

Migration news roundup week commencing 01 Sept 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.

Content warning: this week's news roundup contains themes around the death of young people in care which some readers may find distressing.

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UK borders and migration policy

[The release of the immigration statistics](#) for the year ending June 2026 shows that [the figures are falling for Channel crossings, asylum hotels, asylum claims and initial decisions, as well as work, study and family visas.](#) The Home Office said that [changes to the asylum system, such as reducing hotel use, has resulted in almost £1 billion of savings.](#) (Sources: Home Office, Free Movement, The London Economic)

[Enforced and voluntary returns are at their highest levels for a decade?](#) with almost 80,000 removals since the Labour government took power. [The Home Office has spent almost £40 million on the voluntary return scheme,](#) which pays people up to £3,000 to return to their country of origin. (Sources: Electronic Immigration Unit, The Independent)

There has been an [8% rise in applications for settlement](#), most through the EU Settlement Scheme but also due to specific groups, such as BN(O) visa holders, becoming eligible. Meanwhile, [315,000 people applied for citizenship](#), the highest number on record. (Sources: Home Office, Migration Observatory)

[Did you know that it costs £1,839 to become a British citizen?](#) This briefing shows how costs have changed over the years, estimating that the fee in 1975 was the equivalent of £376 today, taking inflationary increases into account. (Source: UK Parliament)

There are several small boat stories relating to enforcement.

- [The government announced that French police have prevented 185 Channel crossings](#) (4,300 migrants) in a four week period over the summer. (Source: BBC)
- Concurrently, [an increase in the use of violence by French police has been reported](#) when intercepting boats. (Source: the Guardian)
- [The number of National Crime Agency officers focused on people smuggling has more than doubled](#) to almost 800 since the start of last year. (Source: National Crime Agency)
- [A 19 year old South Sudanese man has pleaded guilty to endangering others during a sea crossing](#), after piloting a dinghy in July carrying 165 people. (Source: BBC)

The government's [decision to reduce refugee protection from 5 to 2.5 years is facing a legal challenge](#) after concerns were raised about the policy's rushed introduction without an adequate impact assessment. (Source: Electronic Immigration Network)

Specific migrant groups

[New country guidance on Albanian victims of trafficking](#) has been published following a successful legal challenge from a young man who was refused asylum on the ground that it was safe for him to return home. [The legal ruling may affect future deportations to Albania](#), which currently has the highest number of forced removals from the UK. (Sources: UKVI, the Guardian)

A parliamentary report highlights that [40 unaccompanied asylum seeking children are still missing after disappearing from Home Office run hotels](#) in 2023. Meanwhile, a second [report investigating the deaths of young care leavers in England](#), including young people seeking asylum and refugees, [found that the death rate among this group was three to four times higher than among the general population](#), with a drop off in support for post-18s leading to isolation and increased vulnerability. (Sources: the Guardian, Department for Education)

Since the introduction of the BN(O) visa in January 2021, [almost 40,000 Hongkongers and their family members have now been granted settlement in the UK](#). However, despite achieving permanent residency, [the Hong Kong authorities continue to block BN\(O\) visa holders from accessing their pension funds](#). (Sources: Home Office, Hong Kong Watch)

[A woman with settled status in the UK was initially refused permission to board her flight home from Spain](#), due to a 'known issue' with the eVisa system whereby her digital status became confused with her twin sister's. (Source: the Guardian)

[Falling student visa grants, down 11% on the previous year, led to continued concern from universities about reduced income from international student fees](#), with Universities UK highlighting the negative consequences for UK students, communities and the UK economy. [China and India remain the top nationalities of study visas granted, but are both falling, while there was a noticeable reduction in visas for students from Pakistan](#). (Sources: Research Professional, Home Office)

Cohesion and integration

Residents living near Wethersfield, a former airbase in Essex have? [refuted claims made by a local Reform councillor that the site is a 'holiday camp' for people seeking asylum living there](#), with some complaining that the village had been weaponised by the far right. (Source: BBC)

Birmingham City Council is? [seeking an injunction to stop St George's flags and Union Jacks being erected on public infrastructure](#).?The council said it was pursuing legal action following incidents of harassment and obstruction of staff who were tasked with removing them. (Source: The Guardian)

Rights groups, particularly those supporting refugee women, have? [condemned the rhetoric used in the government's newly issued behavioural guides for people seeking asylum](#).?They are concerned that the information characterises people seeking asylum as perpetrators while marginalising victims, and providing inadequate information around support services. (Source: Asylum Matters)

International news

[Suad Mooge's selection as the Rose of Tralee prompted both widespread support and a surge of online criticism from people questioning whether someone of Somali heritage could represent modern Ireland](#).?Despite this, she used the experience to celebrate her dual identity and advocate for a more inclusive vision of Ireland. (Source: the Guardian)

[Mexicans deported from the US under the government's immigration crackdown are finding support and a sense of belonging in Mexico City's 'Little LA'](#), a neighbourhood where many returnees are rebuilding lives in a country that can feel unfamiliar despite being their homeland. (Source: the Guardian)

Ahead of a state election in Magdeburg, Germany, [around 150 immigrant-owned businesses temporarily closed in a 'Migra-Strike' protest](#) to highlight the potential impact of the AfD party's proposed anti-immigration policies. (Source: InfoMigrants)

Stories that inspired us this week

Exhibitions around the country during September include ['Pieces of Me' which tells stories of members of Refugee Roots](#) at the National Justice Museum in Nottingham, and [contemporary Ukrainian art from women in the North West](#) on display in Kendal. (Sources: Left Lion, The Westmorland Gazette)

[Lord Dubs' memoir, The Boy with the Knapsack](#), will be published this month. The title refers to everything he brought with him on the Kindertransport from Prague to safety in London in 1939. (Source: AOL)

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