



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP,
Minister of State for Immigration,
Home Office
UK Government

The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

ministerforimmigration@homeoffice.gov.uk
si.gov.uk

Direct Tel: 0131-348-5234
(RNID Typetalk calls welcome)
Fax: 0131-348-5088
(Central) Textphone: 0131-348-5415
Email: europe@scottish.parliament.uk

16 October 2015

Dear Mr Brokenshire,

Refugee crisis in the European Union

I am writing to you in relation to the evidence that the Scottish Parliament's European and External Relations Committee heard on 1 October when it held a roundtable evidence session on the refugee crisis in the European Union. I attach a link to the Official Report of the evidence [here](#).

The Committee found the evidence very moving and compelling. A number of issues were raised during the evidence in relation to both the scale of the situation and how Scotland, UK and the European Union could respond.

A number of issues raised related to the UK's reserved competence in this area. I would therefore be grateful if you would consider the issues set out below and respond to the Committee.

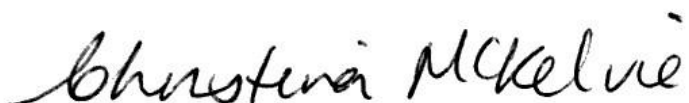
Firstly, the Committee considers the level of support offered by the UK to refugees to be inadequate in the face of the scale of the crisis. The Committee heard compelling evidence about the huge numbers of refugees arriving in the EU, the desperation that caused people to flee their homes and the often harrowing and dangerous journeys that they had endured. The Committee was very concerned about the lack of humanitarian relief available for people arriving in the EU, particularly the evidence from the witnesses who had recently visited the Greek island of Lesbos and found that there was no significant coordinated response either from international charities or the local authorities to the refugees arriving in Lesbos by sea. The Committee therefore

urges the UK Government to consider taking more refugees and to engage further with EU efforts to address the refugee crisis in the European Union.

Secondly, the Committee heard concerns from representatives of local authorities in Scotland about the lack of clarity currently on the funding arrangements for the refugees who will be settled in the UK following the commitment to take 20,000 refugees. The Committee would be grateful if you could provide more detail on the funding arrangements, in particular how this will cover the five-year period for which the refugees have been given humanitarian protection status and how it will cover all of the needs of the refugees. Given the commitment made by the Scottish Government in relation to refugees, the Committee would invite you to consider whether any further responsibility for these refugees can be delegated by the Home Office to Scottish authorities. The Committee would also welcome an indication of the status of the refugees at the end of the five-year period.

Thirdly, the Committee would like to know whether the UK Government intends to revise its rules in relation to family reunion and refugees in order that the family reunion process is no longer viewed as an immigration process but, instead, as a humanitarian process. The Committee heard evidence suggesting that this would make family reunion easier and provide support to families who already have established family members in this country.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christina McKelvie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Christina McKelvie
Convener
European and External Relations Committee