

Migration news roundup 27 November 2023

Image
View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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Stories that inspired us this week

Three [Ukrainian teenagers won this year's International Children's Peace Prize](#) for developing two apps to support young refugees: 'Reftee' supports young children fleeing on their own and 'Svity' connects teenage refugees with peers from host communities to help them settle in. (Source: Kids Rights)

['Mother Tongue Other Tongue' is an anthology of poems written by children and young people in Leeds](#). The young poets could write in a language they already speak or have a go at writing in a language they are learning. (Source: Storyblok)

A festive date for your diary: you can join [the first women's Football Club of Sanctuary in the UK in Leeds](#) celebrating on 3 December, with entertainment from 'Britain's Sanctuary Got Talent'. (Source: LinkedIn)

International news

Outside the EU:

- [Over 500 Rohingya refugees from Myanmar arrived in Indonesia](#) on a single day, having travelled by boat. (Source: Reuters)
 - [At least 300,000 Afghans have left Pakistan](#) since 1 November, the deadline imposed on 1.7 million undocumented people to leave, in a policy widely supported by locals. (Source: Al Jazeera)

In Europe:

- [Local authorities in the Italian Emilia Romagna region agreed to host and support unaccompanied migrant minors](#) through a distribution mechanism. However, this five minute video about young migrants in Sicily describes how [Italy issued a new decree with tougher measures on unaccompanied minors](#) including housing in adult accommodation and use of x-rays to assess their age. (Source: InfoMigrants)
- [Estonia blamed Russia for record numbers of migrants at its borders](#) which it considers 'a hybrid attack operation' on European borders, after 75 people attempted crossing in few days. (Source: the Guardian)

UK borders and migration policy

[Net migration was estimated at 672,000 for the year ending June 2023](#) indicating slowing immigration and rising emigration. While the main driver of non-EU immigration is study, immigration for work increased and people arriving through humanitarian routes decreased. Higher revised estimates of 745,000 for 2022 mean a new record high in net migration, with [associated commentary about whether there's been a subsequent downward trend](#). The [Prime Minister is reportedly considering measures to curb the numbers](#) such as restricting the number of relatives that health and care visa holders can bring with them. (Sources: Office for National Statistics, Migration Observatory, Independent)

Key points from the [Home Office quarterly migration statistics](#) for the year ending September 2023, with [a separate publication on 'irregular' arrivals](#), include:

- Over twice as many health and care skilled worker visas were issued (compared to the previous 12 months) with India, Nigeria and Zimbabwe the top nationalities.
- Family-related visas issued more than doubled, but family migration remains a much smaller group compared to workers and students.
- [The number of people arriving via small boats so far this year is lower than the equivalent period in 2022](#) - commentators noted this is due to a major fall in Albanian arrivals rather than other nationalities.
- Little change in the number of asylum claims at just over 75,000. Top nationalities are Afghan, Iranian, Albanian and Indian. An increase in decisions means the 'legacy backlog' (pre-28 June 2022) has fallen but 'flow asylum cases' have increased, with over 125,000 cases awaiting an initial decision. There has been a fourfold increase in applications treated as withdrawn.
- The number of forced removals was just over 5,500, an increase of 54%, with Albanians accounting for about half of the additional numbers. There were over 17,300 voluntary returns.

(Sources: Home Office, Free Movement)

Following the Supreme Court ruling the Rwanda plan is unlawful, the Prime Minister is apparently exploring the [possibility of blocking the Human Rights Act in new legislation](#) to enable the scheme to go ahead. (Source: the Guardian)

[This article recommends the introduction of a 'Single Enforcement Body' to address labour exploitation.](#)
(Source: Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

As latest statistics confirm [the highest number of people since 2002 were granted refugee status](#) through the asylum system (over 38,000 in the year ending September 2023) there's [continuing reporting about subsequent homelessness](#) and [this eight minute video shows what's happening in a refugee support charity](#) in Liverpool. (Sources: Home Office, Sky News, the Guardian)

New research says [Ukrainians are four times more likely than UK nationals to become homeless](#) due to factors including host-guest relationship breakdowns under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme and a lack of rental deposits and guarantors. (Source: Herriot Watt University)

[New research found that Hongkongers are settling in well overall but some need further support](#) to improve their English and access meaningful employment matching their skills. The latest statistics show [a steady rate of British National Overseas \(BNO\) visa applications at around 10,000 per quarter](#). (Sources: British Future, Home Office)

On children and young people:

- [Parliament is in the legal process of approving the use of x-rays and MRI scans to assess the age of young people](#) whose age is disputed. (Source: Free Movement)
- Following publication of annual data on looked after children, this article provides a [breakdown of key changes with unaccompanied children in care over the last two years](#). It shows a 110% increase in the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children accommodated in unregulated settings. (Source: Community Care)

Research with over 2,000 international students suggests [how the UK higher education sector could support international students to understand how technology is used in their course](#) in order to avoid ‘digital shock’ and isolation. (Source: The Pie News)

Cohesion and integration

Unite Through Football, [a project by the Surrey Football Association to enable refugees to play football](#) across south-east England, has been relaunched. Over 200 players from 35 countries took part last year. (Source: BBC)

Contact us about research

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