

WLPF Conference: Next steps for the UK Immigration System

WLPF Conference Details



Next steps for the UK immigration system

New visa routes, economic impact, and addressing key issues for sectors, businesses and individuals

Morning, Thursday, 9th June 2022

Westminster Legal Policy Forum policy conference [easily accessed online](#)

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with

Professor Brian Bell, Chair, Migration Advisory Committee, and Professor of Economics, King's College London

Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive, UK Hospitality

and

Professor Catherine Barnard, *University of Cambridge*; **Demetris Demetriou**, *Davidson Morris Solicitors*; **Carine Elliott**, *Squire Patton Boggs*; **Marley Morris**, *Institute for Public Policy Research*; **Emelia Quist**, *Federation of Small Businesses*; and **Madeleine Sumption**, *University of Oxford*

Chaired by:

Stuart McDonald MP, Shadow SNP Spokesperson, Home Affairs

[\[full chair and speaker details\]](#) - further senior speakers are being approached]

This conference examines the future of the UK immigration system.

It will be an opportunity to assess recent changes to immigration rules - including new Global Business Mobility, High Potential Individual and Scale-up visa routes - and how the new routes can be used most effectively, as well as the options for further routes.

We also expect discussion on issues for implementation - particularly in light of added pressure on resources as a result of developments relating to asylum, such as the conflict in Ukraine and the Government's new *Migration and Economic Development Partnership* with Rwanda.

The agenda will bring out latest thinking on options for reform to enable the system to more effectively contribute to economic growth and recovery - particularly in the context of labour shortages and increasing pressures on workforces being experienced in sectors such as construction, hospitality, retail, and health and social care.

There will also be examination of the processes and workings of the system itself, with delegates exploring what is needed to improve both employer and individual experiences and lower the barriers for engaging with the system, with discussion expected on:

- the cost of visa applications
- complexity and bureaucracy in sponsor licenses
- information, guidance and support available to employers

We are pleased to be able to include keynote sessions with **Professor Brian Bell**, Chair, Migration Advisory Committee, and Professor of Economics, King's College London; and **Kate Nicholls**, Chief Executive, UK Hospitality.

The conference will be an opportunity for stakeholders to consider the issues alongside key policy officials who are due to attend from the Home Office; the Migration Advisory Committee Secretariat; Department for the Economy, NI; The Scottish Government; and the Welsh Government, along with Parliamentary passholders from the House of Lords.

[\[full list of confirmed speakers so far, and expected attendees\]](#)

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The agenda: [\[taking place online - further details\]](#)

Draft subject to change

- 8.30 Registration
- 9.00 **Chair's opening remarks**
Stuart McDonald MP, Shadow SNP Spokesperson, Home Affairs
- 9.05 **The UK immigration system - assessing current issues and priorities going forward**
Professor Brian Bell, Chair, Migration Advisory Committee, and Professor of Economics, King's College London
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 Break
- 9.35 **The new immigration system so far, and impact on the UK economy**
Madeleine Sumption, Director, Migration Observatory, University of Oxford
Marley Morris, Associate Director, Migration, Trade and Communities, Institute for Public Policy Research
- 9.45 **Case study: immigration policy and meeting sectoral workforce needs**
Kate Nicholls, Chief Executive, UK Hospitality
- 9.55 **Maximising the positive economic contribution of the immigration system - priorities for supporting economic recovery, options for temporary and targeted interventions, and aligning with wider economic aims**
Senior representative, legal
Senior representative, employer
Senior representative, local government
Senior analyst
- 10.15 Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.40 **Chair's closing remarks**
Stuart McDonald MP, Shadow SNP Spokesperson, Home Affairs
- 10.45 Break
- 10.55 **Chair's opening remarks**
Senior Parliamentarian
- 11.00 **Improving the user experience for business and individuals - cost, complexity, bureaucracy, and options for digitisation and innovation in administrative processes**
Professor Catherine Barnard, Professor of European and Employment Law, University of Cambridge
Demetris Demetriou, Head of Legal, Davidson Morris Solicitors
Emelia Quist, Head of Policy Research, Federation of Small Businesses
Senior representative, workforce
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.45 Break
- 11.50 **The new visa routes - key issues for implementation, assessing thresholds and requirements, options for improvement into the future, and considering impact on key sectors, businesses and individuals**
Carine Elliott, Associate, Squire Patton Boggs
Senior representative, employer
Senior academic
Questions and comments from the floor

