

[Antitrust: Commission confirms unannounced inspections in the motor insurance market in Ireland](#)

The European Commission can confirm that on 4 July 2017 its officials carried out unannounced inspections at the premises of companies active in motor insurance in the Republic of Ireland.

The Commission has concerns that the companies involved may have engaged in anti-competitive practices in breach of EU antitrust rules that prohibit cartels and restrictive business practices and/or abuse of a dominant market position (Articles 101 and 102 respectively of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union). The Commission officials were accompanied by their counterparts from the Irish Competition and Consumer Protection Commission.

Unannounced inspections are a preliminary step into suspected anti-competitive practices. The fact that the Commission carries out such inspections does not mean that the companies are guilty of anti-competitive behaviour nor does it prejudge the outcome of the investigation. The Commission respects the rights of defence, in particular the right of companies to be heard in antitrust proceedings.

There is no legal deadline to complete inquiries into anti-competitive conduct. Their duration depends on a number of factors, including the complexity of each case, the extent to which the companies concerned co-operate with the Commission and the exercise of the rights of defence.

[Congratulations to all the pupils, parents and teachers receiving results today – Kane](#)

Commenting on the Key Stage 2 SATs results, **Labour's Shadow Schools Minister, Mike Kane MP, said:**

“Congratulations to all the pupils, parents and teachers receiving results today. This is a culmination of all their hard work and they should be very pleased with all they have achieved.

“However we cannot overlook the fact that the number of pupils meeting the expected standard is lower than it was before Tory changes were introduced. Ministers still have questions to answer about whether their constant

tinkering with assessment really is benefiting our children.”

“Only Labour will deliver a world-class education for every child starting by giving schools the funding they need and launching a commission to look into curriculum and assessment.”

[The news that the talks process in Northern Ireland is now, effectively, to be put on hold over the summer comes as no surprise, but it will be greeted with disappointment and concern – Smith](#)

Owen Smith MP, Labour’s Shadow Northern Ireland Secretary, commenting on the Northern Ireland Secretary’s update on political talks, said:

“The news that the talks process in Northern Ireland is now, effectively, to be put on hold over the summer comes as no surprise, but it will be greeted with disappointment and concern. It is never a good idea to have a political vacuum in Northern Ireland, especially through the summer months, and it is regrettable that the Government has not been able to bring about agreement between the parties after more than six months of stasis.

“For some weeks now that the political parties have felt under little pressure to come to a deal and that is why it has been frustrating that the Prime Minister has so steadfastly refused to engage properly in the talks process. I share the Secretary of State’s hope that a deal can be done when the parties return in the Autumn, but if that hope is to materialise into a reassembled executive, the Conservative Government will need to engage with greater energy and focus.”

[The public sector pay cap: what you need to know](#)

The Scottish Government has announced that from next year the public sector

pay cap will be lifted, ensuring that public sector pay increases better reflect rising living costs.

Home Office 'expansion' of Syrian resettlement scheme fails the most vulnerable, says Green MEP



Green Party

4 July 2017

Yesterday, the Home Office claimed to have “expanded” its scheme to resettle refugees from Syria and neighbouring countries [1].

In fact, the number of refugees it has committed to resettle from the region under the Syrian Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) remains unchanged – capped at 20,000 by the year 2020.

The difference lies in the number of refugees who are eligible for resettlement. The UK will now welcome vulnerable individuals of any nationality – not just Syrian – who have been affected by the country’s ongoing conflict.

Jean Lambert, London’s Green MEP and the Green Party’s migration spokesperson, says:

“I welcome the Government’s decision to widen the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to non-Syrian citizens. This enables the UK to offer a fresh start to some of the Iraqi refugees who have also fled Syria – many of whom have now been displaced from their homes twice. It also means that families of mixed nationalities will be able to seek refuge in the UK together.

“However, in reality, this change in eligibility won’t make a significant difference so long as the scheme remains capped at resettling just 20,000 people. In fact, it will result in fewer Syrian nationals being welcomed to the UK – broadening the pool of those who qualify for resettlement, without expanding the number who will ultimately be accepted.

“As the Home Secretary, Amber Rudd, declares she is ‘proud’ that the UK is ‘making sure our doors are open to the people who most need our help’, let’s remember her recent move to slam the same door shut in the faces of unaccompanied children in France, Italy and Greece through the recent closure of the ‘Dubs’ scheme [2].

“This announcement is a step in the right direction from the Home Office. However, we must bear in mind that it’s the smallest of concessions, while a humanitarian crisis of enormous proportions continues to unfold both in the Middle East and closer to home.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/refugees-of-all-nationalities-fleeing-syria-are-now-eligible-for-resettlement-in-the-uk>
2. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-38912428>

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