Migration news roundup week commencing 27 April 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

Riot-trained police will be dispatched to coast of northern France , as part of a new three-year agreement between the UK and France aimed at preventing small boat Channel crossings, and a removal centre in Dunkirk should also be completed by the end of this year. Meanwhile, an Afghan man has become the first person to be convicted for the new offence of endangering another during a journey by sea. In January this year he piloted a dinghy that had to be rescued. (Source: BBC)

A parliamentary briefing on the ‘visa brake’ policy, that imposed a temporary ban on certain study and work visa applications for nationals of Afghanistan, Cameroon, Myanmar and Sudan, explains that these countries were selected because the number of asylum claims after arrival were greater than 15% of visas issued that year for that route. (Source: House of Commons

Library)

The Albanian ambassador to the UK accused politicians of scapegoating Albanians, with specific criticism of the Home Secretary's recent comments in Parliament linking the country to dangerous criminals. (Source: the Guardian)

Migrant care workers planned to leaflet tens of thousands of homes in the Ladywood area of Birmingham, Shabana Mahmood's constituency, raising their concerns about the earned settlement proposals. The leafleting is part of a wider union-led campaign for a fairer work visa system. Meanwhile, the Home Secretary swore as she responded to protests against changes to the immigration system (especially regarding routes to settlement), describing protesters as 'white and liberal'. (Sources: the Guardian, Unison)

This briefing argues that the design of some migration routes can result in irregular migration status, such as the Seasonal Worker Scheme. (Source: Focus on Labour Exploitation)

Specific migrant groups

News on asylum includes:

- In response to a government consultation, The Law Society strongly criticises the plans for a new independent body for asylum and immigration appeals to replace the current

First-tier Tribunal. The Society is concerned about the impact on justice, independence, and decision quality. Relatedly, a new data briefing on the asylum backlog reveals that a 79% increase in refusals during 2025 led to a doubling of the appeals backlog. (Sources: The Law Society, Migration Observatory)

- The company contracted to run the notorious Bibby Stockholm asylum barge overcharged the UK government by £118 million, and now is 'negotiating commercial arrangements' to repay the money. (Source: the Guardian)
- In response to reporting on immigration advisors encouraging individuals to make false asylum claims, these two articles explore the themes further. The first examines how a lack of accredited immigration legal advice is providing a space where criminal advisors can take advantage. The second highlights how LGBTQ+ asylum seekers can face scrutiny and disbelief when making their claims. (Source: The Conversation)

A research project has concluded that the Afghan resettlement schemes have saved thousands of lives and that while some people are still finding life in the UK difficult, young people especially are adapting well to their new environments. However, some families who have been approved for relocation to the UK are taking legal action over an apparent 'freeze' on relocations currently. (Sources: UCL, Independent)

On international students:

- Enrolment at UK universities by international students fell by nearly a third between January 2025 and 2026, particularly among those from South Asia, according to survey data from across nearly 50 universities. This comes in advance of restrictions upon universities to meet targets around visa, enrolment and completion rates in a traffic light system that could further reduce numbers in future. (Source: BUILA)
- There's evidence that international students from South Asia may be less interested in studying in the UK and more likely to choose Asian destinations, due to a waning interest in Western culture and cost factors. (Source: The Pie News)
- The Russell Group of 24 universities issued an updated data briefing on international students, highlighting that the UK remains the second most popular destination for international students, despite falling trends. It features a case study about food production from students in Sheffield. (Source: Russell Group)

Cohesion and integration

A church in York that hosts Ukrainian groups and a refugee-led pop-up restaurant, has undergone a renovation, part-funded by the Mayor's Community Buildings Programme.' (Source: Yorkshire Post)

International news

Nearly 8,000 people died or disappeared on global migration routes during 2025, with European sea routes most deadly, according to the International Organization for Migration. (Source: Al Jazeera)

There's been a marked increase in rejection rates for Syrian asylum claims across Europe including for minority groups. (Source: Global Banking and Finance Review)

The EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) relaunched its migration bulletin in preparation for the implementation of the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum in June 2026. Meanwhile, the highest number of immigrants living in the EU on record was documented in 2025 at just over 64 million people. (Sources: FRA, Reuters)

Stories that inspired us this week

Hat shop entrepreneur Anil (and refugee resettlement programme lead in his day job) recalls the impact of an act of kindness on his first day in the UK after fleeing Afghanistan, and how an interest-free loan made all the difference in getting his business idea off the ground. (Source: UNHCR UK)

Asmarina Voices, an informal choir at Leeds Playhouse for women who are refugees or seeking asylum, performed at Leeds Bus Station recently having helped to design a specially

decorated piano for the Leeds Piano Trail. (Source: Ilkley Gazette)

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