Migration news roundup 13 May 2024



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Stories that inspired us this week

A group of Associated Press photographers have been awarded a Pulitzer Prize for their powerful images chronicling the arduous journeys made by migrants from central and South America to reach the USA border. (Source: the Guardian)

Read this moving personal account from Pam, a retired nurse hosting ‘Aryan’, an Afghan asylum seeker, following the death of her husband. (Source: Metro)

A group of mums in North Pembrokeshire are calling for the government to set up a community sponsorship scheme for those affected by the conflict in Gaza (Source: South Wales Argus)

International news

Over a million Syrian refugees in Lebanon will be affected by the UHNCR cutting health funding by 50%. According to the Lebanese Health Ministry, this aid reduction is in response to ‘drastic budget cuts caused by crises across the world’. (Source: InfoMigrants)

According to the United Nations, nearly 640,000 people have been displaced in East Africa in recent weeks because of severe floods caused by climate change. (Source: UN News)

Since a year ago, the United States government app for asylum seekers to book appointments at the border - has been used to register almost 550,000 appointments., though it has come under criticism for being error-prone and arbitrary in awarding appointments. (Source: Los Angeles Times)

UK borders and migration policy

Iraq was revealed to be one of the countries the UK has attempted to negotiate a Rwanda-like deal for the third country removal of asylum seekers in the UK. Rwandan officials have declined to comment on how many refugees they could receive from the UK in the future, amid concerns that the agreement will do little to assist the Home Office to clear the asylum backlog. Media stories focus on the impact the scheme is already having on asylum seekers. Reports say that some are fleeing to Ireland in an attempt to avoid detention and removal. (Sources: Sky News, BBC, the Guardian)

The Home Office began then paused publishing data about the number of people the French authorities have prevented crossing the Channel. Meanwhile, the Labour Party has revealed it plans to tackle small boats through improving border security. (Sources: The Herald Series, BBC)

Former immigration minister Robert Jenrick has produced a 30 point plan to reform the immigration system such as by capping arrivals on the health and social care visa. His plans were revealed in a report co-produced by the Centre of Policy Studies. (Source: Sky News)

There's a few other items on visas and immigration:

- The government has come under pressure after e-gates at airports were affected by technological issues, creating challenges for UK Border security. (Source: BBC)
- The seasonal worker visa scheme has been extended for a further five years. 45,000 visas will be made available in 2025 for people to come and work in the UK's agricultural sector. (Source: Farming UK)
- The Home Office is offering grant funding to support organisations helping vulnerable people with the transition to eVisas later this year. (Source: Home Office)

A new parliamentary briefing was published on the costs of the asylum system, in advance of a parliamentary debate on the subject. (Source: House of Commons Library)

A parliamentary debate is to take place on whether a visa scheme for Palestinian nationals should be introduced. This is following a petition on the subject receiving 100,000 plus signatures. (Source: House of Commons Library)

Specific migrant groups

This article looks at the findings from the recent inspection report on the Afghan schemes. (Source: Free Movement)

A House of Lords briefing analysis examines illegal migration statistics and asylum inadmissibility policy. Similarly, a new briefing from the Migration Observatory analyses the asylum backlog, highlighting that over half of those in the system at the end of the 2023 after the government had worked to clear the legacy backlog, were affected by differing policy which make clearing this backlog more complex. (Sources: House of Lords Library, Migration Observatory)

NGOs and charities have expressed concern after it was revealed that over 350 lone children were held temporarily in UK-run detention centres in France between January 2022 and October 2023. A number of charities have called for systematic reform of the support for children identified as possible victims of trafficking or modern slavery, following revelations that in 2022 1,871 children fell out of the National Referral Mechanism when they turned 18. (Source: the Guardian).

Information has been published for modern slavery survivors, relating to their rights if they are at risk of being removed to Rwanda. (Source: After Exploitation)

Some international students at the University of Bangor are reportedly sleeping overnight in university facilities due to the difficulty of finding affordable housing nearby for them and their families. A recent report reveals that postgraduate visa schemes provided a net benefit of £70 million to the UK economy in

2022/3, or £1,240 per graduate. (Sources: BBC, London Economics).

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