

## **Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee**

### **Immigration Inquiry**

The Scottish Parliament's Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee has agreed to hold an inquiry to explore how the UK's immigration policy can best respond to Scotland's demographic and skills needs.

The objective of the inquiry is to seek evidence from organisations and individuals in Scotland on how immigration policy can be developed to reflect and respond to Scotland's demographic and skills needs drawing on the policy options identified by Dr Eve Hepburn in her report to the Committee on [Options for Differentiating the UK's Immigration System](#).

### **Call for Evidence**

#### **Background**

The Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee published a report on [EU Migration and EU Citizens' Rights in February 2017](#).

This report provided strong evidence of the importance of EU migration to Scotland and the contribution that EU citizens have made to the Scottish economy and Scottish society. The report showed that EU migration since 2004 has contributed to reversing the decline in the Scottish population and in increasing the number of people of working age in Scotland.

Written evidence received from a wide range of stakeholders – presented in the Committee's report [Brexit: What Scotland thinks](#) – further highlighted concern that Scotland's economy could suffer if there was no longer access to European workers who have been crucial to so many sectors of the economy. These ranged from agricultural workers, through those employed in food and tourism to skilled engineers and scientists in high-growth sectors. EU citizens have become a crucial part of Scotland's labour market, and there are risks to the Scottish economy of any decline in current number of EU migrants.

The evidence that the Committee collected also showed that the demographic risks for Scotland of a reduction in the number of EU migrants are more acute than for the UK as a whole. The Committee therefore concluded that there had to be a bespoke – or differentiated – solution for immigration policy in Scotland in the future and agreed to commission research on options for differentiating immigration policy to meet Scotland's demographic and skills needs in the future.

In May 2017, the Committee published research that it had commissioned from Dr Eve Hepburn on [Options for Differentiating the UK's Immigration System](#). Dr Hepburn's report presents a range of case studies and explores the possibilities of policy adaptation, to determine whether and how international approaches drawn from the case studies might be adapted to the Scottish/UK context. This analysis reveals that there are at least 20 ways in which Scotland could be enabled to differentiate its immigration policies in order to meet its demographic and labour needs.

#### **Focus of call for evidence**

Organisations and individuals are invited to consider the proposals made by Dr Hepburn in her report on [Options for Differentiating the UK's Immigration System](#)

and to indicate which – if any – they consider would respond to Scotland’s demographic and skills needs. In particular, businesses and organisations are invited to identify which policy options would best address potential skills shortages in their sector.

The proposals include—

1. Developing Scottish Migrant Integration & Reception policies
  - a. Codifying the services and rights of migrants in Scotland
  - b. One Scotland, Many Cultures campaign
2. International Outreach Activities in Immigration
  - a. Creation of multi-media resources to advertise Scotland abroad
  - b. Adding an advisory immigration remit to current Scottish offices abroad
  - c. Expanding the number of Scottish offices abroad
  - d. Promote immigration to Scotland during trade talks
3. Increasing Scottish influence in UK decision-making
  - a. Scottish representation on the Migrant Advisory Committee
  - b. Revising and expanding the Scottish Shortage Occupation List
  - c. Creation of JMC sub-committee on Immigration
  - d. Dissemination of Population Strategy for Scotland
4. Scottish Sectoral Agreements
  - a. Creating a new postgraduate work visa for Scotland
  - b. Temporary work permits for seasonal migrants in Scotland
  - c. Creating ‘European Talent: Working in Scotland’ schemes
5. Devolving administrative aspects of immigration
  - a. Creation of a Scottish Work Permit processing office(s)
6. Scottish Visa Sponsorship Schemes
  - a. Create a statewide visa framework that all regions are eligible for
  - b. Create a single regional visa framework for Scotland only
  - c. Create multiple bilateral programmes for each region
  - d. Create a single bilateral programme for Scotland only
7. Devolving Control over Selection to Scotland
  - a. Creating a Scottish PBS alongside the UK PBS
  - b. Enabling Scotland to create a new immigration system

In addition, organisations and individuals are free to identify any other solutions that they consider would respond to Scotland’s immigration needs.

### **How to submit written evidence**

You may wish to respond on some or all of the issues outlined above, or to raise other issues that you consider to be of relevance to the Committee’s planned inquiry. Evidence should be reasonably brief and typewritten (preferably normally no more than 4-6 sides of A4 in total).

The initial deadline for receipt of written submissions is 25 August 2017. Owing to the timescale normally required for the processing and analysis of evidence, late submissions will only be accepted with the advance agreement of the Clerk.

The Committee prefers to receive written submissions electronically and in a form accessible by MS Word. These should be sent to:

[CTEER.inquiries@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:CTEER.inquiries@scottish.parliament.uk)

You may also send a hard copy of written submissions to:

European and External Relations Committee  
Scottish Parliament  
Holyrood  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

### **Policy for Handling Written Evidence**

Before you submit your written evidence, please ensure that you have read our [policy on treatment of written evidence](#). Written submissions will be handled in accordance with this policy.

We would also be grateful if, when using any tables or graphics in your submission, that you include a short paragraph explaining what the table/graphic shows. This helps readers with visual impairments.

### **How to submit a video as evidence**

We welcome videos as a form of evidence. Please read our guidance before sending a video.

- [Guidance on producing a video as evidence \(83KB pdf\)](#)

### **Contact**

For details about the Committee's work on this inquiry please contact Katy Orr, Clerk to the Committee, tel 0131 348 5234 or [katy.orr@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:katy.orr@scottish.parliament.uk).