

# Migration news roundup 31 July 2023

Image

View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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## Stories that inspired us this week

People seeking asylum and temporarily placed in hotels are sharing the impact of a [sewing project in Bristol](#). (Source: BBC)

Two artists share their stories here: [a comic artist who came to the UK from Somalia](#) who sees comics as a way to share his refugee experience, and a [photographer who migrated from Hong Kong uses art to remember his homeland](#). (Sources: Metro, the Guardian)

## International news

Listen to [what happens to migrants when they reach reception centres in southern Italy](#). In Greece, the [Aegean Boat Report group records an increase in arrivals to Greek Islands](#) and decrease in pushbacks over the same period. (Sources: BBC – listen from 00:30, 16:10, 27:00 and 44:30, InfoMigrants)

Beyond Europe, in Hong Kong there are reports of [family members of prominent pro-democracy activists being taken for questioning by police](#), while [in the USA changes to the asylum process disproportionately affect indigenous South American groups](#). (Sources: the Guardian, Al Jazeera)

## UK borders and migration policy

Following last week's changes to the Immigration Rules:

- UK Border Force Union revealed some [staff are uncomfortable about new visa requirements](#) for some nationalities, due to [concerns that new rules discriminate against national groups like East Timorese](#).
- This article examines the [government's decision to widen the scope for withdrawing asylum claims](#) and what this means in practice. (Sources: Free Movement the Guardian)

Since the passing of the Illegal Migration Act:

- [The professional body for solicitors issued a statement condemning the new legislation](#) for being unworkable and posing a 'threat to the law and justice system'.

- In protest against the Act's potential impact, an [LGBT rights campaign group displayed images of the Home Secretary and Prime Minister as Barbie and Ken](#).
- A [National Refugee Strategy](#) from the Refugee Council proposes alternative solutions to the Act including a call for the government to [introduce a refugee visa](#).
- A [recent poll found that British voters support the proposals from the Illegal Migration Act](#) by two to one, but [they also support specific schemes for Ukrainians, HongKongers and Afghans](#). (Sources: Law Society, Metro, Refugee Council, the Guardian, New Statesman, British Foreign Policy Group)

[Costs of housing asylum seekers in hotels is resulting in millions of pounds of the UK's foreign aid budget being spent on tax payments](#) that return to the Treasury. Further, since the Illegal Migration Act no longer allows many people who arrive through irregular routes to claim asylum [the rules governing international aid spending on refugees could end the government using this budget to support them](#). (Sources: the Guardian, Devex)

The [Solicitor's Regulation Authority is to investigate claims that some solicitors were found to be assisting clients to make false asylum claims](#) to regularise their stay in the UK. (Source: BBC)

## Specific migrant groups

[Asylum support rates have increased](#) from £45 to £47.39 per week. The High Court found the [Home Secretary unlawfully withheld financial support for families with young children and pregnant women](#). (Sources: gov.uk, the Guardian)

New guidance has been published for local authorities on [pre-matching Afghan refugees for settled accommodation](#). (Source: Home Office)

On children and young people:

- [The High Court ruled that 'routine' housing of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in hotels is unlawful](#).
- Following murals being painted over at a reception centre in Kent, [pupils from a primary school in Birmingham sent drawings to unaccompanied children seeking asylum](#) housed there to show that they are 'welcome' and 'not alone'.
- [Refugee Education UK has been commissioned to conduct a study into access to education for newly arrived displaced adolescents aged 13-19](#) and is asking practitioners to complete a survey. (Sources: BBC, Refugee Education UK)

On modern slavery, the [Home Office has been ordered by the High Court to change the policy on trafficking](#) which disqualifies people with criminal convictions from accessing support and protection. Meanwhile, an [increase in cases of modern slavery in the care industry](#) has been reported. (Sources: the Guardian, BBC)

[Some UK universities have introduced flexible payment deadlines](#) to support Nigerian students due to the sudden devaluation of their currency. (Source: The Pie News)

Here's a useful reminder on [how absences from the UK impacts on applications to the EU Settlement Scheme](#). (Source: Free Movement)

## Cohesion and integration

In [Llanelli, Wales, a solidarity picnic in support of asylum seekers who may soon be housed in hotels nearby](#) was held. Relatedly, this piece talks about ‘performative hostility’ and how [housing asylum seekers in inhospitable and unwelcoming sites can be seen as part of a strategy](#) to take away agency and a sense of belonging. (Sources: Hope not Hate, the Conversation)

[The former goalkeeper and captain of the Afghan women’s national football team describes adapting to a new culture](#), and the role of football in healing. (Source: UNHCR)

## Contact us about research

If you have any questions about our research, contact us:

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