

Migration news roundup 22 January 2024

Image

View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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Stories that inspired us this week

A BAFTA is being awarded to June Givanni who [established an archive of Pan African cinema and is being celebrated as a 'pioneering force'](#) in the preservation, study and celebration of African and African diaspora cinema'. (Source: the Guardian)

On the global stage, watch this [short video by Deline, a young woman leading youth climate action](#) in Kakuma, the Refugee Camp where she lives in Kenya. On the subject of climate, this article explains how [migration can aid sustainable solutions to environmental issues](#). (Sources: YouTube at 1:57 minutes, The Conversation)

You can [attend an online Holocaust Memorial Day Lecture from York University about Ruth Wiener's story](#). She was born in Berlin, moved to Holland as a child with her family, and survived the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. It's on Tuesday 23 January at 6.30pm. (Source: University of York)

International news

[The European Court of Justice has declared that women suffering gender based violence are eligible for EU refugee status](#). Meanwhile, the UNHCR urged Hungary and Belgium, the two countries holding the EU Presidency in 2024, to [implement a proposed Migration and Asylum Pact aimed](#) at helping to protect the rights of people seeking asylum. (Source: InfoMigrants)

Outside of Europe, in Niger, [the new military government, has started offering military escorts through the Sahara Desert](#) in exchange for cash from those seeking to depart for Europe via North Africa and Mediterranean. (Source: InfoMigrants)

UK borders and migration policy

[The Safety of Rwanda Bill has been voted through the House of Commons](#), after a potential major Tory rebellion was averted. Some Conservative MPs attempted to amend the bill to ensure human rights law cannot prevent removals to Rwanda from going ahead. [Deputy chairs Lee Anderson and Brendan Clarke resigned](#) after

the amendments were voted down. [The proposed legislation will now be considered in the House of Lords](#), where significant opposition is anticipated. [Barrister and peer Lord Carlile said the government is ‘elevating itself to an unacceptable level above the law’](#). (Sources: BBC, the Guardian)

Meanwhile, [the supreme court’s concerns about Rwanda’s safety](#) are unlikely to be assuaged by the new treaty with the country, according to legal experts. [The UNHCR says that the scheme will still breach international law. New figures about the Rwandan asylum system also raise questions about the country’s capacity to manage the scheme](#), and its decision-making – 421 claims were considered in the last 5 years, and three-quarters were refused, including from countries such as Afghanistan and Syria. There are ongoing [concerns about human rights abuses in the country](#). (Sources: the Guardian, Independent, inews)

[Tragedy struck in France when five people lost their lives](#) attempting a small boat crossing to the UK. [A new report calls for safe routes to be expanded](#). (Sources: BBC, Refugee Council)

There are concerns in the struggling hospitality sector about the [potential impact of the upcoming increase to the minimum skilled worker salary threshold](#). In other news, Home Office have been accused of [‘systematically’ refusing visas enabling dependent children to join their mothers](#) in the UK. (Source: the Guardian)

Specific migrant groups

There are a few items on asylum accommodation:

- The [Home Office has reportedly shelved plans to procure more vessels as asylum accommodation](#) after the Bibby Stockholm’s highly publicised issues. (Source: Independent)
- There has been [criticism of the government’s exclusion of asylum accommodation from new protections against substandard housing conditions](#) in the Social Housing Act 2023. Home Office say this is because the Act is only applicable to landlords registered as social housing providers, which asylum accommodation is not. (Source: the Guardian)
- This new [report on the experiences of LGBTQI+ people](#) finds that many feel unsafe in asylum accommodation. (Source: African Rainbow Family)

On EU nationals, the [Home Office updated its EUSS guidance to caseworkers](#) expanding reasonable grounds acceptable as a justification for a late application. This includes [enabling those who mistakenly applied for permanent residency](#) rather than settled status, to make a late EUSS application. (Sources: Home Office, the Guardian)

From 6th February, many migrants, including BN(O)s and their family members, will be required to pay an [increased Immigration Health Surcharge](#), as per the [Immigration \(Health Charge\) \(Amendment\) Order 2024](#) approved by Parliament. The fee will raise by over 60% and it was first announced by the government last July. (Sources: Electronic Immigration Network, legislation.gov.uk)

[This new guide aimed at migrant workers](#) explains what work exploitation is, and what their rights are. (Source: Right to Remain)

This article describes [financial pressures upon universities and the impact on home and international students. York University is reported to be taking a more ‘flexible’ approach to entry requirements for international students](#). (Sources: The Pie News, BBC)

On children and young people:

- [Kent County Council are reviewing multiple sites for use as temporary reception centres for recently arrived unaccompanied children seeking asylum](#). (Source: Kent)
- Several UK councils such as [Dorset](#), [Hertfordshire](#), [Bath and North East Somerset](#) highlighted the lack of sufficient funding to support caring for unaccompanied children. (Sources: Dorset Echo, East Anglia Bylines, Midsomer Norton).
- Finally, this briefing looks at [local authority duties to support children under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989](#). (Source: Free Movement).

Cohesion and integration

A new policy paper has been released by the University of Warwick [on the variety of integration needs of refugees, as well as their unique aspirations](#). (Source: University of Warwick)

The Centre for Homelessness Impact has published a blog [on how compassionate reforms to the refugee system can improve housing access for all](#). (Source: Centre for Homelessness Impact)

Contact us about research

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

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