

# Landmark Immigration Bill to end free movement introduced to Parliament

The Immigration Bill will be introduced to the House of Commons today (Thursday 5 March) ending the European Union's rules on free movement.

It represents an important milestone in paving the way for the new UK points-based immigration system. It will be introduced by the Minister for Future Borders and Immigration, Kevin Foster, and marks an historic moment in the country's history, following the UK's departure from the EU on 31 January 2020.

Minister for Future Borders and Immigration Kevin Foster said:

Today we've taken the momentous first step to end free movement and take back control of our borders, delivering on the people's priorities.

Our firmer and fairer points-based immigration system will attract the brightest and best from around the globe, prioritising those who come to Britain based on the skills they have to offer, not on the passport they hold.

The bill will begin its passage in the House of Commons. Once passed, it will give the UK full control over who comes to the country. By ending free movement, and bringing EU citizens under UK immigration controls, the bill will enable the newly announced UK points-based system to operate from 1 January 2021. This will deliver a firmer and fairer immigration system for the whole of the UK.

Details of the new points-based immigration system were [announced by the Home Secretary](#) in February, giving top priority to those with the highest skills and the greatest talents, including scientists, engineers and academics. Overall levels of migration will be reduced, and the government will end a reliance on low-paid labour from abroad.

Those who want to come to the UK and make a contribution to our economy and society will benefit from a more flexible, streamlined, and simplified system. The operation of the UK border will be revolutionised, and security tightened to stop serious criminals entering the country.

Further information on the points-based system will be detailed in the Immigration Rules published later in the year.

The bill will further protect the long-held rights of Irish citizens, a unique status in place since the 1920s. It makes it clear Irish citizens will continue to freely enter and reside in the UK without requiring permission to do so after free movement ends.

The Immigration Bill also allows the government to make changes to social security arrangements. This will help to ensure people making the UK their home after 1 January 2021 pay into the tax system for a reasonable period of time before they can access the benefit system.

EU citizens and other non-visa nationals will not require a visa to enter the UK when visiting the UK for up to 6 months. However, the use of EEA national identity cards will be phased out for travel to the UK, with the Home Office setting out plans in due course.

The government has committed to guaranteeing the rights of EEA citizens and their family members who are resident in the UK by the end of the transition period (31 December 2020).

Those EU citizens resident in the UK by this time can still apply to settle in the UK through the EU Settlement Scheme until June 2021.