Migration news roundup 13 November 2023



- Stories that inspired us this week
- International news
- UK borders and migration policy

- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration

Stories that inspired us this week

Congratulations to The University of Sheffield on becoming a ‘University of Sanctuary’. (Source: University of Sheffield)

Discover the story of Mohammed Salim who played for Celtic football club in 1936, making him the first footballer from Asia to play in Europe. (Source: Sky News)

Listen to ‘Voices of Hope’, a new podcast providing a safe and inclusive space for refugees and asylum seekers to share information, experiences and aspirations. (Source: Voices of Hope)

‘Heart of the Nation’, a touring exhibition shining a light on the stories of people who came to Britain to work in the NHS over the past 75 years is currently displayed at Trinity shopping centre in Leeds. (Source: The Yorkshire Press)

International news

France is reviewing and debating reforms to its immigration laws , focussing on labour shortages and increasing deportations. Meanwhile, like Austria, Germany is looking at ways to address their migration challenges, including the possibility of processing of asylum applications in a third country, similar to the UK’s Rwanda plan. (Sources: InfoMigrants, BBC)

The number of refugees arriving in Spain's Canary Islands has reached almost 32,000 during 2023, breaking the previous record of 31,678 in 2006. (Source: the Guardian)

Police in Serbia carried out a nationwide migration raid, arresting and detaining over 4,500 people in a two week period. (Source: InfoMigrants)

The Refugee Council in Australia called for an urgent review of indefinite immigration detention cases, after the High Court determined indefinite detention is unconstitutional. (Source: Refugee Council of Australia)

UK borders and migration policy

This article looks at the UK government's approach to facilitating the evacuation of British citizens from Gaza and asks whether help will be provided for their non-British family members. (Source: Free Movement)

An accident investigation report has been published nearly two years after the 2021 tragedy in which at least 27 people drowned when their dinghy sank in the English Channel. Several factors that hindered rescue efforts have been identified. Following the report, an independent inquiry has been ordered by the government and concerns have been raised about the prioritisation given to calls from boats in distress in the run up to the disaster. (Sources: Marine Accident Investigation Branch, BBC, the Guardian)

Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, called for a 'data-sharing firewall' after finding that in the three-year period to March 2023, 537 domestic abuse victims had their immigration status checked by police. There are concerns a fear of being reported to immigration enforcement might deter domestic abuse victims from seeking help. (Source: BBC)

Specific migrant groups

On asylum and destitution, this article is about refugee families in the UK facing destitution. Meanwhile, Newcastle Council is calling on the government to change its policy on asylum processing to avoid increasing homelessness. (Sources: Big Issue, Newcastle City Council)

There's been a relaunch of the 'Unseen' app, to help identify signs of modern slavery and report concerns. (Source: Unseen)

On children and young people:

- According to Home Office data, since 2020 over 7,500 unaccompanied children have waited longer than a year for an initial decision on their asylum claim, with 57 of those waiting longer than five years. (Source: InfoMigrants)
- Refugee Council highlights discrepancies in Home Office data around age disputed young people, as official data omits the hundreds of cases of children being wrongly assessed as adults by border officials. (Source: the Guardian)

- Councillors in Falkirk highlight a lack of Home Office funding to care for vulnerable unaccompanied children, as Falkirk Council claims it faces a shortfall of over £400,000 to care for them. (Source: Daily Record)

The Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) has updated the EUSS adviser guidance including a section relating to late applications following changes in August. The guidance now states OISC Level 1 EUSS advisors should refer cases on 'where a person's late application is unlikely to be classified as meeting the "reasonable grounds" threshold'. (Source: OISC)

Cohesion and integration

In honour of Remembrance Sunday, a list of recommended novels looking at war commemoration and displacement has been produced. It includes 'Summer' by Ali Smith, which juxtaposes life in lockdown with the life of a young German-British Jew who was detained in an Isle of Man internment camp during the second world war, and 'Small Island' by Andrea Levy, which follows four protagonists, two British and two Jamaican, through the second world war and the post-war Windrush moment. (Source: The Conversation)

More than half of people in the UK think politicians are using so-called 'culture wars' to distract from other issues, according to a new survey. 62% of those polled thought politicians 'invent or exaggerate' culture wars as a political tactic, up from less than 44% three years ago. (Source: Kings College London)

King Charles has been reported as saying he wants refugees to feel more welcome in Britain, at a recent Disasters Emergency Committee event. (Source: Telegraph and Argus)

The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) is offering up to £500,000 funding in 2024 to support projects which focus on bringing communities together to commemorate, educate and celebrate the 'Windrush Generation' and their descendants. (Source: DLUHC)

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