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TENS OF THOUSANDS 'EXPLOITING HIDDEN ASYLUM LOOPHOLE'

EXCLUSIVE: Foreign nationals allowed into UK on time-limited visas are then lodging claims to stay indefinitely, leak reveals

By **David Barrett**
Home Affairs Editor

TENS of thousands of foreign nationals entering Britain on visas are lodging asylum claims to stay permanently.

Leaked documents seen by the Mail show that international students, workers and visitors are exploiting the hidden 'back door to Britain'.

Visas grant permission to stay in the UK for a set period – usually just a few months. But by claiming asylum applicants are highly likely to remain here indefinitely because the Home Office faces huge obstacles to deporting them, including human rights laws.

Previously-unseen official documents – covering the year to March 2023 – show a record 21,525 asylum claims were made by visa holders, a 154 per cent annual rise.

It means one in every 140 people who entered on a visa went on to claim asylum. And over the past decade more than 102,000 applied to stay after being allowed in only temporarily.

Pakistan was the largest nationality among claimants, with nearly 17,400 cases, followed by

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Harry's back in Britain next week ... but will he see his father?

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