Migration news roundup 14 April 2025



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
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UK borders and migration policy

Following news that government has delayed a ‘blueprint’ on immigration (a white paper) likely now to be launched after local elections, an independent thinktank makes the case for government to develop an annual migration plan to avoid ‘kneejerk’ changes. In the context of the anticipated white paper concerns have been raised about skilled visa shortages in key sectors, against a backdrop of scam recruitment agencies, particularly in the care sector. (Sources: The Standard, Institute for Government, BBC)

In case you missed it: government released two reports: an evaluation of 'the compliant' environment during 2021-2023 covering six key restrictions affecting people without a legal migration status, and a further report relating to one of those key restrictions: employer awareness of, and compliance with,

Right to Work checks. The latter identifies employers at greater risk of not complying include small businesses, those using agency or zero hours workers, and the construction industry. (Source: Home Office)

The lack of good quality immigration legal aid is a significant ongoing issue. This report highlights the problems and calls for an overhaul of the current system, a significant injection of funding and a simplified immigration system individuals can navigate without such reliance on legal aid services. (Source: Migrants Organise)

Specific migrant groups

The family of a 16-year-old Syrian boy have described an 'unimaginable emptiness' following his death by stabbing in Huddersfield. A 20-year-old man has been charged with murder. (Source: West Yorkshire Police)

News on the asylum system include:

- The Home Office will start processing asylum claims for people who had been earmarked for deportation to Rwanda . The announcement came just before a court hearing was due to hear a legal challenge about the processing of their claims in the UK. (Sources: Home Office, JCWI)

- The government is being sued by at least 250 people who were detained at Manston asylum centre in 2022, claiming they experienced breaches of human rights. As the Manston independent inquiry continues, several former Home Secretaries and former Prime Ministers have been named as people who may be called to give evidence. (Sources: the Guardian, BBC)

- This article on international development spending criticises government for continuing to allocate a proportion of foreign aid to domestic asylum accommodation, despite a significant cut to the overall aid budget. Although 'in-donor refugee costs' fell during the past year, they still contribute over 20% of aid spending. The article calls for local authorities to be given responsibility to house people seeking asylum. (Source: Bond)

- An Afghan woman, who risked her life to defend human rights in Afghanistan, has been refused asylum as the Home Office believes it's safe for her to return. Previously, claims from Afghan women in roles like Mina were generally accepted, but grant rates are falling for Afghan asylum claims and 26 Afghan women had their claims refused in the last quarter of 2024. (Source: the Guardian)

On modern slavery:

- Albania, among others, is sometimes thought of as a ‘safe country’. This article uses a case study to discuss the consequences of labelling a country as ‘safe’ in the context of modern slavey and the asylum system. (Source: Helen Bamber Foundation)

- Joy’s story highlights how a chance encounter in a London park was a first step to escaping modern slavery and how a church and local charity, ‘Kalayaan’ enabled her to build an independent life in the UK. (Source: Metro)

The number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children presenting at Northern Ireland’s health trusts has more than doubled in the last three years, with most children arriving through the Republic. (Source: Irish News)

To mark International Roma Day here in the UK we had the chance to learn more about Roma culture (take five minutes to watch this short piece) and among many events, the Roma community in Bradford shared storytelling, folk music, dancing and food. (Sources: BBC, Bradford 2025)

Cohesion and integration

136 organisations signed a collective statement calling on Keir Starmer to stop using anti-migration rhetoric following his remarks at the recent international people-smuggling summit. (Source: the Guardian)

A paper published in ‘Leisure Studies’ looks at how young refugees engage with leisure within their immigration experience. It draws on findings of a three-year project in London to co-develop a leisure-based, youth-led, social action programme. (Source: Taylor and Francis)

Read about the importance of integration support for Nehzat, a refugee from Iran who arrived in the UK in 2022 and lives in Wolverhampton. She’s been supported to overcome challenges and rebuild confidence, including access to language learning, volunteering and being reunited with her husband after months of separation. (Source: ACH)

International news

‘Barcelona or death’ is the phrase on the lips of many Senegalese men contemplating reaching Spain. This article looks at their perilous journeys and the emotional toll on families, especially the women left behind. It also highlights a frustration with youth unemployment, the dying fishing industry and the ‘illusion of a better future’ on social media. (Source: the Guardian)

A traditional flower casting ceremony was held in Strasbourg to mark International Roma Day, honouring the identity, resilience, and cultural heritage of Roma people. The flowing water represents the worldwide nature of collective challenges and unity, and the flowers symbolise hope and renewal. The event was part of the Council of Europe's Opre Roma! Month, featuring activities to celebrate Roma history, language, and cultural identity. (Source: Mirage.News)

Stories that inspired us this week

Bradford has been chosen as the site for a memorial dedicated to the Rohingya people to be unveiled this summer. Bradford was the first city in the UK to welcome Rohingya refugees, through the Gateway Protection Programme in 2008. (Source: Yorkshire Bylines)

And finally, continuing our ‘Roma International Day’ spotlight: Manchester’s Whitworth Gallery is hosting an exhibition to celebrate the ‘narrative-rich’ textile works of Roma-Polish Artist, Malgorzata Mirga-Tas. (Source: the Whitworth)

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