12.30 **The outlook for UK immigration moving forward**

Senior representative, policy
Questions and comments from the floor

12.55 **Chair's and Westminster Legal Policy Forum closing remarks**

Senior Parliamentarian
Sean Cudmore, Deputy Editor, Westminster Legal Policy Forum

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Key areas for discussion: [\[back to the agenda\]](#)

Visa routes

- **issues** - eligibility? complexity? impact on sponsors
- **options** - ways that the utility and take-up of the new routes might be improved ?
considering sector specific and temporary routes to tackle acute and critical skills shortages

Economic impact

- **the points based system** - maximising positive economic impact ? cost and other issues for employers including SMEs ? addressing challenges experienced by key sectors in meeting skills needs
- **targeted interventions:**
 - options for tackling acute labour and skills shortages
 - temporary and sector-specific interventions for sectors such as hospitality, retail, and freight and the supply chain
 - recognition of vocational skills and qualifications to tackle shortages across technical occupations such as construction, agriculture and manufacturing
- **coordination with wider policy** - the immigration system in the wider context of economic policy ? strategies for alignment with growth and recovery objectives for key sectors and industries
- **servicing the future economy** - how far will the current system meet government goals of a high-tech and dynamic economy with a high-skill workforce

User experience and addressing barriers

- **cost** - options for sponsor license fee reform? differentiated fees for roles, skills and businesses ? relating fees to turnover and business size
- **complexity and bureaucracy** - what is needed to reduce administrative burden for sponsor licences ? challenges for SMEs ? alternative license regimes such as umbrella licenses
- **digitisation and efficiency** - considering the improved use of technology to streamline the system and reduce the time investment required

Relevant developments: [\[back to the agenda\]](#)

- **Changes to immigration rules** - new visa routes including Global Business Mobility, High Potential Individual, and Scale-Up
- **Points-based immigration system** - introduced in Jan 2020 and yet to be experienced under non-COVID conditions
- **Ukraine ambassador urges Priti Patel to relax UK visa scheme** - from the Guardian
- **Nationality and Borders Bill**
- **World first partnership to tackle global migration crisis** - Home Office announces controversial changes to asylum claims that will see asylum seekers screened before being resettled in Rwanda
- **Migration Advisory Committee annual report:**
 - showing rising vacancies, particularly in health, social care and hospitality

- highlighting issues of cost, complexity and clarity in the UK sponsorship system, particularly relating to individual workers and SMEs
- [The Impact of the New Immigration Rules on Employers in the UK](#) - the APPG on Migration inquiry recommending sponsorship for lower skilled roles and sector-specific short term interventions
- [Migrants in the UK Labour Market: An Overview](#) - briefing from the Migration Observatory finding that migrants are over-represented in the hospitality, transport, IT and health and social sectors

Booking arrangements

To book places, please use our [online booking form](#).

Once submitted, this will be taken as a confirmed booking and will be subject to our terms and conditions below.

You can also pay in advance by credit card on 01344 864796. If advance credit card payment is not possible, please let me know and we may be able to make other arrangements.

Options and charges are as follows:

- Access to *Next steps for the UK immigration system - new visa routes, economic impact, and addressing key issues for sectors, businesses and individuals* (plus a permanent record of proceedings) is **£210** plus VAT per delegate
- Concessionary rate places for small charities, unfunded individuals and those in similar circumstances are **£95** plus VAT. Please be sure to apply for this at the time of booking.

If you find the charge for places a barrier to attending:

- please let me know as concessionary and complimentary places are made available in certain circumstances
- typical eligibility: individual service users or carers not supported by or part of an organisation, full-time students, unemployed and fully retired people with no paid work, and small charities
- concessions are not offered to businesses, individuals funded by an organisation, or larger charities/not-for-profit companies.

Please note [terms and conditions](#) below (including **cancellation charges**). [\[back\]](#)

I do hope that you will be able to join us for what promises to be a most useful morning, and look forward to hearing from you soon.