

Over 24,000 UK asylum seekers could be sent to Rwanda despite court ruling

Home Office sent 24,083 letters of intent warning refugees they were being considered for forcible removal

More than 24,000 asylum seekers from about one-third of the world's countries could face removal to Rwanda by the UK Home Office in the future, even though the scheme was found to be unlawful in the court of appeal on Thursday.

Home Office data obtained under a freedom of information request shows that, between January 2021 and March 2023, 24,083 asylum seekers were issued with letters warning them that they were being considered for forcible removal.

A notice of intent letter is issued after the Home Office has declared an asylum claim inadmissible. This means the case cannot be determined in the UK because the asylum seeker previously passed through a safe country before reaching Britain.

The notice of intent is to send the person to a safe third country instead to have their claim determined there. The only country the UK has an agreement with to do this is Rwanda, but because of the continuing legal proceedings these cases have become part of the Home Office's record backlog.

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