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## UK-France Migrant Return Deal Faces Legal Delays Despite Government Reassurances

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The UK government's new migrant return agreement with France could face significant delays due to anticipated legal challenges, despite official claims that there are no loopholes in the policy. The deal, which operates on a "one in, one out" basis, aims to return migrants who are ineligible to remain in the UK back to France, while accepting migrants from France who have established ties to Britain.

Cabinet minister Lisa Nandy confirmed that while the agreement is intended to streamline removals, legal obstacles may still slow down its implementation. Speaking in an interview

aired on *Sky News*, Ms Nandy acknowledged: “Obviously there are people who will try to frustrate the process through the courts, but we’re speeding up the court process to make sure that those delays will be minimal and we will be able to return people to France.”

Despite critics raising concerns about potential human rights challenges to the policy, the Home Office clarified that individuals may be removed from the UK if their human rights claims are deemed “clearly unfounded” under British law. However, once France consents to accept a returned migrant, the legal process is expected to proceed without reversal.

The migrant return policy is designed to tackle the rising number of unauthorised Channel crossings, many of which involve small boats departing from northern France. The aim is to disrupt the business model of people-smuggling networks and establish a more controlled system of migration between the two countries.

Sources close to the government have indicated that preparations are already in place for judicial reviews to be heard within the UK legal system, even for cases where the migrant remains in France during proceedings. However, once a return is formally accepted by French authorities, legal routes back into the UK would be limited.

The agreement has not been without criticism from advocacy groups. The charity *Care4Calais*, which previously mounted successful legal challenges against the former government’s Rwanda deportation plan and proposed Channel “pushback” operations, stated it would examine the legality of the current policy. A spokesperson told *Sky News*: “We will consider all options open to us to oppose any plans that will put more lives at risk and involve governments trading humans.”

Channel crossings continue to rise despite repeated commitments to reduce them. Figures released earlier this year show an increase in arrivals via small boats, placing added strain on UK border resources and local councils. The government has expressed urgency in implementing the UK-France return arrangement to curb illegal entry and discourage future crossings.

The policy is seen by supporters as a pragmatic step toward restoring control over the UK’s immigration system and ensuring that those with no legal right to remain are removed swiftly and efficiently. Nevertheless, the legal framework surrounding asylum and human rights remains complex, and ministers face ongoing pressure to deliver results without breaching international obligations.

While the government insists that this agreement does not contain exploitable loopholes, the potential for drawn-out legal battles may test the efficiency of the policy in the months to come.