

Foreign criminals removed to Albania

Yesterday (Thursday 14 July) the UK Government removed 23 foreign criminals on a charter flight to Albania.

Two individuals who entered the UK illegally were also swiftly removed after they were first encountered by Immigration Enforcement in the past few weeks.

This is testament to the dedicated and tireless work of Home Office teams in returning those with no right to be in the UK.

Individuals returned on the flight to Albania include:

- An individual first encountered in June 2022 following his arrest on suspicion of driving with excess drugs. He claimed to have entered the UK in the back of a lorry in 2021 but did not make himself known to authorities. The individual was detained for removal to Albania and agreed voluntarily to return.
- An individual who claimed to have entered the UK by yacht in 2021 but did not make himself known to the authorities. He was first encountered in July 2022 following an arrest on suspicion of driving offences, for which no further action was taken. He was detained for removal to Albania and agreed voluntarily to return.
- An individual sentenced to five and a half years' imprisonment for intent to supply Class A drugs.
- An individual sentenced to three years and four months' imprisonment for the production of Class B drugs.

The foreign national offenders removed had received combined prison sentences of more than 55 years and were convicted of crimes including the production and supply of controlled drugs, return in breach of a deportation order, illegal entry and destruction of property.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

These criminals are responsible for appalling drug offences, which destroy lives, families and communities. They have violated our laws and our values, leaving their victims living with the scars of their crimes.

The British public should be in no doubt of my determination to remove them by all available means to make our streets safer. Our new Nationality and Borders Act will help end the cycle of last-minute claims and appeals that can delay removals.

We are continuing to remove foreign criminals and those with no right to be here, as the public rightly expects.

The removal flight forms part of a regular schedule of returns to multiple

countries, to remove those with no right to remain in the UK.

Over the last few weeks, the enforced removal of more foreign criminals from the UK has taken place. Individuals removed on charter flights include three individuals removed to Romania, who were sentenced to over seven years for facilitating illegal entry to the UK.

In June 2022, 240 foreign national offenders were removed from the UK on both charter and scheduled flights. These individuals had been convicted of offences including:

- 98 convictions for drugs offences
- 35 convictions for sex offences
- 29 convictions for violent crimes
- 27 convictions for threatening behaviour
- 16 convictions for immigration offences

Since March 2021 more than 10,000 people have been removed by both scheduled and charter flights, with 86 flights chartered to 13 different countries.

The Nationality and Borders Act will further deter illegal entry into the UK, breaking the business model of people-smuggling networks and speed up the removal of those with no right to be in the UK.