Migration news roundup 14 November 2022



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Stories that inspired us this week

This article explores how migrants buying food and other products from their home country has led to trade opportunities for migrant entrepreneurs. (Source: BBC)

An Amnesty group was encouraged by the public response in Ilkley while raising awareness of what asylum seekers face in the UK. (Source: Telegraph and Argus)

Here are six stories from a powerful storytelling project about the different parts of refugees' journeys to safety using videos, objects and writing. (Source: SADA)

International news

As COP27 began, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees called leaders to remember displaced people and, as they demand climate compensation, small island nations warned they'll become climate refugees in future. (Sources: UNHCR, Independent)

Once again Italy is refusing some NGO rescue ships permission to travel into its waters and not allowing all passengers to leave once docked. France called out the Italian government as one ship in question, Ocean Viking, headed its way. France unveiled a new immigration bill to integrate immigration policies with

labour market needs by issuing residency permits for undocumented migrants willing to fill labour shortages. (Sources: Info Migrants, Reuters)

UK borders and migration policy

In continued coverage of the issues related to people arriving on small boats, French authorities seem less confident than Prime Minister Rishi Sunak about their recent talks to address Channel crossings, while opposition leader Keir Starmer talks of working 'upstream' with the French President. However, there appears to be a deal on the cards this coming week where the UK will increase payments to France for more patrols along the coast. (Sources: inews, Sky, BBC)

The Manston site for short term processing of new arrivals remains headline news, with Grant Shapps sharing concerns it was becoming an unofficial detention centre during his brief tenure as Home Secretary, and this report of how a migrant was dragged away from reporters by security guards. To deal with the overcrowding, contingency sites continue to be set up including in Rishi Sunak's Northallerton constituency and rural Snowdonia. Living in a hotel is 'intolerable' according to Ali, who has been in one for nearly 500 days. (Sources: BBC, Sky, The Northern Echo, the Guardian)

Here's a sample of recent comment and public opinion:

- Holocaust survivors have written to the Home Secretary saying 'The words we use have consequences. We know

this all too well’. (Source: the Mirror)
- Enver Solomon, head of Refugee Council, directs proposals to the Prime Minister on the asylum backlog and Channel crossings. (Source: Conservative Home)
- Independent Chief Inspector David Neal says government focus should be on speeding up asylum decision making. (Source: The Times)

- This op-ed states it is a ‘crisis by design, not of arrivals’. (Source: the Guardian)
- A poll has found that most have a negative view of people arriving via the Channel, and that people are more likely than a few months ago to see immigration as bad for the country. (Source: YouGov)
- This article explores the views of people living in Dover. (Source: the Guardian)

A parliamentary briefing on seasonal worker visas reiterates government policy of reducing dependence on workers from abroad. (Source: House of Commons Library)

Places of worship are among the community locations where immigration officials have been encouraging people with insecure immigration status to leave the UK. (Source: Independent)

Specific migrant groups

The Joint Committee on Human Rights is investigating the human rights of asylum seekers in the UK, including how this

relates to inadmissibility, Rwanda relocations, legal aid, accommodation support, the right to work, modern slavery and the Nationality and Borders Act 2022. The deadline for submissions of evidence to the inquiry is 15 December. (Source: UK Parliament)

Relating to the backlog in asylum decision-making:

- The Institute for Government published an ‘explainer’ piece on the asylum backlog,. (Source: Institute for Government)
- This briefing on recent removals activity also announces the rollout of a pilot to speed up asylum decision making through ‘streamlining and digitising the system’. (Source: Home Office)
- There are warnings about inexperienced new recruits making asylum decisions, amid new decision-making targets for caseowners. (Sources: the Guardian)
- Following criticism of the Home Office-funded helpline to offer advice and guidance to asylum seekers, Migrant Help issued a statement citing unforeseen pressures, and challenging circumstances, saying ‘we are not perfect, but we care deeply’. (Sources: the Guardian, Migrant Help).

On children and young people:

- A study on children and families with no recourse to public funds found that local councils are failing to protect children due to a focus on parental harm rather than the harm caused by factors such as poverty, immigration status or race. (Sources: Children and Society, Community Care)

- This parliamentary briefing criticises the situation of separated children being placed in hotels without proper access to the child protection system. (Source: Refugee Council)

A new International Education Commission is being launched for the higher education sector to promote policies to sustain international student pathways. People with refugee status planning to apply to university can find out about the student loan process on 17 November at this event with the Student Loan Company. (Sources: The Pie News, Student Action for Refugees)

Early analysis of the Census reveals that at 3.9 million, there are fewer EU nationals in England and Wales than expected. An NHS guide on improving health of Roma communities is aimed at health and social care professionals. (Sources: Migration Observatory, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities)

An inspection review praises the Hong Kong BNO visa route as efficient and ready to be scaled up if needed, though raises concerns about a large number of adult dependent relatives with unresolved cases due to a policy decision awaited regarding the high threshold for this group. The Foreign Secretary writes of government's 'unwavering support' for the Hong Kong community in the UK after the incident at the Chinese consulate in Manchester. (Sources: Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, UK Parliament)

On modern slavery:

- A resource to help councils mitigate modern slavery risks will be launched on 17 November, with an online attendance option. (Source: Shiva Foundation)
- There are concerns about the risk of people arriving on boats falling into the hands of traffickers immediately after arrival. (Source: The Times)
- In the imminent UN five-yearly review of UK human rights, it's anticipated that other countries will criticise how the UK has changed its approach to modern slavery. For example, the Nationality and Borders Act means victims potentially lose credibility for not reporting exploitation early. (Source: Anti-Slavery International)

Cohesion and integration

DNA evidence from the remains of people dating from the fifth and sixth centuries shows the diversity of ancient Britain after the Roman Empire, how quickly those of Scandinavian and northern European ancestry integrated with those of western British and Irish descent, as well as one girl found with 33% West African DNA. (Source: The Conversation)

These two short reader letters focus on the skills, talents and contributions that people seeking asylum bring to the UK. (Source: the Guardian)

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