Migration news roundup 05 May 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
- International news
- Stories that inspired us this week

UK borders and migration policy

A reciprocal EU-UK youth mobility scheme seems more likely with EU leaders willing to consider visas limited to 12 months. This overview describes the existing UK Youth Mobility visa currently available to young people from just 13 non-EU countries for two years. (Sources: the Guardian, Free Movement)

More than 10,000 people have arrived on small boats so far this year, a number not previously reached this early in the year. The Home Secretary attributed the numbers to favourable weather conditions and announced French police will take more action to prevent crossings when boats are already in the water. (Source the Standard)

Against the backdrop of local elections, the Prime Minister and Reform UK leader clashed in the House of Commons over migration with Farage calling for government to declare a ‘national emergency’, referring in particular to the costs of asylum accommodation and ‘alien’ cultures. This article

considers how far Labour's migration policies are influenced by concerns about support for Reform UK. (Sources: the Standard, the Guardian)

Specific migrant groups

Government announced several asylum and migration policy developments:

- A target for legal tribunals to decide asylum appeals in 24 weeks of those in accommodation support (the average is nearly 50) to reduce hotel use.
- Rolling out AI for asylum decision makers by providing access to country advice and summarising interview transcripts. An evaluation of pilots using AI as an aid in the asylum decision making process found it makes the process faster with no impact on the quality of decisions. (Source: Home Office)
- Tougher measures against unregistered immigration advisers with fines of up to £15,000 and the power to immediately suspend people suspected of giving advice fraudulently. This article describes the impact of insufficient numbers of lawyers to support the growing number of asylum appeals, leaving people to navigate their own way through the system.

- Preventing individuals being granted refugee status if they’re convicted of a crime qualifying them for the sex offenders register. Relatedly, when the Home Secretary was asked about whether sex offenders will be able to use Article 8 of the ECHR (the right to family and private life) to appeal a deportation, she advised government is reviewing the application of Article 8 to immigration cases.

(Sources: Home Office, Big Issue, the Standard)

On the asylum support system, this briefing on asylum accommodation trends tells the story of change over the past decade including a more even distribution of asylum housing between council areas and moves away from hotels and large sites. A move towards using the private rented sector further is suggested by housing contractor Serco offering landlords five year deals to house asylum seekers. (Sources: Migration Observatory, inews)

This report recommends measures to prevent the exploitation of people on UK work visas, based on policy and practice from six countries. The authors want an end to the employer-sponsorship system but also support reforms such as a Workplace Justice visa, a longer grace period to find another sponsor, and stronger penalties for rogue employers. (Source: Work Rights Centre)

Cohesion and integration

This research article looks at how the experience of resettlement affects family dynamics and parenting practices for Syrian families in the UK. It explores the challenges of culture shock and obstacles to integration, and how this is reflected in maintaining cultural values and parental authority in a new environment. (Source: Human Organization, Taylor & Francis)

A university roundtable discussion on how to improve support for students from asylum seeker and refugee backgrounds included developing an action plan for improving post-admission support. (Source: University of Westminster)

Legacies of Windrush in Cambridge is an exhibition displayed in the city's museum that captures experiences and special moments through oral histories as retold by local Caribbean elders. (Source: Museum of Cambridge)

International news

UN agencies are implementing significant job cuts and operational reductions due to sharp declines in US funding. The World Food Programme expects a 30% staff reduction, while UNHCR is closing offices in some countries, describing a 'devastating' impact on refugees' lives and on the provision of necessities such as clean water. (Source: AP news)

Germany's incoming government plans to enforce stricter border controls from 6 May to reduce asylum applications through more

identity checks at the border to identify asylum seekers who didn’t make their claim where they first entered the EU, and coordinate returns with neighbouring countries. (Source: Infomigrants)

Stories that inspired us this week

Fahd Saleh, who was a professional goalkeeper in Syria, is now coaching the England under 15 national team (he’s also goalkeeper coach for youth teams at Sheffield United). He shares his excitement as he’ll join the team at the Vlatko Marković International Tournament in Croatia soon. More sporting success was shown on breakfast tv with the foster parents of Adnan, a cricketer from Afghanistan making the Lancashire Second XI. (Source: BBC)

Shervin and Ghazal, two young artists who fled Iran, have opened an exhibition in St Albans. The artists showcase their Persian cultural heritage and Iranian community experiences. (Source: The Herts Advertiser)

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