Migration news roundup week commencing 20 July 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

To facilitate the removal of the Rochdale gang leader to Pakistan, an amendment introduced to the Immigration Bill will allow deportation of Commonwealth citizens convicted of serious criminality such as terrorism, child sexual exploitation or human trafficking, loosening protections granted in 1971. Relatedly, incoming Prime Minister Andy Burnham voted to back the Bill at its second reading in the House of Commons.
(Sources: the Guardian, Novara Media)

The Home Office plans to keep removing potential trafficking victims to France despite a court ruling that says it should reconsider negative trafficking decisions for them.

(Source: Medical Justice)

Specific migrant groups

In relation to new large asylum accommodation sites recently announced:

- There's cross-party support as North Yorkshire Council writes to the asylum minister to oppose the use of the former RAF site at Linton-on-Ouse as asylum accommodation, on the grounds that it's 'not the right location'. (Source: Darlington and Stockton Times)
- We gain some insight into how the suitability of sites is assessed and the performance management of providers in correspondence published between a parliamentary committee and the asylum minister Alex Norris. (Source: Home Affairs Committee)
- The Suffolk site RAF Barnham is facing some unusual local resistance due to a protected bird, the stone-curlew, nesting in the surrounding area. (Source: BBC)

This article describes some context behind new legal challenges to the policy priority to close asylum hotels. The argument is that the vulnerabilities of the individuals directly affected weren't considered, from medical needs to young people taking exams. (Source: the Guardian)

A new data briefing looks at the main characteristics of people claiming asylum in the UK and the asylum system overall. (Source: Migration Observatory)

The Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTG) service for child victims of modern slavery (including unaccompanied asylum seeking children) will be expanded to cover all councils in England and Wales. It began as a pilot over 10 years ago to provide independent advocacy and support. The service is delivered by Barnardo's and funded by the Home Office. (Source: Barnardo's)

A legal challenge was unsuccessful in questioning the legality of the suspension of the refugee family reunion route. The Refugee Council estimates over 16,000 family members have been unable to join their refugee sponsor since the suspension in September 2025, although the Home Office said the scale of the scheme had been small. (Sources: Free Movement, the Guardian)

This article explains the process and options available to care workerswhere their sponsor loses its Home Office licence, while this guide for employers outlines changes to right to work checks coming in October. (Source: Free Movement)

This data publication provides an overview of migration from Hong Kong under the BN(O) visa route, including characteristics of people who arrived, economic outcomes, and satisfaction with life here. (Source: Migration Observatory)

News on international students includes:

- Government confirmed the proposed international student levy will go ahead as planned following a recent

consultation. English universities must pay £925 per international student registered each year (beyond their first 220 students) from 2028/9. (Source: Department for Education)

- Data indicates the biggest change in international student acceptances at UK universities is a fall in students from Pakistan then India to study this autumn. (Source: The PIE)
- Private schools in the UK are experiencing a decline in international pupils, likely due to the introduction of VAT on their fees. (Source: Icef monitor)

Cohesion and integration

South Yorkshire Police has closed its investigation into civil unrest in summer 2024, with the last of 120 convictions. Relatedly, councillors in Manchester are asking officers to develop plans for setting up 'exclusion zones' to stop demonstrations outside asylum hotels and to protect residents, staff and the public. (Sources: BBC, Manchester Evening News)

The courts have sided with government on a policy concerning 'good character' in place since 2025 - that refugees face an obstacle to citizenship if they entered the UK through an irregular route. (Source: Free Movement)

Refugee and environmental charities are working together to provide opportunities for people in the asylum system to volunteer with local environment programmes in Wales. The programme is expanding to places such as Sheffield. (Source:

the Guardian)

International news

A global survey found support for protecting refugees remains stable worldwide, with two thirds of respondents agreeing people should be able to take refuge in another country to escape war or persecution - and a higher figure for UK respondents. Views are mixed on the details such as how refugee systems operate and how far integration has worked. (Source: Ipsos)

A deep dive documentary explores the reasons behind mass deportation of Afghans from Pakistan. (Source: Al Jazeera, 28 minutes)

More than 500 Rohingya asylum seekers are feared dead after two overcrowded boats that left Myanmar in June disappeared at sea. The article gives background to the desperate choice to get on a boat. (Source: BBC)

Stories that inspired us this week

‘This is what community looks like,’ was the call during a community march in Southampton in support of refugees and people seeking asylum, marking 75 years since the UN Refugee Convention. (Source: In Common)

This article shines a light on entrepreneurial refugees who are turning their passion for food into thriving small businesses in the UK. (Source: The Times)

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