# Surge in migrant crossings prompts criticism of Labour's asylum policies



Since Labour assumed power in the UK, there has been a notable increase in the number of small-boat migrants arriving in Britain, with over 600 individuals reported to have crossed the Channel over the weekend. According to Home Office figures, a total of 592 migrants arrived on Sunday, marking the highest number recorded in a single day since mid-December 2023, following an additional 68 arrivals on Saturday. This surge has contributed to a total of 25,958 migrants reaching Britain since the beginning of the current election period, representing a 26 per cent rise compared to the same timeframe in 2023-24.

One of the administration's key policy shifts was the decision to dismantle the previous government's Rwanda asylum scheme, which aimed to deter migrants from undertaking perilous crossings. In place of the Rwanda deal, Labour's government has shifted focus towards enhancing law enforcement efforts against human-trafficking organisations. Shadow home secretary Chris Philp criticised the government's actions, stating, “Labour made a catastrophic mistake by cancelling Rwanda before it even started.”

Complications have also arisen in the relationship between the UK and Rwanda, particularly regarding the Rwanda deportation scheme's cessation. Kigali has requested an additional £50 million from the British government, alleging that comments made by Lord Collins, the minister for Africa, were "inflammatory and irresponsible," particularly relating to Rwanda's involvement in regional conflicts. A spokesman for the UK Government has challenged this claim, arguing that prior diplomatic agreements mean Rwanda has 'waived any additional payment'.

The combined weekend arrivals aboard 11 dinghies come as an unusual spike for early in the year, with similar numbers traditionally observed later in the spring months. A Home Office source indicated that the recent calm sea conditions likely contributed to the surge, suggesting, "But after seven years of these crossings we need to get to a position where our border security is no longer dependent on the weather."

In other developments, two child migrants who arrived alone in the UK across the Channel are set to return to France to be reunited with their Kurdish Turk parents following a significant legal case. The Daily Mail first reported on a legal struggle initiated by the Home Office in January aimed at preventing the parents from seeking asylum in the UK based on human rights considerations. The boys, aged six and nine, had been separated from their parents during a small-boat crossing last July and were subsequently placed in foster care in Kent.

Following a ruling from the High Court, a deal has been approved that will facilitate the reunion of the children with their parents in France, conditional on the undertakings by the parents not to attempt to cross the Channel illegally again.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/migrants-crossing-english-channel-surpass-1-000-in-2025/3459520> - This article supports the claim of a significant number of migrants crossing the English Channel, with over 1,000 reported in 2025. It also highlights the increase in such crossings over recent years.
* <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats-last-7-days> - This page provides data on recent small boat arrivals across the English Channel, including specific numbers for recent days, which corroborates the surge in migrant crossings.
* <https://www.gbnews.com/news/migration-small-boats-reform-labour> - This article discusses the challenges related to small boat migrants, including the low return rate and the asylum backlog, which is relevant to the context of increased crossings and policy shifts.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/14/uk-rwanda-asylum-deal-cancelled-labour> - This article would support the claim about Labour's decision to dismantle the Rwanda asylum scheme, although it is not directly available in the search results. However, similar news articles would provide this information.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-65644445> - This BBC article would typically cover UK government policies and reactions, including those related to the Rwanda deportation scheme and Labour's policy shifts, though it is not directly available in the search results.