

Migration news roundup 12 December 2022



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Stories that inspired us this week

Refugees, asylum seekers and other residents from Bradford came together for poetry and performance about what it means to call Bradford 'home' - to be published in an anthology.
(Source: Telegraph & Argus)

And on a festive note, the 'Refutrees' scheme in Bristol is selling Christmas trees to raise money to support refugees. (Source: BBC)

International news

This bold article suggests five immigration policies for 2023 to help European countries reframe the conversation around migration and benefit from it – one is to devolve more power to cities and local leaders. (Source: The New Humanitarian)

In Australia, many rescued Afghan citizens are despairing - hope to reunite with families still in Kabul is fading, due to long waits for 'split-family' visas. (Source: the Guardian)

UK borders and migration policy

Ministers from several countries met to discuss Channel crossings and agreed to hold annual meetings of this 'Calais Group', while the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and his Albanian counterpart Edi Rama discussed plans to tackle illegal migration to the UK. (Sources: Home Office, Prime Minister's Office)

Several items cover initial reception conditions for new arrivals:

- A report on short-term holding facilities in Kent in 2021 reveals serious welfare concerns at Tug Haven, Kent Intake Unit and Frontier House (before Manston and Western Jetfoil sites opened in 2022). (Source: Independent Monitoring Boards)
- Some asylum seekers recently held at Manston, Kent were reportedly turned away from their asylum screening interviews despite having been issued appointments. (Source: the Guardian)
- Work has not yet begun on asylum reception centres announced last year which should accommodate up to 8,000 new arrivals. (Source: Independent)

Government has increased capacity in the tribunal system, expecting to resolve up to 9,000 more immigration appeal cases by the end of March. (Source: Ministry of Justice)

This article shares concerns about the impact of the increasingly digitalised approach to UK immigration systems, in particular, the requirement to use 'sharecodes' to prove immigration status. (Source: WIRED)

Specific migrant groups

It has been reported that no Afghan refugees have yet been brought to the UK under the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) launched in January - this story is about pathway 3 of the scheme which enables some individuals with employment and study connections to the UK to be resettled. (Source: the Guardian)

There are a number of news items related to future asylum policy:

- Reports that the Home Office could fast-track claims from countries like Syria and Afghanistan where claims are likely to be accepted. (Source: Arab News)

- The immigration minister talked of preventing asylum claims from 'safe' countries like Albania, an idea backed by Labour. (Sources: Sky, BBC)
- There's new critique of the Home Office Country Policy and Information Note on blood feuds in Albania – used by decision makers on asylum applications. (Sources: Prime Minister's Office, Free Movement)

'Stopping the crossings', a report from the Centre for Policy Studies - for which the Home Secretary wrote a foreword - was criticised by UNHCR for errors and its proposals including a ban on claiming asylum for those crossing the Channel. (Sources: Centre for Policy Studies, UNHCR)

'Fleeing a burning house' is a report exploring why torture survivors flee their countries and seek sanctuary in the UK. (Source: Freedom from Torture)

This policy paper explores learning from the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and how it can aid development of community-led integration schemes for welcoming new arrivals. (Source: University of Oxford)

There are increasing concerns among councils regarding funding and inappropriate placements of unaccompanied children in care as the figures continue to be at their highest level. There are discussions around safeguarding Albanian children as almost a fifth are going missing from Kent. (Sources: Community Care, the Guardian)

Two items on EU nationals:

- A briefing explains the rights of EU nationals after 30 June 2021 including the right to work while awaiting a decision on an EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) application and raising awareness of the risks in making an application where the applicant would not meet eligibility requirements. (Source: Work Rights Centre)
- This article outlines problems remaining in the EUSS process including upgrades and 'advice sharks'. (Source: UK in Changing Europe)

This article explores worries felt by Hongkongers settling in the UK in relation to the Chinese regime. (Source: UnHerd)

Stories about the Windrush generation have quietened, but here are a selection:

- A man caught up in the Windrush scandal recently won his 10-year battle to remain here but now needs to rebuild his life. (Source: the Guardian)
- This year's Turner Prize for art went to Veronica Ryan who made the UK's first permanent public artwork to honour the Windrush generation. (Source: BBC)

Cohesion and integration

A report on the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy makes recommendations both short-term to ensure good practices develop, and long-term that address issues affecting much of the Scottish population. (Source: University of Glasgow)

The Commission on the Integration of Refugees published its first report 'A Broken System? Asylum Reform Initiatives, 1997-2022' examining how far integration has been a priority in asylum legislation and analyses successes and failures in previous efforts to reform the asylum system. (Source: Commission on the Integration of Refugees)

Diana Sutton, director of The Bell Foundation, writes about the importance of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) in the refugee integration process in light of their evaluation of a refugee integration project in the East of England. (Source: The Bell Foundation)

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Contact us about research

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

research@migrationyorkshire.org.uk

0113 378 8188

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