

2026

APRIL EDITION



# MIGRATION NEWSLETTER



# MIGRATION HIGHLIGHTS

## DEADLY CENTRAL MEDITERRANEAN CROSSINGS CONTINUE

- Multiple boat capsizing in April 2026 resulted in dozens of fatalities
- At least 20 Pakistani nationals reported missing or drowned in 5th April Tragedy
- **Affected districts:** • Gujranwala • Gujrat • Hafizabad • Mandi Bahauddin • Sialkot • Pindi Bhattian



### Related Early April Tragedy

Five young men from Hafizabad lost their lives: Mazhar Hussain, Atif, Haroon, Hamza, Jafar

### Additional Incidents (March–Early April):

5–6 additional Pakistani deaths  
(From Punjab regions)

## New Publication Released

In response to the recent migration tragedy, our latest publication provides a brief key protection concerns and actionable recommendations.

Read the full analysis: [Link](#)

## MIGRATION OUTLOOK 2026 RELEASED (ICMPD)

### Emerging Trends

- Labour mobility pressures (EU shortages vs youth unemployment in origin countries)
- Geopolitical risks (Afghanistan–Pakistan border, Middle East conflicts)
- Rising irregular migration via Central Mediterranean Route
- Climate & conflict-driven displacement
- Reintegration challenges despite growing return cooperation

### FOR FULL REPORT

[Download ICMPD Silk Routes Migration Outlook 2026](#)

## FIA ANNUAL REPORT 2025

### Strengthening Enforcement

- Rs. 18 billion recovered
- 4,244 convictions secured
- 2,333 arrests made
- Focus on trafficking, smuggling, and organized crime



### FOR FULL DETAILS:

[Download the FIA Annual Administration Report 2025](#)

# JUSTICE DELIVERED IN LIBYA BOAT TRAGEDY CASE 2023

- 19 years rigorous imprisonment
- Rs. 1.3 million fines
- Rs. 4.43 million extorted from victim's family
- False promise: sending two sons to Italy via illegal routes
- Both victims lost their lives



# UNITED KINGDOM LARGE-SCALE SMUGGLING NETWORK (10 APRIL 2026)

- Two individuals (Dilshad Shamo, 43 and Ali Khdir, 42) sentenced to 19 years imprisonment each
- Both originally from Iraqi Kurdistan, legally residing in the UK
- Operated a major people-smuggling network from a car wash in Caerphilly, Wales
- Facilitated movement of hundreds of migrants across Europe
- Network described by authorities as a "Tripadvisor for people smugglers"



# UNITED KINGDOM – ORGANIZED SMUGGLING OPERATIONS (25 FEBRUARY 2026)

- Ali Omar Karim (47) sentenced to 8 years and 7 months imprisonment
- Iraqi national based in Portsmouth
- Ran a prolific smuggling network
- Facilitated movement of hundreds of migrants into the UK
- Routes included small boats and lorries



# GREECE (CRETE) – FAKE WORK VISA FRAUD NETWORK (MARCH 2026)

- 21 People were arrested in crackdown on visa fraud ring
- Included 5 Pakistani nationals (part of overseas network tier)
- Network issued fraudulent Greek work visas and residence permits
- Used fake companies and forged documentation
- Charged migrants €10,000+ per person

# OPPORTUNITIES

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: SWISS NETWORK OF YOUNG MIGRATION SCHOLARS (SNYMS) CONFERENCE 2026 “NARRATIVES ON MIGRATION”

The Swiss Network of Young Migration Scholars (SNyMS) invites early-career researchers (PhD and PostDoc level) to submit abstracts for its annual conference titled “Narratives on Migration”.

**DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION: 15 MAY 2026**

[Click here for more information](#)

## EMERGING PERSPECTIVES ESSAY COMPETITION 2026 – NOW OPEN!

The Mixed Migration Centre (MMC) has launched its annual Emerging Perspectives Essay Competition for young and emerging writers, researchers, and thinkers from the Global South.

