

## Protests Erupt Across UK Over Asylum Hotels Amid Rising Tensions

August 24, 2025

— Categories: Defence & Security



Protests erupted across the United Kingdom on Saturday, with demonstrators rallying against the government's use of hotels to house asylum seekers. The nationwide demonstrations were met with counter-protests from anti-racism campaigners, leading to scuffles and police intervention in cities including Bristol, Liverpool, London, Mold, Perth, and County Antrim.

In Bristol, police in riot gear and on horseback were deployed to separate dozens of anti-migrant protesters from several hundred anti-racism demonstrators. Similarly, in Liverpool, rival rallies led to 11 arrests for offenses such as being drunk and disorderly, assault, and affray, according to Merseyside Police. The protests were sparked by a recent high court ruling that temporarily blocked a hotel in Epping, Essex, from accommodating asylum seekers. The ruling followed weeks of protests at the Bell Hotel in Epping, some of which turned violent after an asylum seeker was charged with sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl.

The court decision has prompted several councils across the country, including those controlled by Labour, the Conservatives, and Reform UK, to consider launching legal challenges. Minister of State for Security Dan Jarvis announced that the government would appeal the high court's ruling, stating, "We've made a commitment that we will close all of the asylum hotels by the end of this parliament, but we need to do that in a managed and ordered way."

Prime Minister Keir Starmer's Labour government has faced criticism over its immigration policies, particularly after official figures showed record numbers of migrants and asylum seekers arriving in the UK. According to Home Office data, more than 50,000 migrants and asylum seekers have crossed the English Channel in small boats since Starmer took office, often risking dangerous journeys in flimsy inflatable dinghies. By the end of March, about 32,345 asylum seekers were being housed in hotels, while asylum applications reached a record 111,084 by the end of June. The figures have raised questions about border enforcement, resource allocation, and the long-term sustainability of the government's approach.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has noted that the UK government does not grant most asylum seekers the right to work, leading to concerns about their integration and well-being. Critics in Britain argue that the use of taxpayer-funded hotels is both costly and unsustainable, and point to the strain it places on local services and communities. As the government prepares to appeal the court's decision, the debate over asylum accommodation continues to divide public opinion. While some advocate for more secure and permanent housing solutions, others argue that the current system is a necessary measure to manage the influx of asylum seekers. The eventual outcome of the legal disputes will determine not only how asylum seekers are housed but also how firmly the government enforces immigration policy in the years ahead.