

'Move-on' period briefing, September 2025

What is the 'move-on' period?

Under the Immigration and Asylum Act of 1999, people waiting for a decision on their asylum claim receive housing and limited financial support from the Home Office (**just £9.95 per week** for those in catered accommodation).

The 'move-on' period refers to the time that newly recognised refugees have to leave this Home Office support after they receive a positive decision on their asylum claim. During this transition, refugees must secure their own accommodation, and either gain employment or apply for mainstream welfare benefits.

Updates to the 'move-on' period

- In December 2024, the Government introduced a **trial 56-day 'move-on' period** – double the amount of time previously granted.
- It was subsequently announced that this pilot **would be evaluated** by the National Centre for Social Research and RSM.
- On 7 July 2025, Dame Angela Eagle, the Minister for Border Security and Asylum, confirmed that the 'move-on' period trial would be **extended to the end of 2025**.
- However, on August 27, the Home Office chose to **revert back to a 28-day 'move-on' period** for single adults, who account for a majority of people seeking asylum. This decision came without any warning and came into effect on September 1.

What challenges does this present?

The 28-day 'move-on' period for newly recognised refugees has long been acknowledged as inadequate. In far too many cases it has pushed people into homelessness and destitution. Most new refugees have little or no savings to rely on (having been banned from working while seeking asylum), and 28-days is simply not enough time to secure employment, find housing, or access Universal Credit – which has a built in 35-day delay before a first payment is made.

Meanwhile, problems with eVisa documentation and housing shortages only exacerbate these challenges further.

Evidence of the need for change

Stretched local authorities and voluntary sector organisations have highlighted that a 28-day 'move-on' period is a "cliff edge" that leaves new refugees at immediate risk of homelessness.

Results from NACCOM's 2023/2024 survey data - when the 'move-on' period was 28 days or lower - showed a **99% increase in homelessness** amongst adult refugees that year.

Recent NACCOM research has found that over 70% of homelessness and refugee charities said the 56-day 'move-on' period reduced the risk of homelessness.

What policy changes do we need?

HIAS+JCORE is joining with partners in the refugee sector to urge a permanent 56-day 'move-on' period for all new refugees.

We are also calling for this to be accompanied with other policies which empower integration and ensure compassion and fairness in our asylum system. These include:

- **Lifting the ban on the right to work.**

Currently people seeking asylum are unable to work while their claims are processed. The result? Many are forced into destitution. The current policy prevents people from using their skills or contributing to the economy - leaving them stuck in limbo. Lifting the ban is common sense.

- **Reversing the refugee citizenship ban.**

Earlier this year, the Government quietly introduced a change which effectively bans refugees who reached this country irregularly from receiving British citizenship. Rethinking this policy would ensure people seeking safety here can access their full rights as citizens - just as Jewish refugees once did before.

- **Scrapping limits to family reunion.**

On 1 September, the Government temporarily paused new refugee family reunion claims. This closes one of the few safe routes to the UK - and will likely force women and children, who made up 92% of applicants in the most recent year, into dangerous journeys here.

Learn more

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HIAS+JCORE is a registered UK charity, number 1132666. Visit hiasjcore.org to find out more.