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| **Regional Report on Migration Issues**  **Leeds – June 2018** | Migration Yorkshire logo |
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**Post Compass Arrangements**

1. The Home Office is due to announce the outcome of the AAST (Asylum Accommodation and Support Transformation) contract tendering process in autumn 2018, with the new contract coming into effect in September 2019. All the indications are that the detail of the new contract will be similar to the old one. The new contract will be for 10 years.
2. The Home Office has begun the process of tendering for the AIRE (Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility) Service, which will contain a more significant face to face element but will be fairly similar to the current contract. Migration Yorkshire hosted a stakeholders meeting on 20th March, attended by statutory and voluntary sector stakeholders from across the region.

**Syrian Resettlement (VPRS)**

1. The Yorkshire and Humber region committed to resettle around 1,700 individuals as part of the government’s pledge to resettle 20,000 Syrians in the UK by 2020 under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. By the end of May 2018, over 1,200 Syrians will have been resettled in this region.

**Vulnerable Children’s Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)**

1. Ten Local Authorities in Yorkshire and Humber have also agreed to resettle around 160 individuals (children and their families) under the government’s Vulnerable Children’s Resettlement Scheme (3,000 individuals from the Middle East & North Africa region). By May 2018, over 75 individuals had been resettled in this region under VCRS.

**Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC)**

1. At 31st December 2017, it is estimated that there were 285 UASCs and 196 former UASC care leavers being supported in the region. The majority of these have been spontaneous arrivals to the UK. 15 UASC were placed in Y&H in the 6 months to 30th April 2018 (fewer than in the two previous 6 month periods). Five LAs accepted referrals: Bradford, Leeds, East Riding, NE Lincs and York. There’s an increasing backlog of cases in the system.
2. A Home Office UASC funding review is on-going. New payment rates were due to start in April 2018 to support Local Authorities towards cost recovery. LAs claim funding 2 months in arrears, so it may be that the new rates will be fixed and become payable in time.

**NHS Charging Regulations.**

1. Amendments to the NHS ‘Charging Regulations’ for overseas visitors were brought in in July and October 2017. Hospitals are now required to charge up-front for treatment, unless doing so would prevent or delay urgent treatment. GP services and A&E remain free for all and hospital care remains free for those who are ‘ordinarily resident’ in the UK. Refugees and asylum seekers continue to be exempt, but some refused asylum seekers will now be chargeable.
2. The Department of Health is conducting a formal review of the amendments, as concerns were raised by the House of Lords regarding barriers to healthcare for vulnerable individuals and breaches in equality legislation through the potential use of racial profiling as a means to identify chargeable patients. The consultation closed on 1st June 2018.

**Hostile Environment measures**

1. **Data Sharing:**The memorandum of understanding between the Home Office and NHS Digital which allowed for the Home Office to request patients’ data from the NHS to aid immigration controls has been suspended. An amendment to the Data Protection Bill restricts the occasions when NHS Digital has to share data with the HO to incidents relating to criminal investigations and serious offences. NHS Digital has released a statement here -   
   <https://digital.nhs.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/a-statement-from-nhs-digital-on-the-memorandum-of-understanding-with-the-home-office>
2. Bank Account checks  
   The Home Secretary has announced the temporary suspension of checks on all bank accounts, which were instituted in January as part of measures against those with no legal right to be in the UK. This is to allow the Home Office to “review existing safeguards to ensure that those who are here lawfully are not inadvertently disadvantaged by measures put in place to tackle illegal migration.”  
   <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/17/home-office-suspends-immigration-checks-on-uk-bank-accounts>

**New Immigration Bail conditions**

1. The Home Office has now issued guidance   
   <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705600/immigration-bail-v2.0ext.pdf>

**‘Right to Remain’** has produced a useful summary table on people’s right to study, which can be found by using this link.

<http://www.righttoremain.org.uk/legal/new-immigration-provisions-are-resulting-in-sudden-study-bans/>

**Controlling Migration Fund**

1. Migration Yorkshire arranged a number of briefings and ‘surgeries’ in the region to facilitate applications to this fund. In West Yorkshire all five authorities have now been successful with their bids. There has also been a successful bid to build capacity to support unaccompanied asylum seeking children across the whole region and this will be led and co-ordinated by Migration Yorkshire.
2. More recently the DCLG has agreed to use some of the CMF to part fund pilot projects to employ Local Authority Asylum Support Liaison Officers in Bradford, Sheffield and Leeds. Migration Yorkshire is hoping to secure funding to help fund post-decision work in those towns that were not funded by the CMF project.
3. So far LAs in the whole of the Yorkshire & Humber region have received over £8 million of CMF funding to work in areas where recent migration has brought challenges to local communities. In Y&H three projects to work with UASCs have been confirmed, to be led by Leeds City Council, North Yorkshire County Council, and York City Council – whose project will work with councils across Y&H.

**Asylum Numbers in Leeds & Yorkshire**

1. The overall number of dispersed asylum seekers in Yorkshire & Humber as a whole was 5,499 on 28th February 2018. This compares to 5,236 on 28th February 2017 – an increase of 263, or 5% over the year. It is anticipated that the number of dispersed asylum seekers in the region will rise during this calendar year.
2. The number of supported asylum seekers in Leeds, based on HO figures to 28th February 2018, is currently 867, up 103 or about 13% higher than the same time last year. This is still 23% below what it would be if dispersal was spread evenly across the region and so is currently well below the +15% tolerance level agreed informally by Local Authorities in Yorkshire & Humber. At the ‘dispersal’ meeting on 23rd April 2018, G4S indicated that it anticipates an increase of approximately 215 supported asylum seekers in Leeds by the end of 2018.

**New arrivals in Leeds**

1. In 2017 7,975 people from other countries registered for a NINo. This is 1,547 down on the figure for 2016. 66% of the newcomers were from the EU and 34% from outside the EU and newcomers came from 105 different countries.
2. There has been a change in the make-up of new arrivals since 2016. Most of the top nationalities show a drop in numbers with Romania top on 1,843 (down 59 from 2016); Poland 674 (down 425); Italy 562 (down 125); India 507 (down 73); Spain 463 (down 225); Portugal 274 (down 65); China 209 (down 30); Lithuania 202 (down 51). This fits in with a national pattern of a reduction in net migration, with the bulk of the reduction resulting from fewer EU nationals coming to the UK and more EU nationals leaving. Migration Yorkshire produces a ‘Newcomers to …’ briefing for each Local Authority area each year and the most recent briefing is attached to this report.

**Migration Yorkshire Training**

1. Migration Yorkshire offers all of our partner councils a free ‘Introduction to Migration’ training session each year. Leeds have contracted a series of 22 sessions since June 2016, attended by 474 participants. Further sessions are planned for 2018-19 on dates to be arranged.

Bill Dennis/Liz Maddocks/Aidan Hallett - Migration Yorkshire

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