Migration news roundup week commencing 05 October 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 death that some readers may find distressing.

- UK borders and migration policy
- Specific migrant groups
- Cohesion and integration
- International news
- Stories that inspired us this week

UK borders and migration policy

The unexpectedly sharp fall in net migration has contributed to slowing down population growth in the UK and could leave Chancellor John Healey with a budget shortfall of billions of pounds. Meanwhile, new research on the relationship between the UK and the EU has found that attitudes towards free movement are largely positive if there are obvious economic benefits.(Sources: Independent, the Guardian, British Future)

This briefing gives an overview of what migration data is available at local authority level, emphasising that this is much

more limited than national level data. (Source: UK Parliament)

The ‘one in, one out’ agreement with France formally ended on 1 October, with the UK government acknowledging that the scheme did not reach the scale initially hoped for, and France expressing a preference for a Europe-wide deal in its place. A recent inspection report about Tinsley House Immigration Removal Centre, where people awaiting removal to France are held, raised a number of concerns including delays in accessing legal advice, issues with the identification of children and modern slavery victims, and healthcare. (Sources: BBC, the Guardian, HM Inspectorate of Prisons)

On Channel crossings:

- Two women and a 10 year old child have lost their lives in an incident in a ‘water taxi’ dinghy near Calais. (Source: BBC)
- A French court has sentenced 13 men for their roles in the 2021 Channel small-boat disaster that killed 31 migrants, with six convicted of involuntary homicide. (Source: Al Jazeera)

- There is evidence of launches becoming more common further west and south along the coast, increasing the length and therefore risk of the journey. (Source: BBC)

- Home Office enforcement officers have been taking action against people smuggling from Ireland to the UK, with 49 arrests made at several UK ports recently. (Source: Home Office)

As migrant workers held a demonstration over unfair visa conditions outside the Labour party conference, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood hinted in her speech that she may reconsider aspects of the government's earned settlement proposals. Communities Secretary Angela Rayner and Unison's Andrea Egan have been among the voices criticising plans to extend overseas care workers' wait for settlement from 5 to 15 years. (Sources: Unison, the Guardian)

Following changes to the Immigration Rules that came into place on 1 October, the government has updated its employer's right to work checks guide. It means employers must now also conduct checks on third-party workers, such as individual subcontractors

and they will face considerable civil penalties if they fail to do so. (Sources: UKVI, Free Movement)

Specific migrant groups

The Prime Minister has told people living near RAF Linton-on-Ouse that he'll listen carefully to their objections to housing people seeking asylum at the base, while North Yorkshire police raised concerns over the resources needed to respond to protests in such a rural area. As the debate continues, housing experts have suggested that buying and renovating properties into social housing stock offers a long term and less expensive solution. (Sources: BBC, The i Paper)

A new report explores the ongoing and future advice needs of EU nationals and their family members, and provides a map of advice provision available across the UK. (Source: EU Citizens UK)

At least twelve democracy activists from Hong Kong were recently refused a BN(O) visa due to criminal convictions related to their political activities. (Source: HK Labour Rights Monitor)

A new independent inspection is seeking evidence on how children are safeguarded within the UK migration and borders system, including children arriving by small boat and those involved in asylum and immigration processes. Submissions should be made by 15 October. (Source: Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration)

The number of potential victims of modern slavery continues to rise: nearly 25,400 referrals were made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) in the year ending June 2026. The top three nationalities were from the UK, Somalia and Eritrea. This period recorded the highest-ever volume of exploitation reported entirely outside the UK (almost 13,600 cases or 54%). (Source: Home Office)

In case you missed them, here are the latest modern slavery reports published last month:

- This first report shines a light on the rise in modern slavery within the retail sector. More than half of victims were on skilled worker visas, where dependency on a single employer sponsor significantly increased their vulnerability.

The most common nationalities were from Sri Lanka, India and Pakistan. (Source: Unseen)

- A second briefing recommends improvements to the asylum system and NRM in light of clinical evidence about trauma. (Source: Helen Bamber Foundation)

Cohesion and integration

Preston City Council has agreed to approach the government to take on the role of coordinating resettlement programmes, after Lancashire County Council announced it would step back. The County Council stated the shift would make sense as district authorities have responsibility over housing, a key part of the schemes. (Source: BBC)

Communities Secretary Angela Rayner said 'intimidatory' far-right marches were not an acceptable form of protest and should not be permitted. Responding to the large-scale actions over the last month, she said that a line had been crossed when volunteers were attacked and local people were frightened. (Source: the Guardian)

This article looks at the contribution of the Romanian community and how, despite being one of the most economically active European migrant groups in the UK and Ireland, they still face negative associations and prejudice. (Source: The Conversation)

International news

Malaysia has begun returning Myanmar nationals despite UN warnings that ongoing conflict and persecution mean conditions may be unsafe for return. (Source: the Guardian)

The Australian government has committed to reducing net overseas migration, leaving some migrants concerned about their future in the country. This podcast episode explores the differing views among Australians on this increasingly polarising topic. (Source: the Guardian, 25 minutes)

Stories that inspired us this week

An academic from the University of Essex has written a play about the issues faced by migrant care workers. Dr Mary Mazzilli said she's honoured to tell the story of those who haven't been made to feel welcome. She described the play as an invitation to

everyone - especially politicians - to ask themselves: 'Is this the kind of society we want to live in?' (Source: Colchester Gazette)

Olena Mikheionok tells her story of fleeing Ukraine and finding shelter in Devon while her host, Amanda, says that the experience of welcoming people into their home has brought her own family closer together and caused them to reflect on their privileges. (Source: BBC)

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