Migration news roundup week commencing 09 November 2026



This Migration News Roundup presents a selection of news, policy, research and statistics from the previous week on

migration-related topics. The contents of each story do not necessarily reflect the views of Migration Yorkshire.

- UK borders and migration policy
- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration
- International news
- Stories that inspired us this week

UK borders and migration policy

The government published the findings from the consultation on its ‘earned settlement’ proposals (also known as Indefinite Leave to Remain or ILR) and announced final policy decisions. This Home Office news story summarised the key points. (Source: Home Office)

- The standard waiting period will double from five to ten years, as proposed, before a person can apply for ILR.
- The most discussed element in the media concerned health and care workers who assisted in the UK recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. In a change to the original proposals (under which they faced a 15 year wait) some migrant care workers will still be able to apply for ILR after 5 years. However, those earning less than £25,000 or who joined the Health and Care Worker route after May 2025 must wait at least 10 years.
- Highest earners will only wait 3 years, higher earners (at least £50,271) and other public sector workers will qualify after 5 years.

- There are different rules for people who are refugees. People who arrived by small boat could face up to a 30 year wait before they can apply for settlement, some refugees on a study or work route will be able to settle after 10 years, while (in a change from the initial proposal) those arriving on refugee resettlement schemes can still apply after 5 years.
- Hong Kong BN(O) visa holders are largely excluded from the settlement reforms. (Source: Harrogate Informer)

This article offers an independent overview of the changes and what they mean for different migrant groups. This updated parliamentary briefing explains the changes in more detail, including transitional arrangements, and highlights which proposals have been dropped - including one to allow people with volunteering experience to apply for settlement earlier after charities had raised a number of concerns. Changes will happen during 2027. (Sources: BBC, House of Commons Library, Civil Society)

There's been widespread critique of the updated policy; an immigration lawyer argues it's misleading to describe settlement as 'automatic' under current rules citing high fees and other requirements, academics have commented on the potential impacts on poverty and integration. Skilled workers describe the worry and uncertainty caused by the changes and the refugee author of this article says the strict new conditions won't deter people from seeking safety in the UK but will increase vulnerability and stall integration. (Sources: Sonia Lenegan via Substack, COMPAS, inews, the Guardian)

Finally in relation to ILR, new analysis suggests skilled migrant workers and their adult dependants will be net contributors of £115 billion to the UK economy over their lifetimes. (Source: IPPR)

The government is considering using live facial recognition technology in public spaces, as part of immigration enforcement. As well as concerns over mass surveillance, civil liberty campaigners have expressed concerns about accuracy and racism, since the technology has been accused of misidentifying non-white faces. (Source: The Northern Echo)

The UK government is still removing individuals who were already detained under the ‘one in, one out’ agreement with France, although the scheme formally ended last month. There’s also been a gap of three weeks with no small boat crossings from France, which have now resumed. (Source: the Guardian)

This article explains the habitual residence test and how it affects eligibility for housing and homelessness assistance. (Source: Chartered Institute of Housing)

Specific migrant groups

In North Yorkshire campaigning continues against RAF Linton-on Ouse as asylum accommodation, with local people claiming the site would triple the number of adults living in the village. Home Office ministers have argued that the site is 'self-contained and away from the community.' (Source: The Northern Echo)

A parliamentary briefing on the refugee family reunion route, suspended over a year ago, explains the rationale for the closure, considers possible policy developments, and sets the UK approach in the context of international law. An announcement about future policy is expected in early 2027. (Source: House of Commons Library)

News about international students includes:

- This article discusses the government decision to return the Graduate Visa back to two years instead of 18 months, if a graduate comes from a university with good employment outcomes. Another analysis concludes there's a paradox that those who are more likely to be eligible for a Graduate Visa could have the least intention to seek one. (Sources: The PIE, Wonkhe)
- This article reflects on the earned settlement policy changes in relation to international researchers. It concludes stricter rules will have a negative effect on international colleagues and their families, particularly those not on high salaries. (Source: Research Agenda)
- More broadly this article reflects more broadly on government direction in relation to universities and international students. (Source: Wonkhe)

The annual Subedi Essay Prize is looking for the ‘best original essay in English on the abolition of modern forms of slavery or the protection of human dignity’. The entry deadline is 31 December. (Source: University of Hull)

Cohesion and integration

Hertfordshire County Council has rejected a move to reconsider seeking Council of Sanctuary status. (Source: BBC)

A new GCSE in Ukrainian is being developed after the UK government apologised to Ukrainian students who were advised to study Russian in schools, in the absence of a qualification in their own language. (Source: the Guardian)

A new documentary, Allies in Exile, tells the story of Syrian filmmakers Hasan and Fadi's fourteen-year friendship, navigating conflict in Aleppo, displacement from Syria and experiencing the UK asylum system. (Source: BBC, 39 minutes)

International news

As candidates with migrant backgrounds made gains in the US midterm elections, attention may shift to US immigration policy; this article outlines five ways the midterm election results could affect immigration in the coming years. (Sources: BBC, The Washington Post)

Rescue organisation Sea-Watch reported 2026 as the most violent year in a decade for migrants and rescue crews in the central Mediterranean, documenting 26 incidents involving shootings, assaults, intimidation and other forms of violence, the majority attributed to the Libyan coastguard. (Source: InfoMigrants)

Stories that inspired us this week

A group of volunteers took medical supplies from the University of Sunderland to Lviv, returning on public transport so they could leave their vehicle in Ukraine. (Source: The Northern Echo)

Laila Sardar from Afghanistan says studying changed her life; she's a finalist in adult learning awards in London and works to support vulnerable people in health and social care. (Source: FE Week)

Sign up to make a Christmas wreath in Sheffield, and you'll also be raising funds for Hope English School, a charity providing English language support and digital skills to refugees. (Source: The Star)

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