Migration news roundup week commencing 21 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.

- UK borders and migration policy
- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration
- International news
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UK borders and migration policy

Concerns have been raised about the 'one in, one out' scheme with NGOs reporting that hundreds of people, including some age-disputed young people, have lost contact with the authorities after being returned to France. The medical organisation commissioned to care for people seeking asylum following their return to France has reported that some individuals arrived with injuries apparently sustained while in UK detention, and has also documented cases of psychological distress. The scheme has returned around 1,400 people since September 2025 at a cost of approximately £56,000 per person returned. It's due to end on 1 October, and it remains unclear whether it will be replaced by a similar arrangement; France is reportedly seeking a broader agreement involving the rest of the EU. (Source: the Guardian)

Meanwhile, this article describes life in the camp near Cherbourg close to the launch point for the boat that arrived in Portsmouth recently. (Source: The Sun)

Following the story about the cost of citizenship in our previous roundup, this article reports that the government generated almost £5 billion from visa and citizenship fees last year, while many applicants struggled to afford the payments. (Source: The Bureau of Investigative Journalism)

New briefings have been published on the following topics:

- The characteristics of people migrating to the UK, highlighting that India has been the top nationality for more than two decades, and the most common reason to migrate here last year was study.
- An overview of people living in the UK who were born overseas, who make up nearly a fifth of the total population. Although the highest numbers of arrivals are for study and work, people moving here for family reasons are more likely to settle long-term.

- The government's progress against its migration pledges, noting falls in net migration, small boat arrivals, the asylum decision backlog and numbers of people seeking asylum housed in hotels, alongside an increase in returns. However, the briefing highlights a growing asylum appeals backlog.

(Source: Migration Observatory)

Specific migrant groups

News on asylum includes:

- In a novel form of protest against plans to use nearby former military base MoD Bicester as asylum accommodation, residents of Piddington voted overwhelmingly to leave the UK, albeit in a symbolic referendum. The accommodation plans are also facing a legal challenge on environmental grounds. (Source: BBC)
- Meanwhile, people seeking asylum in Birmingham have praised a specialist trauma clinic that supports those who have experienced extreme violence, persecution and torture on their journey to the UK. (Source: the Guardian)
- Worryingly, sexual assaults on women seeking asylum by British men are thought to be underreported, with many victims afraid to come forward in case it negatively affects their claim. (Source: the Guardian)

On resettlement, many former military staff are being forced to make their own way out of Afghanistan, despite being accepted for resettlement. It's estimated that around 3,000 Afghans who have been approved to come to Britain remain in Afghanistan. (Source: Independent)

On international students, London has launched 'Your London Starts Here', a city-wide partnership to support international students and strengthen the capital's reputation as a global study destination. Meanwhile, research from University College London suggests that falling demand could place significant financial pressure on UK universities by 2030, with applications from key markets including China, Hong Kong and the EU projected to decline or stagnate over the rest of the decade. (Sources: The PIE news, Times Higher Education)

In case you missed it, the Independent Monitoring Authority (IMA) has launched a new podcast, 'In Conversation With', featuring Citizen's Panel members reflecting on life in the UK after Brexit. The first episode covers the EU Settlement Scheme, access to rights and discrimination, and includes personal accounts from EU citizens about their experiences and reasons for living in the UK. (Source: Spotify)

Cohesion and integration

Refugee entrepreneurs could contribute an additional £2 billion to the UK economy, according to a new report from Small Business Britain. 'The Cedar Review' highlights the challenges refugees face in starting businesses and calls for improved support, including better access to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), identity and credit checks, and training for business idea development. (Sources: Small

Business Britain, Cedar Review)

The Home Secretary is seeking the views of North Tyneside residents on immigration as part of a series of deliberative events organised by the Home Affairs Select Committee. The goal is to bring together a wide range of perspectives on recent migration policy proposals, particularly balancing reductions in net migration with the workforce needs of businesses and public services. (Sources: BBC, Parliament)

International news

Australia has announced new migration reforms targeting international students, visa overstayers and backpackers. (Source: the Guardian)

Amid Iran's economic crisis, thousands of Afghans are returning to Afghanistan despite difficult conditions and restrictions under Taliban rule. (Source: Reuters)

Over 2,500 Yemenis have arrived in Djibouti. The government is warning that continuing arrivals are putting pressure on its capacity. (Source: Al Jazeera)

The European Commission is proposing a new European Emergency Response Framework for exceptional, sudden and large-scale migrant inflows. (Source: Reuters)

Stories that inspired us this week

The Victoria and Albert Museum is displaying a collection of Orthodox treasures from Kyiv. The launch included a discussion about the 'impact of conflict on cultural institutions'. (Source: The Art Newspaper)

'What We Do When We Can’t Dance' on 11 October closes a national tour of the show performed by artists from a refugee background. The show has 'big laughs, bold beats and a shocking twist, wrapped around friendship, first love and the search for a place in the world.' (Source: BritishTheatre.com)

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