Migration news roundup week commencing 26 January 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

For the first time, French police intercepted a small boat already in the water, a so-called 'taxi boat' thought to be on its way to collect passengers. This approach follows a UK-French agreement made last summer. This article reports on UK far-right activists harassing migrants in northern France.
Meanwhile, there were record levels of removing social media content related to smuggling last year. (Sources: BBC, the Guardian, National Crime Agency)

A report based on medical evidence concludes that the 'one in, one out' scheme is causing further harm to people already struggling with trauma related to experiences such as torture and trafficking. Meanwhile, a detained Iraqi man facing removal to France said he would try to return. (Sources: Medical Justice, Independent)

Also on immigration detention:

- Charity Rainbow Migration expressed concerns about a lack of protection for LGBT+ people in immigration detention. (Source: Byline Times)

- Concerns raised in an inspection of short term holding facilities in immigration reporting centres (including Waterside Court in Leeds and Vulcan House in Sheffield) include a lack of healthcare provision and inadequate consideration of a person's vulnerability in the decision to detain them. (Source: HM Inspectorate of Prisons)

Specific migrant groups

On the asylum system:

- After months of local protest and uncertainty, 27 people in the asylum system were moved into Crowborough barracks in East Sussex. The site is intended to house 540 people in total. (Source: Independent)

- An updated analysis of the UK asylum system describes it as 'overwhelmed' by mismanagement, with the appeals backlog being the most pressing problem. The briefing suggests the Home Office will struggle to cope with new demands generated by the government's asylum reform proposals. (Source: Free Movement)

- The government has responded to a Home Affairs Committee report that had highlighted leadership failure leading to spiralling costs of asylum accommodation. This led the committee chair to welcome improved contract management systems but said the Home Office still lacks a plan to end the use of hotels or improve safeguarding. (Source: Home Affairs Committee)

On children and young people:

- Young people who have been through the UK asylum system talk about the importance of access to education and how this impacts their prospects; the article includes the story of a young woman placed in an asylum hotel in Yorkshire. Relatedly, a Birmingham school describes how they support young refugees with an intensive English course and related activities prior to entering the mainstream system. (Source: ITV news)

- Research by a teacher in Lebanon shows supportive, high-quality education can transform the resilience and motivation of Syrian refugee students during conflict. (Source: The Northern Echo)

On modern slavery:

- The authors of this report argue that immigration legislation passed in recent years has negatively impacted efforts to identify and support victims. (Source: Unseen)

- This article outlines a recent legal case relating to the Home Office's refusal to grant temporary leave to remain to a modern slavery victim. The Home Office withdrew its refusal shortly before a court hearing challenging its approach. This could have implications for others in a similar position. (Source: Free Movement)

Cohesion and integration

A report about the response to the riots of 2024 by government and the courts examined a sample of legal cases of people who participated in the riots, finding official responses attempted to separate the riot's causes from

racism, Islamophobia and anti-migrant attitudes, and so failed to address underlying tensions while reinforcing negative attitudes around migration in policymaking. (Source: Institute of Race Relations)

The outgoing chief executive of the Refugee Council reflects on how the asylum and migration scene has changed since 2020, observing that a narrative shift caused hostility to rise and the far right to be emboldened. (Source: the Guardian)

International news

Following the discovery of mass graves and underground detention sites linked to human trafficking, emergency teams went to eastern Libya to support those who have been freed. (Source: International Organisation for Migration)

As border enforcement tightens, people with a refugee or migrant background in the US are increasingly considering moves to Canada. (Source: Global News)

Sweden is calling for an EU system to redocument Afghans and Syrians, to facilitate returns of people whose asylum claims have been refused or who have committed crimes. (Source: AP news)

Stories that inspired us this week

Giel Malual and John Kwai, two young Sudanese men reached the end of a 730-mile walk from Kent to Caithness to raise money to build a school for displaced children. Despite harsh winter conditions the two friends kept going to draw attention to the conflict in Sudan. (Sources: Go Fund Me, The Northern Times)

Prelude and Fugue on Louvaine, music inspired by the story of Belgian families who found sanctuary in Rhosllannerchrugog, Wales during World War 1, will be performed at the Bangor Music Festival next month. (Source: Nation Cymru)

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