Migration news roundup 9 January 2023



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Stories that inspired us this week

Nottingham Forest FC has adopted UNHCR shirts to show support for refugees for the rest of the 2022-23 season. (Source: FourFourTwo)

In another sport-related story, these photos show how cricket is helping young Syrians living in a Lebanese refugee camp to deal with trauma. (Source: the Guardian)

International news

The arrival of hundreds of migrants from Cuba prompted the closure of a national park in Florida; the Dry Tortugas National Park was temporarily closed after an estimated 300 migrants crossed over the New Year weekend. There is a focus now on President Biden's new plans to introduce a new humanitarian pathway to apply to enter the country legally, providing applicants have a financial sponsor in the US. (Sources: NPR, BBC)

Increasing numbers of Palestinian refugees are making fatal sea crossings towards Europe in search of a better life due to Israel's blockade of Gaza. (Source: Independent)

UK borders and migration policy

We previously reported on government plans for legislation making it harder for people arriving via irregular routes to claim asylum. Now laws to ‘stop small boats’ feature as one of the five promises in a major speech from Prime Minister Rishi Sunak. Meanwhile a Home Office source apparently warned that measures to prevent people from Albania arriving in the UK wouldn’t reduce the overall number of crossings. (Sources: BBC, Sky)

The Home Secretary is expected to renege on a number of government promises that came out of the Windrush review. These include giving more powers to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration and the creation of a new migrant’s commissioner post. (Source: the Guardian)

In our previous roundup we shared a media report that government is changing the law to allow new arrivals to be detained in short-term processing centres for four days instead of 24 hours – you can see the formally amended legislation here. Meanwhile there are calls for a public inquiry into the problems at Manston processing centre. (Sources: The National Archives, the Guardian)

Only 3% of UK employers are using the graduate visa route while many report being unaware of its existence. The route was established to help resolve skill gaps in the UK labour market. (Source: The Pie News)

Specific migrant groups

To relieve pressure on the accommodation estate, a changed asylum accommodation policy means individuals granted Section 95 support who are already living in private accommodation in the community will be provided with financial support but not offered accommodation unless they make a further request. (Source: UK Visas and Immigration)

Charities are warning the lack of accommodation on offer has pressured some refugees to consider returning to Ukraine at the end of hosting placements under the Homes for Ukraine scheme. Thousands of people have been placed in hotels by councils responding to homelessness when sponsorships end. (Source: Independent)

In over 96% of reports of modern slavery offences, no charges are brought, according to this article that also features the work of South Yorkshire Police. (Source: inews)

The Home Office introduced a fixed-term funding pilot to incentivise councils to transfer more unaccompanied children to their area, with the aim of closing hotels currently accommodating unaccompanied asylum seeking children. The funding will cover the transfer of each child between 16 December 2022 to 28 February 2023. (Source: UK Visas and Immigration)

This article from Wales highlights the difference a safe home can make to young people fleeing persecution. Another story from Wales describes an ambulance crew welcoming young Ukrainian

refugees into their station and teaching them new skills. (Sources: Wales Online, Nation Cymru)

Cohesion and integration

Residents in rural North Somerset villages helped provide support when refugees were moved into a hotel outside Bristol Airport. Residents coordinated support such as providing service users with lifts into Bristol when they needed essential services, given the remote nature of their accommodation. (Source: Bristol Live)

Jess Thompson, Founder of Migrateful (an organisation where refugee cooks teach their traditional cuisines to the public in cookery classes), discusses the importance of projects bringing together people from different communities and backgrounds such as through shared experience of food. (Source: inews)

This article talks about the increasing number of people in the world learning Ukrainian, the methods they are using to do this and how learning a language reflects attitudes towards the conflict in Ukraine. (Source: the Guardian)

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