Migration news roundup 24 April 2023



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Stories that inspired us this week

The Refugee Council accepted a €10 million donation from a Spanish historian called Joaquín Romero Maura, which they say will allow them ’to make a big difference in the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum’. (Source: Civil Society)

Meet the refugee weightlifting team that will be participating in the 2023 World Weightlifting Championships. (Source: International Olympic Committee)

International news

There are growing concerns about the numbers of people fleeing Sudan as a result of the recent outbreak of conflict. Sudan itself hosts more than a million refugees from neighbouring countries. (Source: Al Jazeera)

A report by the United Nations concludes that money provided by the European Union to state entities in Libya has enabled crimes against humanity towards migrants. Meanwhile this piece argues that policies of outsourcing asylum to countries in Africa are likely to fail. (Sources: The Grayzone, The Conversation)

UK borders and migration policy

The government is expected to make an amendment to the Illegal Migration Bill which would enable the Home Secretary to ignore interim injunctions from the European Court of Human Rights. These ‘Rule 39 orders’ were used to prevent removals to Rwanda last year. This article argues that the new law will make it more likely that people arriving irregularly will ‘disappear’ rather than engage with the authorities. (Sources: BBC, Free Movement)

On the Rwanda scheme, some people previously threatened with removal have now been accepted into the asylum system. Meanwhile a poll for More in Common found that while 46% of respondents supported the Rwandan scheme, 34% thought it would reduce the number of people crossing the Channel. Finally, a Rwandan opposition politician has voiced concerns about the suitability of the country for the scheme. (Sources: Independent, Daily Mail, Mirror)

The latest figures show that just over 5,000 people have crossed the Channel in small boats so far this year compared with 6,300 at the same point in 2022. This article considers how smuggling gangs have capitalised on political developments in the UK to encourage people from Albania to take this route. Meanwhile the French and British authorities are investing in advanced detection systems to improve monitoring of the coastline. Finally, this article considers whether new ‘safe and legal routes’ could prevent small boat crossings. (Sources: Evening Standard, Mirror, Marine Link, Free Movement)

A Home Office training course has been encouraging staff to show greater empathy to people who are applying for visas or are seeking asylum by referring to them as ‘customers’, as opposed to ‘subjects’ or ‘cases’. (Source: the Guardian)

A Nigerian graduate who originally came to the UK on a highly-skilled migrant visa is now reliant on food banks to feed her family due to the cost of visa fees. Relatedly, this article considers how the cost-of-living crisis is affecting households on the 10 year route to settlement. (Sources: Metro, New Statesman)

Following a campaign, legal advice surgeries for people in immigration detention must now be delivered in person. (Source: Women for Refugee Women)

Specific migrant groups

The Home Office told the High Court that it expects to accommodate up to 140,000 people seeking asylum by the end of this year, declaring this a national emergency caused by rising small boats arrivals. The court accepted the Home Office’s position, overriding a council-led legal challenge against its plans to use a former RAF site in Essex. (Source: Financial Times)

Wales’ Basic Income pilot attracted criticism from the Prime Minister for including unaccompanied young people who seek asylum among its recipients. The scheme offers £1,600 a month to 18-year-olds leaving care, which the Welsh Government hopes will help those young people to ’rebuild their lives’.

(Source: BBC)

The guidance for the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) route has been updated. One of the main changes allows family members of a main applicant who passes away during the application process to continue with an application. (Source: Home Office)

This report suggests that the Windrush scheme, which is intended to help and support those whose lives have been affected by the 'Windrush scandal', has failed them and 'violated' their right to 'an effective remedy'. (Source: Human Rights Watch)

Cohesion and integration

This comment piece, following the release of the Evidence for Equality National Survey, explores the complexities of racism, and highlights that certain 'white' communities also experience racism, such as Gypsy, Traveller, Roma and Jewish people. (Source: the Guardian)

A journalist whose family owned slaves and who recently visited Grenada to make a formal apology, has called on King Charles to also apologise on behalf of the monarchy and the British government for historical links to slavery. (Source: the Guardian)

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