Migration news roundup 24 October 2022



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Stories that inspired us this week

Abdi Suleiman, whose family fled Somalia when he was a child, is seeking nomination to stand as a Labour candidate in Sheffield Central for the next general election. (Source: Huffington Post)

The University of Sheffield has launched a scheme for academics fleeing war or persecution to continue their research here. (Source: University of Sheffield)

Bradford College is the first college in West Yorkshire to receive the FE College of Sanctuary award. (Source: News Anyway)

International news

The US is set to accept about 24,000 Venezuelan asylum seekers entering directly by air and having secured a sponsor under a new programme, but under a new agreement with Mexico Venezuelans arriving at the southern US border will be expelled back into Mexico. At the same time, hundreds of migrants have been sent to New York by republican leaders in other states, leading to a tented camp opening there on Randall's Island. (Source: Al Jazeera)

UK borders and migration policy

In another politically tumultuous week, Grant Shapps emerged as the latest Home Secretary, who may take a more moderate approach to migration issues. (Source: the Guardian)

On the Rwanda policy:

- Privilege Style has become the latest airline to remove itself from the Rwanda flights scheme, following pressure by campaigners (Source: the Guardian)
- A further £20 million has been paid to the Rwandan government for 'initial set-up costs' despite zero removals to Rwanda so far (Source: Daily Mail)
- A House of Lords committee is concerned the arrangement with Rwanda is based on a Memorandum of Understanding rather than a legally binding treaty. (Source: UK Parliament)
- A second judicial review is being considered by the High Court, brought by Asylum Aid, regarding plans to remove asylum seekers within three weeks of arriving here. (Source: Independent)
- An asylum seeker selected for removal is bringing a legal challenge over the government's pilot electronic tagging scheme, claiming he was 'treated like an animal' (Source: Independent)

Following a recommendation by Wendy Williams in the 'Windrush Lessons Learned Review', the Home Office has launched an Independent Examiner of Complaints service for people who use immigration services. (Source: Home Office)

Specific migrant groups

On asylum:

- Judges have ruled that asylum seekers who had their phones confiscated can claim compensation if they arrived between April and November 2020. (Source: the Guardian)
- Concerns have been expressed about 11 Albanians who were returned to their country just days after arriving in the UK on small boats. There are also concerning reports of Albanians in asylum hotels being recruited for cannabis farms. (Sources: the Guardian, Telegraph)
- A private security firm (MTC) has been awarded a contract to provide security at the Manston asylum processing site in Kent; MTC was criticised by Ofsted for its operations in a former youth detention centre. (Source: the Guardian)
- There are reports of hotel staff being made redundant due to the Home Office overseeing operations in the hotel in Buckingham to accommodate people who are seeking asylum. (Source: the Sun)

An independent inspection into the use of hotels for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children was published, raising concerns that staff working and living on site had not been DBS checked. The report calls for a ‘clear cross-government approach’ to protect these extremely vulnerable children. On the related issues of young people going missing from hotels and the risk of trafficking, watch this Newsnight report from minute 26:13. (Sources: Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and

Immigration, the Guardian, BBC)

A Hong Kong protester was attacked at the Chinese consulate in Manchester, leading to calls for tougher actions against perpetrators to reassure the Hong Kong community in the UK. In other news, a new statement of immigration rules provides for the expansion of the BNO visa to include the younger cohort from 30 November. (Sources: the Guardian, British Future, Free Movement)

Government is facing a legal challenge over the planned approach to late EU settlement scheme applications, relating to the requirement to convert from pre-settled to settled status. Meanwhile, new flaws with digital status are emerging, with some individuals being shown other people's information instead of their own. (Sources: the Guardian, Public Technology)

Anti Slavery Day was on 18 October, with the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool exhibiting a beautiful quilt created by survivors of modern slavery. Child victims of trafficking shared their experiences of UK systems in a report, identifying what they need to see for positive and meaningful change in their lives. In an update to immigration rules, from 30 January victims of modern slavery will be eligible for temporary permission to stay. (Sources: Anti Slavery Day, National Museums Liverpool, ECPAT, Free Movement)

Cohesion and integration

In this opinion piece, councillors from different political parties call out ‘racist immigration policies’ that gatekeep who is seen as ‘worthy’ of state support in UK society and who is included or excluded from being considered part of ‘the public’. (Source: Edinburgh Evening News)

What’s in a name? Some Brits living in Turkey are questioning using the term ‘expat’ whilst a recent survey suggests some British people are now identifying more strongly as European, post-Brexit. (Source: The Conversation)

Source URL:
https://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/news/migration-news-roundup-24-october-2022