Migration news roundup 18 November 2024

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Content warning: this week's news roundup contains themes around suicide and death which some readers may find distressing.

Stories that inspired us this week

Hundreds of refugees will have the opportunity to take a highly regarded English language proficiency test free of charge. The IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test is widely accepted for education and work reasons. (Source: British Council)

Makomborero Haruzivishe, a Zimbabwean pro-democracy activist who fled his country to seek protection in the UK, has received a scholarship to study law and politics in Kent. (Source: Independent)

International news

Following the election of Donald Trump as the next US President, Canada’s immigration minister warned ‘not everyone is welcome’ as the country anticipates a rise in undocumented arrivals from the US. (Source: the Guardian)

To curb irregular migration, the Dutch government will implement border checks from 9 December. This comes after last month's announcement to send people seeking asylum whose applications are unsuccessful to Uganda. (Source: InfoMigrants)

UK borders and migration policy

Last year's increase in net migration to the UK was bigger than in any other developed economy, according to an annual report on global migration from the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). Relatedly, and tying in with a new documentary, this article explores why successive governments have failed to fulfil promises about reducing migration. (Sources: Independent, OECD, BBC)

As people continue to cross the Channel in small boats with some ending in tragedy, there's reportedly scepticism among some Home Office staff that the government's focus on tackling smuggling gangs will prevent people making this journey. A 'major supplier' of boats and engines was arrested after cooperation across UK, Dutch and Belgian police. This article recounts an investigative journalist's attempt to trace some of the key figures in the smuggling trade. (Sources: the Guardian, inews, BBC, Independent)

Campaigners have concerns about the use of artificial intelligence tools by the Home Office as part of enforcement decision-making. (Source: the Guardian)

This article reviews the new Paddington film through the lens of the UK migration system, concluding the Brown family must have helped meet the £1,630 cost of British citizenship. (Source: Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

On children and young people:

- government released this year's data on children looked after in England, which shows the number of unaccompanied children and young people in care that seek asylum (7,380) dropped slightly compared to previous reporting year. (Source: Department for Education)

- an inquest heard that a young Afghan who died last year on a motorway slip road had been upset after being assessed as an adult the day before. (Source: the Guardian)

- Research with young Syrians in Lebanon has identified a positive impact of therapy delivered through phones on young refugees' mental health which could contribute to supporting young people's mental health in humanitarian settings. (Source: BBC)

On asylum:

- Voluntary sector organisations that provide homeless support to refugees are said to be at capacity, a key finding from an annual data briefing on destitution and homelessness identifying that over 4,000 people couldn't be accommodated last year. (Source: NACCOM)

- In case you missed it, the Home Office released an overview of resources developed to support mental health and wellbeing, including an online course designed by Solace in our region. (Source: Home Office)

The Home Office launched the EUSS webchat using a digital assistant, as a way of asking questions about the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), particularly out of hours. There's another story of a family at risk of being deported while awaiting the outcome of their EUSS application. (Sources: UKVI, BBC)

The Home Office has introduced new measures to increase the proof-of-funds requirements for students applying for a study visa. This aims to reflect inflation and the high cost of living. (Source: Business Day)

A new report explores challenges faced by the migrants making up a third of the social care workforce; these relate to working hours, low pay, employment rights breaches, and visa conditions. It also shows nearly 200 care providers that have recently violated labour standards have been granted

sponsorship licences by the Home Office. (Source: Work Rights Centre)

On modern slavery:

- Latest statistics from the system for identifying and supporting modern slavery survivors, the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) show a record high in referrals (4,758) and the number of conclusive grounds decisions. The proportion of positive ‘reasonable grounds’ decisions is well below levels from before the Nationality and Borders Act came into force last year. (Source: Home Office)

- This report synthesises research findings from the past four years on the prevention of adult exploitation and trafficking. (Source: Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre)

Cohesion and integration

An academic article on the social networks of resettled refugees examines how relationships and networks of individuals on different schemes vary, concluding community sponsored refugees tend to develop broader networks than those supported by caseworkers. (Source: Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies)

Read the story of Waleed, director and founder of Yemen Land Ltd, how he left his home city of Aden and the challenges he

faced coming to and integrating in Britain. He also shared why he’s taken part in the new art exhibition Congregation. (Source: UNHCR)

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