

Migration news roundup 18 March 2024

Image
View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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Stories that inspired us this week

To mark International Women's day, [a photography exhibition opened in London, celebrating women refugees](#) from across the world. (Source: Stylist)

[Ghani shares his experience of rebuilding his life in Kirklees, training to be a barber](#) and becoming a barbering lecturer at Kirklees College. (Source: Kirklees College via Facebook – 2min video)

[Ripon Grammar School in North Yorkshire has become a 'School of Sanctuary'](#). (Source: Your Harrogate)

International news

[Palestinian Canadians have expressed disappointment with Canada's family reunification programme](#) for people in Gaza to join their relatives in the country. Only 12 people have had applications approved, and there have not yet been any arrivals under the scheme. (Source: the Guardian)

[At least 60 people died attempting to cross the central Mediterranean Sea](#), after their boat was left adrift following an engine failure. The International Organization for Migration has called for measures to prevent similar tragedies in future. (Source: Al Jazeera)

UK borders and migration policy

The government [proceeded with its plans to cut net migration](#), laying [new immigration rules](#). Joining dependants are no longer permitted on the health and social care visa, while from 4 April the minimum salary threshold for the skilled worker route increases to £29,000, and the Shortage Occupation List is replaced by an Immigration Salary List. A new [parliamentary briefing](#) summarises these changes. The Home Secretary also confirmed the Migration Advisory Committee has been commissioned to review the graduate visa route. (Sources: Home

[Concerns have been raised within the care sector that the new rules, alongside a reported tightening of checks,](#) will make it too difficult for companies to sponsor enough staff. Meanwhile, new research on exploitation and visa routes has found that [some migrant care workers are earning as little as £5 a day](#). (Sources: the Guardian, Independent)

A [union representing civil servants has threatened legal action against the Home Office if it continues to implement the Safety of Rwanda Bill](#), as they believe this could be a breach of international law and so enacting provisions would contravene the civil service code. Meanwhile, following a recent National Audit Office report, the Public Accounts Committee has opened [call for evidence from senior Home Office officials on the Rwanda scheme and the costs of asylum accommodation](#) in the UK. Also on Rwanda, the government is exploring setting up a scheme in which [asylum seekers could be paid to voluntarily relocate to Rwanda](#). (Sources: the Guardian, UK Parliament, BBC)

The Home Office was criticised after a [data breach affecting over 76,000 people](#), with errors recording names, photos and immigration status. (Source: the Guardian)

The [public inquiry about the Manston asylum processing site](#) could be launched soon, following reports of mistreatment and abuse. (Source: the Guardian)

36 MPs have signed a joint [letter calling for the government to implement an emergency scheme for Palestinian people](#) in Gaza, similar to the Ukraine and Afghan schemes. Meanwhile a [Palestinian refugee in the UK has won a legal challenge](#), after visa rules prevented his family from proceeding with a refugee family reunion application without undertaking biometrics enrolment. (Source: BBC)

Specific migrant groups

There are a number of items on asylum:

- [The Home Office updated its policy](#) to implement a [stricter approach to accommodation requests around room sharing and location](#). Some individuals previously deemed unsuitable for room sharing or being accommodated in large sites like Napier and the Bibby Stockholm, could now be accommodated in these settings. (Sources: Home Office, Free Movement)
- [Far-right protests are on the increase](#), particularly at large asylum accommodation sites like Scampton in Lincolnshire. (Source: Sky News)
 - [Charities are calling for a doubling of the grace period for refugees](#) moving on from asylum accommodation. This is following a 965% increase in homelessness among this group in recent months. (Source: the Guardian)

The [children's commissioner has criticised reported Home Office plans to use shipping containers to house unaccompanied children infected with diphtheria](#). (Source: The Times)

[A new report highlights vulnerability to exploitation for migrants working in the care and agriculture sectors,](#) making a number of recommendations to mitigate the risk. (Source: Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre)

Cohesion and integration

This [new report on the use and proficiency of English Language among migrants](#) looks at the percentage of migrants speaking English, the take-up of ESOL resources and how levels of English affect quality of life. (Source: The Migration Observatory)

As the government announced a new anti-extremism strategy, [three former home secretaries came forward to warn against 'politicising' definitions of extremism](#). Meanwhile UK terror attack survivors have written an open letter asking politicians not to equate being Muslim with extremism. Finally, [Hope Not Hate expresses concerns about far-right extremism and a growth in anti-migrant activity](#). (Source: the Guardian)

A [new display celebrating the trailblazing contributions of Muslims living and working in the north of England](#) can be seen at Leeds City Museum's Voices of Asia Gallery. (Source: Leeds City Council)

Contact us about research

If you have any questions about our research, contact us:
research@migrationyorkshire.org.uk
[0113 378 8188](tel:01133788188)

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