

Migration: some facts, and the shame

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This post is by Andrew, who is a regular commentator to this blog, who has posted [two comments to this blog](#) this morning, all of which I share here because I think they are important in the context of what [Boris Johnson has had to say today](#).

Andrew began with this:

Let's [have some basic facts on asylum](#).

In 2021, there were 48,540 asylum applications in the UK, relating to 56,495 people. That was a 63% increase on 2020, and the highest for years, but it is not a record. It was over 80,000 in 2002. Unsurprisingly, the number of refugees increase in times of civil disturbance and war.

Nearly 10,000 came from Iran, 6,000 from Iraq, 5,000 from Iraq and Albania, and several thousand from Syria, Afghanistan and Sudan. Nearly half were males aged 18 to 29. I wonder if we can think of any reasons why these people may find it easier to leave. But a sixth were children, and over 3,500 unaccompanied.

So that is who we are talking about. Largely young Moslem men from the Middle East, many of whom might speak some English but probably not French.

In 2021, the UK offered protection, in the form of asylum, humanitarian protection, alternative forms of leave and resettlement, to 14,734 people (including dependants). Barely more than 1000 per month.

Around half the people from Iraq and Albania are granted asylum, so there is clearly a problem with people from these countries who are not refugees, but over 80% and for some countries over 95% are granted asylum.

Overall, in 2021, initial decisions on asylum were made in 14,572 cases, so the backlog is getting longer year on year. The number of initial decisions is significantly lower than in 2019 (20,766). And overall 72% were granted asylum or another status allowing them to remain in the UK (which is higher than the usual trend, of about a third).

There were appeals against refusal in 4,035 cases and 49% of appeals were granted.

That left 81,978 cases (relating to 100,564 people) awaiting an initial decision.

These are the sort of people we might give a one-way ticket to a country in the middle of Africa which has a history of human rights abuses and ethnic violence. That is 90%+ Christian, and English is the third language. Where LGBT rights are problematic. Where the president is a former army officer who has been in office for over 20 years, changed the electoral law to his benefit, banned opposition parties and disqualified potential opponents, and as a result has been elected with over 90% of the vote three times. Either he is more popular than Jesus or ... well.

This would not be the first time the UK has set up camps in Africa to hold civilians it didn't care for.

The prospect of my country treating desperate people in this inhuman manner disgusts me.

He then added this:

I tried to post some basic facts about immigration earlier, but here is another angle.

The UK has a population of around 67 million. There are around 700,000 births and 600,000 deaths each year. So the population is growing by about 100,000 each year just due to births exceeding deaths. But an increasing number of people are aged 70 and over, and the post-war baby boom generations from the 1950s and 1960s (over a million per year) are at or approaching retirement.

Even without the moral argument that we are obliged to give asylum to people who need it – which is most of those who claim it – if we can accommodate hundreds of thousands of new children each year, who will need health and education services for at least 18 years, and a million people per year entering retirement, whose health and welfare needs will only increase, then we can add some more people seeking asylum without too much problem. Most of the migrants are young, fit and healthy (they need to be to get to the UK) and could be working productively for decades. Many are well educated, and will save us the time and cost of primary and secondary schooling. The economic argument in favour of immigration is almost unanswerable.

No, no. Let's ship them off to Rwanda. It beggars belief.

The delay was all my fault: I realised I intended to post the comment as a post and so delayed moderating it.

I am as appalled as Andrew, and am ashamed that this country can propose something as base and racist as this. That is why I share this.