**DEADLINE FOR ABSTRACT SUBMISSION: 5 MAY 2026**

[Click here for more information](#)

## CALL FOR PAPERS – NOW OPEN!

**Navigating Challenges in Unfamiliar Contexts: Migration and Displacement**  
International Association for Applied Psychology is accepting paper regarding challenges faced by migrants in their journeys.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: THURSDAY, 30 APRIL 2026**

[Click here for more information](#)

## CALL FOR PAPERS DAMR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

The conference will be hosted by the Radboud University Network on Migration Inclusion (RUNOMI) at Radboud University.

**SUBMISSION DEADLINE: 17 MAY 2026**

[Click here for more information](#)

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY AT HAMDAM DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION (D.I. KHAN)

A volunteer opportunity is available with Hamdam Development Organization in D.I. Khan for community mobilization, awareness sessions, and field coordination.

[Click here for more information](#)



# Global Labour Shortages & Skilled Migration Opportunities

*Rising global labour shortages are creating new opportunities for safe, skills-based migration pathways.*

## Europe

### Germany

- Healthcare: Doctors, nurses, elderly care workers
- Engineering: Mechanical, electrical, civil engineers
- Skilled trades: Electricians, plumbers, technicians
- IT: Software developers, IT specialists

### Italy

- Agriculture and seasonal workers
- Construction workers and technicians
- Domestic workers and caregivers

### Spain

- Agriculture and food processing workers
- Hospitality and tourism staff
- Construction and low-to-mid skilled labour

### Greece

- Agriculture and seasonal labour
- Tourism and hospitality sector workers
- Construction labour

## North America & Oceania

### Canada

- Healthcare professionals
- Construction and skilled trades
- Transport and logistics workers
- IT and digital sector professionals

### Australia

- Agriculture and seasonal labour
- Tourism and hospitality sector workers
- Construction labour

## Asia

### Japan

- Care workers (elderly care sector)
- Engineers and technical trainees
- Industrial and manufacturing workers
- Researchers and specialized professionals

### South Korea

- Manufacturing and factory workers
- Agriculture and fisheries labour
- Technical and semi-skilled workers

## United Kingdom

### United Kingdom

- Healthcare: Nurses, caregivers, support staff
- Logistics: Drivers, warehouse workers
- Hospitality and food services
- Skilled trades and technicians

## Gulf Region

### Saudi Arabia & UAE

- Construction workers and technicians
- Drivers, mechanics, and operators
- Hospitality and service sector workers
- Healthcare professionals (growing demand)

# POLICY & MOBILITY UPDATES

Updates	Description	Effective / Launch Date
US Immigrant Visa Processing Pause	The US Department of State has paused issuance of immigrant visas (leading to green cards/permanent residency) for nationals of 75 countries, including Pakistan. This is part of a review of public charge rules and enhanced vetting processes. Applications and interviews may continue, but no visas will be issued until the review concludes.	21 January 2026
Pakistan's First National Action Plan against Migrant Smuggling (2026–2030)	Pakistan launched its inaugural National Action Plan to Counter Migrant Smuggling, developed in partnership with UNODC and led by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). It adopts a five-pillar, whole-of-society approach: prevention, prosecution, protection, partnerships, and policy.	Launched in early 2026 (ongoing implementation)
Pakistan-EU Cooperation on Legal Migration	Pakistan, along with Italy, Spain, and Greece, agreed on a coordinated framework to combat illegal migration and human smuggling. Emphasis on promoting legal migration channels, skills-based labour mobility, repatriation of criminals, and dismantling trafficking networks.	Agreement reached February 2026
Pakistan's Visa Policy Tightening for Inbound Travel	Pakistan has suspended the Visa on Arrival (VOA) and free Visa Prior to Arrival (VPA) programs for most nationalities (previously covering 126 countries). Travelers must now apply via the standard paid e-Visa system, with processing times of 7–20 business days. Exceptions remain for certain Gulf countries.	January 2026
Qatar – Suspension of Visa on Arrival for Pakistanis	Qatar has suspended the Visa on Arrival facility for Pakistani passport holders. Pakistani nationals must now obtain an appropriate visa in advance through Qatari embassies or authorized channels. No more visa issuance at the airport or border.	31 March 2026 (immediate)
United Kingdom – Higher English Requirement & ETA Enforcement	UK has raised the English language requirement to B2 level for many work and study visa categories. Additionally, from February 2026, all visa-exempt or short-stay travelers must obtain an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) (£20, valid for 2 years) before boarding.	February 2026 (ETA from 25 Feb)

