

This factsheet unpacks the background and details of the proposed UK policy, as well as legal challenges to its implementation.

Why is the UK trying to send asylum seekers to Rwanda?

Since at least 2020, the issue of asylum seekers crossing the English Channel in small boats from France, and the impact of these arrivals on the UK asylum system, has attracted increasing attention in the UK. There are mixed views on whether this focus on what the UK government calls '[illegal routes to asylum](#)' is warranted, or whether [delays and inefficiencies within the Home Office](#) are the greater concern.

The vast majority of people who cross the Channel to the UK [make an asylum application](#), and most [would be recognised as refugees](#) if the UK processed their claim. However, in an attempt to deter Channel crossings, the UK has taken various steps to render 'inadmissible' in the UK the asylum claims of people who enter from France without authorisation, and to remove them, either to their own country or to a third country – Rwanda.

What are the details of the proposed UK-Rwanda asylum deal?

In April 2022, then UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson [announced](#) that anyone entering the UK 'illegally' might be forcibly removed to Rwanda under a plan [broadly comparable](#) to Australia's 'offshore processing' policies.

As part of a new [Migration and Economic Development Partnership](#) (MEDP), the UK and Rwanda entered into a [memorandum of understanding](#) (MOU) under which Rwanda agreed to receive asylum applicants and to 'process their claims and settle or remove (as appropriate) individuals after their claim is decided', in accordance with its national laws and international obligations. In return, the UK agreed to

