

Migration news roundup 24 March 2025

Image

View of Houses of Parliament from bridge over river Thames

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 National Audit Office (NAO) has criticised the Home Office for failing to assess the potential impact of making it easier to recruit care workers from overseas. Their report further says the department doesn't have a full understanding of how the Skilled Worker visa route is operating, and that 'the Home Office cannot be confident it is achieving value for money'. Meanwhile, anti-slavery commissioner Eleanor Lyons has attributed the exploitation of care workers to the poor design of the visa scheme, and called on the government to go further in addressing the issues.

Closer to home, Yorkshire International Recruitment Hub is seeking views and suggestions on how to strengthen support for migrant healthcare workers in our region. The survey is live until

Friday 4 April and they would like to hear from a variety of different organisations who are currently providing support to workers on Health and Social care visas. (Sources: NAO, the Guardian, Leeds City Council)

Evidence from an expert witness at the Cranston inquiry into the 2021 tragedy when at least 27 people drowned while attempting to cross the Channel in a small boat, has led lawyers to suggest that more lives could have been saved if rescue efforts had continued for longer. (Source: the Guardian)

An Essex couple who were fined £1,500 after discovering and reporting a man concealed in their motorhome bike cover on their return from France, have now had their fine rescinded. (Source: BBC)

On the Border Security, Asylum and Immigration Bill, a new amendment means that people who have committed a crime but cannot be removed from the UK, could be subject to electronic tagging and curfews. The Joint Committee on Human Rights is conducting an inquiry to scrutinise the Bill, and is calling for evidence by 11 April. (Sources: BBC, UK Parliament)

A historian from India who has lived in the UK for 12 years is facing removal due to exceeding the number of days she is permitted to spend outside the UK; she visited India to study archive material as part of her research for the University of Oxford. (Source: the Guardian)

Specific migrant groups

The government was accused of prioritising quantity over quality of decision making as the number of people seeking asylum and awaiting appeals increased by almost 500% in the past two years. (Source: Refugee Council)

The Home Affairs Committee's inquiry into asylum accommodation began hearing evidence from experts from across the sector. The Red Cross submitted written evidence that it had to redistribute money from its disaster fund to provide clothing to people seeking asylum in the UK due to lack of appropriate statutory assistance. Meanwhile, the reality of life in an asylum accommodation is brought home as men living in a hotel in Yorkshire describe the daily challenges they face, including isolation and hostility from the local community. Further on asylum accommodation, following a High Court judgement that people seeking asylum were unlawfully housed at Wethersfield detention centre, there have been renewed calls for the base to be permanently shut down. While it remains to be seen whether that closure will happen, the Home Office has announced that from September 2025 it will no longer be using Napier Barracks as asylum accommodation. Both sites have been subject to allegations of unsatisfactory living conditions. (Sources: UK Parliament, the Guardian, The Independent)

A freedom of information reveals that 39 people believed to be children were housed at RAF Wethersfield, an accommodation site intended for adults who seek asylum. (Source: The I Paper)

A builder from Bradford has been given a suspended prison sentence for a health and safety breach following a tragedy in 2021 when a man seeking asylum died. The Iranian man had been offered casual work on a building site and fell from scaffolding. (Source: Yorkshire Post)

The government has confirmed the funding for the Hong Kong BN(O) Welcome Programme for 2025/26 financial year. Many of the elements of the programme remain as they were. The changes are around to eligibility for English classes and the funding for employment support, which has not been continued. In other news, Hong Kong Hub in Yorkshire and Humber is looking for Hongkongers to join Hong Kong Advisory Panel. The deadline for applications is Monday 7 April 2025. (Sources: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Migration Yorkshire)

Cohesion and integration

In Islington, London Borough of Sanctuary, a panel of 18 members from different places around the globe who have personal experience of seeking sanctuary in the UK, have been recruited to award £500,000 worth of grants intended to support new arrivals. (Source: the Guardian)

The annual 'State of Hate' report has been published, exploring far-right extremism in the UK. This year the focus was on the summer riots and the rise of Reform UK. Meanwhile, a recent poll has revealed two-thirds of people in Britain think that attitudes towards refugees are more negative today than they were 20 years ago, while 56% are in favour of supporting refugees to integrate into life in the UK. (Sources: Stop Hate, Refugee Council)

Two Conservative Councillors in Scotland have been criticized for spreading 'fear and division', after circulating an anti-asylum leaflet in Aberdeenshire. (Source: The National)

International news

The European Court of Justice has ruled that transgender refugees in Europe have the right to have their gender identity accurately reflected in asylum records without the need for gender reassignment surgery. This decision strengthens the rights of transgender individuals and ensures their gender identity is respected across the EU. (Source: Info Migrants)

This article discusses how high fertility rates and overall population growth historically led to increased emigration from Europe. They suggest that similar dynamics are still in play today, and that the ongoing global decrease in birth rates is expected to significantly alter migratory flow patterns. (Source: UCLA Anderson Review)

Stories that inspired us this week

Read about Saifullah, a young man from Afghanistan who told how a donated bike he received when he first arrived in South Yorkshire through Barnsley Refugee Bike Project, helped him regain his independence in the new environment. Saifullah now volunteers at the Bike Project scheme, helping others. (Source: BBC)

Young children from Ukraine are being offered 'Forest School' sessions in Cornwall. The aim of the initiative is to provide a welcoming environment, encourage resilience and build social bonds. (Source: The Packet)

Contact us about research

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