Migration news roundup 7 November 2022

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Stories that inspired us this week

The finalists for Bradford's Community Stars' Shared Values in Action Award include Connecting Roma C.I.C who support Bradford's EU Roma community and Richard Taiwo who is an ESOL teacher and coach for Horton Housing United FC Refugee Football Team. (Source: Telegraph and Argus)

This story, presenting the Princess of Asturias Award for Sport to the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) and the Refugee Olympic Team (ROT) in Madrid, recognises resilience of refugees. (Source: UNHCR)

A student from Bradford shares about his family's journey of overcoming challenges many migrants face to study law at Oxford. The family who are from Zambia gained refugee status when he was a child. (Source: Telegraph and Argus)

A forthcoming episode of CBeebies show Hey Duggee will feature new Ukrainian characters, intended to make Ukrainian children feel welcome in the UK. (Source: BBC)

International news

In response to the Italian government intention of keeping NGO rescue boats away from their coasts, the President of the European Parliament urged her counterparts to remember the

2013 migrants shipwreck situation and comply with relevant international and EU laws. She called for more solidarity for migrants as demonstrated by Greek authorities in this short video. Meanwhile, with Egyptian migration to Europe on the rise, the EU signed an €80 million agreement with Egypt to help the country reduce irregular migration and human trafficking. Meanwhile, Tunisia reports it has thwarted six unauthorised immigration attempts across the Mediterranean into Europe. (Sources: Info Migrants, Euronews, Reuters, Middle East Monitor)

Beyond Europe, Nigeria's Boro State decided to shut down camps for people displaced by Boko Haram violence and this report reveals that the decision has affected 200,000 people. (Source: Human Rights Watch)

UK borders and migration policy

Home Secretary Suella Braverman has been criticised for her handling of the challenges at the Manston migrant processing centre – she denied claims that she prevented hotel use to ease the pressure there. Her use of the word 'invasion' in the House of Commons on Monday, in relation to people seeking asylum, provoked an angry reaction from many, and criticism from within her own party. Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick distanced himself from this use of language. Some argue that the government is to blame for the problems in the asylum system – for example by failing to address the backlog of asylum claims awaiting a decision. (Sources: BBC, ITV News, The Times, the Guardian)

The Home Office faces a judicial review over conditions at Manston, which continue to persist, including cases of MRSA and diphtheria and people being referred to by the number on their wristband. The site's capacity is 1,600 people but recently breached 4,000 people. Since the story broke, more people have been moved off site, although some without accommodation to go to. The Prisons Inspector concluded that 'the Home Office and its contractors need to get a grip' back in July not only in relation to the Manston accommodation but how detainees are treated there. (Sources: inews, the Guardian, Independent, HM Inspectorate of Prisons)

Not far from Manston, another Border Force site for migrants was attacked with petrol bombs by a man with links to the Far Right, and the investigation is being led by counter-terrorism police.. (Sources: Hope not Hate, the Guardian)

On wider asylum system, here's a useful overview of evidence presented at a recent Home Affairs Select Committee on Channel crossings and other asylum issues, and a small boats crossing Factsheet covering data from July 2022. As Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has signalled his intention to reduce migration and reform the asylum system, this article considers the various policy options to address the issue of people making the dangerous journey across the Channel. Meanwhile, over 100 charities have written an open letter to the Home Secretary calling for her to create safe routes for people claiming asylum, and to deal with the backlog of asylum claims. (Sources: Free Movement, Home Office, Independent, The Times, IMIX)

There’s been more coverage of people from Albania arriving in the UK. The Albanian government has criticised the UK for not reaching agreement over removals, and for a lack of information sharing, but there are reports of proposals for a bespoke route in order to speed up removals. Meanwhile, it’s been reported that most Albanian nationals granted asylum last year were women survivors of trafficking. (Sources: the Guardian, Independent)

On detention, this briefing provides an overview of recent numbers of people in immigration detention. 81% of people detained in 2021 had previously claimed asylum – this increase from 66% in 2020 is thought to reflect the fact more people are now arriving by small boat, many of whom are detained for a short period on arrival. Elsewhere, a review of prisons finds that immigration detainees held in prison settings are ‘substantially disadvantaged in terms of legal safeguards and welfare’ in comparison with those held in immigration removal centres. (Sources: Migration Observatory, HM Inspectorate of Prisons)

Specific migrant groups

Councils are increasingly considering legal steps to prevent local hotels being used to accommodate asylum seekers. A company contracted to provide housing for asylum seekers has recorded rising profits. And a 15-year-old boy has been charged with the attempted murder of a child asylum seeker near a hotel used by the Home Office in London. (Sources: Sky, the Guardian)

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children currently housed in the Manston holding centre have allegedly been pressured by screening officials to declare themselves as over 18, to secure a quicker release from the centre. This comes as unaccompanied children were photographed sleeping on the floor at a Home Office facility in Kent. (Sources: the Guardian, BBC)

On EU nationals, a House of Commons research briefing covers the implementation of citizens' rights after Brexit, while this article provides an update on the NHS and comprehensive sickness insurance. (Sources: UK Parliament, Free Movement)

The Home Office published an update on referrals to the National Referral Mechanism for potential victims of modern slavery up to September 2022. (Source: Home Office)

Hong Kong migrants fear for their safety and are calling on the UK government to take a stronger stance after a pro-democracy protester was beaten in the grounds of a Chinese consulate. Relatedly, government is considering the closure of Confucius institutes in the UK because they threaten Chinese students' safety. While Conservative MP Iain Duncan Smith appealed to the security minister to take actions, the Director of the China Institute at SOAS University of London suggests that the government needs a 'proper Chinese strategy' to address the issue. (Sources: the Guardian, Pie News)

The UK Higher Education sector released a statement underlining their commitment to promote academic freedom and

free speech which aimed at creating an environment in which staff and students could discuss complex and controversial topics with respect, dignity and civility. (Source: Universities UK)

Cohesion and integration

To mark the end of Black History Month, panellists from a wide range of professions and sectors named one change they would like to see to achieve black equality in Britain. These suggested that changes were necessary in all spheres from politics to arts and included proposals such as teaching black history all year round. (Source: the Guardian)

This article considers why the new Home Secretary would use inflammatory language. It suggests it has to do with Braverman's attempt to rekindle debates about borders and migration – which based on recent surveys seem to be less of a priority for the general public – as a way to deflect from economic problems. (Source: The Conversation)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) released their first Census 2021 topic summaries. The population related summary confirmed trends of an ageing population, while the migration related summary reported that 57% of population increase since the Census 2011 is due to net migration. Furthermore, the non-UK born population grew from 7.5 million in 2011 to 10 million in 2021. In Yorkshire and Humber, the non-UK born population grew by 34% to 622,300 – with the largest populations in Leeds, Bradford and Sheffield. Use this interactive map to explore Census data for your local area. (Source: ONS)

Source URL:

https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/news/migration-news-roundup-7-november-2022