## POLICY SNAPSHOT

### BALUCHISTAN FIELD INSIGHTS ---- PRIORITY ACTIONS

Recent field observations from Balochistan (Iran & Afghanistan routes) highlight increasing irregular migration driven by economic hardship, climate stress, and lack of safe pathways, with growing involvement of youth and adolescents and rising dependence on smuggling networks.

### PRIORITY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

#### EXPAND SAFE MIGRATION PATHWAYS

Develop accessible legal migration options for at-risk districts to reduce reliance on smugglers

## STRENGTHEN LIVELIHOODS & CLIMATE RESPONSE

Invest in youth employment, skills development, and climate resilience in drought-affected areas

## DISRUPT SMUGGLING NETWORKS

Adopt targeted enforcement combined with community awareness to counter exploitation and fraud

## ENHANCE PROTECTION MECHANISMS

Improve cross-border coordination and humanitarian support for migrants facing abuse, detention, and abandonment

## SUPPORT RETURNEES & PREVENT RE-MIGRATION

Establish structured reintegration programmes (economic, psychosocial support) to break the cycle of repeat migration

## FACILITATE REGULATED BORDER MOBILITY

Introduce managed cross-border systems to protect livelihoods linked to informal trade and labour movement

# OUR WORK IN ACTION: PROMOTING SAFE & INFORMED MIGRATION

We are committed to promoting safe and purposeful migration. Through a range of initiatives, including art, videography, seminars, and panel discussions, we continue to raise awareness and foster informed decision-making. Our work over the past three years stands as a testament to this sustained commitment.



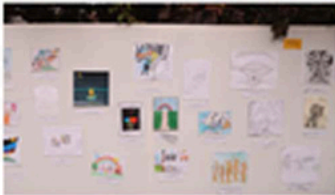
## International Migrants Day 2023

A two-day Art & Drawing Exhibition was held at PNCA Islamabad on 17-18 December 2023, engaging 40+ educational institutions. Over 200 artworks promoting the message of safe migration were received. The event attracted participants from diverse backgrounds and successfully reached more than 2,000 people.



## International Migrants Day 2024

A two-day Art & Videography Exhibition was organized at PNCA Islamabad on 17-18 December 2024, with participation from 45+ institutions. The event featured 250+ artworks and 30+ videography submissions, significantly expanding outreach and disseminating the message of safe migration to over 3,000 people.



## International Migrants Day 2025

The third International Migrants Day event was held on 18 December 2025 at IFQ Islamabad, where 300+ creative submissions were received. The initiative continued to amplify the message of safe migration, reaching an audience of more than 5,000 people.

# Call for Volunteers

International Migrants Day (IMD) 2026

Legal ID Foundation invites passionate individuals to join us as volunteers for the **4th International Migrants Day (IMD) 2026**.

Building on the momentum of the past three years, engaging thousands of participants and showcasing hundreds of creative contributions, IMD 2026 aims to expand its reach even further through art, dialogue, and community engagement.

- 1. Do you have your **story**?**
- 2. Are you making some meaning contribution in the field of **Migration**?**

*Share it now!*

**For Queries and sharing your contributions; feel free to reach out to us:**

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