

Migration news roundup 25 September 2023

Image
View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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Stories that inspired us this week

In Leeds, campaigners from Leeds City of Sanctuary received a standing ovation from councillors after [calling for Leeds to become an official council of sanctuary](#). (Source: West Leeds Dispatch)

‘The Old Oak’ is Ken Loach's [new film, featuring a Syrian family settling into a community in the UK and how there can be hope](#) in a hostile environment. (Source: Big Issue)

‘[Hear Our Stories: An Anthology of Writing on Migration](#)’ is a collection of poetry and prose featuring 38 [migrant and refugee authors](#) giving a personal perspective on the experiences of people who came to the UK looking for a better life. (Source: IMIX)

International news

Italian prime minister Giorgia Meloni has launched an appeal for EU solidarity in dealing with the increase in [arrival of migrants in Lampedusa](#). She argues that the way to ‘resolve’ EU migration issues is not through ‘redistribution policy’ but by ‘stopping departures’ altogether. Meanwhile, [Germany requested detailed information from Poland over the alleged visa fraud](#) which granted migrants from Africa and Asia entry to EU zones including Germany. (Sources: the Guardian, AP news)

Outside Europe, [the Biden administration made Temporary Protection Status available to more than 200,000 Venezuelans](#), enabling them to access employment. However, plans to strengthen the Southwest border security to control border crossing were also announced. (Source: NBC News)

UK borders and migration policy

The report of the inquiry into the 2017 abuse at Brook House immigration removal centre has now been published. [Instances of mistreatment identified](#) included inappropriate use of force, subjection to pain, and racist comments. [The Home Office has issued this statement in response](#), saying that it is considering the recommendations in the report, and setting out reforms implemented since the incidents occurred. [Meanwhile immigration chief inspector David Neal has criticised the government’s decision](#) to discontinue the annual reviews relating to safeguarding measures for vulnerable detainees. [Neal has also recently published a report on](#)

[measures to identify and mitigate risks of insider threat to Border Force](#), and has critiqued the Home Office for the number of redactions made. (Sources: Home Office, BBC, the Guardian, Free Movement)

[This new briefing on immigration fees](#) has been published ahead of [imminent increases to fees and charges](#) announced earlier this year. (Sources: House of Commons Library, Free Movement)

This article provides an [overview of mandatory and discretionary reasons for refusal of applications to enter or remain in the UK](#). (Source: Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

The [cost of housing people seeking asylum has risen to £8 million a day](#) according to figures provided in the [Home Office's annual report](#) (note the Home Secretary gave figures of £6 million earlier in the week). [Labour says it will end the use of hotels and reduce spending](#) on asylum accommodation through clearing the backlog. Meanwhile, the government has been [accused of failing to meet its duty to provide access to justice](#) due to the lack of legal aid provision for asylum and immigration matters. (Sources: the Guardian, Home Office, Sky News)

The government published a statement confirming that [all refugees arriving through Afghan schemes have now exited bridging hotels](#), with 55 hotels closing and 15,000 individuals being moved or matched to new housing. Meanwhile, [Barnsley Council has approved the proposal to purchase 13 properties to house Afghan refugees in Barnsley](#) with the help of a government grant. (Sources: Home Office, The Star)

[The government has published its latest modern slavery statement](#), setting out measures to prevent modern slavery in its supply chains. [Meanwhile a man trafficked to the UK as a child, has had his conviction for drugs offences](#) quashed by the Court of Appeal. The commentary highlights the fact that under recent legislative changes, someone in a similar position might not receive the positive conclusive grounds decision that was crucial in this case. (Sources: Home Office, Free Movement)

[The number of unaccompanied children who are under 16 and accommodated in hotels keeps increasing](#), despite the practice has been ruled unlawful. In other news, [Kent Council is receiving new funding from government to support more unaccompanied children and improve the pace of transfers](#) to other local authorities under the National Transfer Scheme. (Sources: The National, BBC) ?

[The team within the Home Office tasked with making the department's approach to migration more compassionate, one of the Windrush report's recommendations, has been disbanded](#). The Home Office stated that 'due to significant progress' there is no longer need in a special taskforce, and that now their programme will be embedded in day-to-day operations and activities. Campaigners, however, described the news as 'insulting', 'disappointing' and 'upsetting'. (Source: the Guardian)

This article on destinations of BNO(British National overseas) visa holders [features Leeds and Hongkongers attending Café Connect activities at a local church](#). (Source: Spectator)

Cohesion and integration

A concerning article about how [those in power can find it useful to have their prejudices mirrored by those from minority groups](#) to effectively shield them from criticism. Meanwhile, [far-right activists have been targeting the Royal National Lifeboat Institution in Kent](#). (Sources: the Guardian, Kent Live)

In contrast, Carlisle Refugee Action in Cumbria are urging communities to [stand united against rising tensions](#) around people seeking asylum being housed in hotels.? And on the occasion of Rosh Hashanah (Jewish New Year), [Rabbi David Mason, calls for ‘more than spiritual asylum’, encouraging the befriending of those in the asylum system](#). (Sources: News and Star, Jewish News)

Contact us about research

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