Migration news roundup 30 January 2023



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Stories that inspired us this week

Find out about ‘Ordinary people’ - the theme for Holocaust Memorial Day, remembering people who died in the Holocaust and in genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. There were debates in Westminster and an associated parliamentary briefing. (Sources: Holocaust Memorial Day Trust, House of Commons Library)

Read about the success of the ‘Buddy Box’ invented by a North Yorkshire veteran to help teach English to refugee children, and how this resource has gone global. (Source: BBC)

International news

The US government is inviting the public to sponsor refugees under a new community-led scheme where groups of at least five people can sponsor refugees if they raise enough money and can show how they plan to assist with post-arrival settlement. (Source: WSIU)

This article discusses the challenges faced by non-Ukrainian refugees and asylum seekers in Ukraine and other European countries after Russia’s invasion. Meanwhile in Sweden, a campaign to deter migration has been launched with the aim of dispelling perceptions of Sweden as an asylum destination

country with generous benefits. (Source: EU Observer, Euractiv)

UK borders and migration policy

The government is effectively reviving the hostile environment with its new taskforce which will ‘examine how to protect access to rented accommodation, bank accounts, healthcare, education, driving licences and public funds to only those eligible’. The initial focus will be on illegal employment. The news has prompted concern in some quarters, and 21 unions have pledged solidarity with migrant workers. Meanwhile here’s an example of someone struggling as Home Office delays in renewing her visa means she can’t prove her right to work. Also this week, researchers have concluded that Brexit is to blame for a 330,000 shortfall in the UK workforce. (Sources: Home Office, the Guardian, Independent)

The government may be planning on introducing new legislation in 2023 that could see removals to Rwanda enshrined in law, in an effort to limit human rights challenges based on breaches of the European Convention on Human Rights. A coalition of charities have also published some figures revealing that many asylum seekers earmarked for removal to Rwanda had spouses and children, countering claims from the previous Home Secretary Priti Patel that the scheme would target single men ‘elbowing out the women and children, who are at risk and fleeing persecution’. Immigration Minister Robert Jenrick told the women and equalities committee that families with children are facing removal to Rwanda. (Sources: Telegraph, Together With

Refugees, the Guardian)

On small boats, news of crossings have returned with large numbers attempting to cross in one day despite sub-zero temperatures. Border Force officials are forecasting that the number of crossings will double this year. If you want to learn more about policy development in response to Channel Crossings, have a look at this useful timeline (Sources: Daily Mail, Channel Crossings)

Finally, this article shares homelessness experiences of people with a migrant background. (Source: Byline Times)

Specific migrant groups

An article in the Guardian highlights the inadequate and inaccessible asylum helpline delivered by Migrant Help under the AIRE contract. Meanwhile, the Home Office published details of its £70m contract for asylum accommodation centres. (Source: the Guardian)

The government admitted this week that 200 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children have gone missing from their Home Office provided hotel accommodation, some of whom are believed to have been kidnapped by criminal networks. This includes one girl and at least 13 children under 16 years old. ECPAT UK and the Refugee Council have together written a letter to the Prime Minister signed by 100 charities from the children's and refugee sector, outlining their concerns and calling for an immediate end to the use of hotels for these children. (Sources:

The Guardian; ECPAT UK, The Refugee Council)

New research critiques the legal advice system for modern slavery survivors, recommending that free legal advice should be available. You can also read a blog by the researchers, which suggests that quality legal advice for people who have experiences of modern slavery should be holistic and encompassing complex and intersecting legal needs (Sources: British Institute of Comparative and International Law, Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre)

Just over 59% of Windrush compensation claims had a final decision to the end of December 2022. At her first formal meeting with the Windrush Cross-Government Working Group, the Home Secretary has reaffirmed her department's commitment to the Windrush generation. Despite this, she has dropped three (out of thirty) recommendations that were proposed by Wendy Williams in her Windrush lessons learned review and that were accepted by the previous home secretary Priti Patel. Braverman claimed that she would not implement changes that would increase independent scrutiny of the Home Office's immigration policies. (Sources: Home Office, Wiredgov, the Guardian)

The Department for Education has expressed concerns over Suella Braverman's plans to curtail the graduate visa as this would damage the UK's appeal to international students and pose a threat to the country's economic growth. (Sources: The Times, iNews)

Cohesion and integration

Watch this clip from Channel 4 News on difficulties of cultural integration for some Ukrainian arrivals adapting to life in the UK’s more diverse areas, highlighting pre-existing racial prejudice. (Source: Channel 4 News)

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