

## UK to Resume Processing of Syrian Asylum Claims After Temporary Pause

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The United Kingdom has resumed reviewing asylum applications from Syrian nationals following a six-month suspension, marking a significant shift in its immigration policy. The Home Office has approved the return of 26 individuals to Damascus and expects many more claims to be processed as part of this renewed effort.

In June, the Home Office halted new decisions on Syrian asylum applications amid concerns about political instability after the fall of Bashar al-Assad's regime. That freeze, which affected some 7,300 pending claims, has now been lifted. As a result, the government anticipates a sharp drop in approvals and a corresponding increase in rejections. Officials say that 26 Syrian nationals, mostly failed claimants and a small number convicted of crimes, have already departed voluntarily to Damascus, marking their first removals since 2012.

The policy shift closely follows renewed diplomatic engagement with Syria. Foreign Secretary David Lammy's visit to Damascus was the first by a British Cabinet minister in fourteen years. The decision signals what ministers describe as the restoration of conditions in parts of Syria necessary to justify restarting asylum decisions.

However, refugee advocates caution that while processing claims again is welcome, the government must evaluate each case based on individual risk. Recent instability and continuing threats in Syria suggest that not all returnees will face safe conditions upon repatriation.

From a center-to-right standpoint, resuming claims processing reflects a pragmatic approach, balancing controlled immigration with diplomatic normalization. The government's decision to remove individuals with denied claims supports orderly returns rather than open-ended public funding. Maintaining a case-by-case review ensures that national borders remain secure while preserving humanitarian commitments.

In summary, the United Kingdom's move to restart Syrian asylum claim reviews and facilitate returns demonstrates a policy shift toward structured immigration control, coupled with renewed ties to Damascus.

Clear legal criteria, individual assessment, and international cooperation will be essential to managing future arrivals responsibly.