

# 21 December 2020: Joint Ministerial Statement on the JCPoA

Press release

A Joint Ministerial Statement on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) has been agreed, following a Ministerial Meeting on 21 December



1. A Ministerial Meeting of the E3/EU+2 (China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy) and the Islamic Republic of Iran, the participants of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA), was held virtually on 21 December 2020. The meeting was chaired by the EU High Representative, Josep Borrell.
2. JCPoA participants re-emphasised their commitment to preserve the agreement and stressed their respective efforts in this regard. They discussed that full and effective implementation of the JCPoA by all remains crucial and discussed the need to address ongoing implementation challenges, including on nuclear non-proliferation and sanctions lifting commitments.
3. Ministers underscored the important role of the IAEA as the sole impartial and independent international organisation mandated by the UN Security Council to monitor and verify the implementation of the nuclear non-proliferation commitments under the JCPoA. They stressed the importance of continued good faith cooperation with the IAEA.
4. Ministers recalled that the JCPoA, as endorsed by UN Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), remains a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture and a significant achievement of multilateral diplomacy that contributes to regional and international security. Ministers reiterated their deep regret towards the US withdrawal from the agreement. They stressed that resolution 2231 remains fully in

force.

5. Ministers agreed to continue dialogue to ensure full JCPoA implementation by all sides. Ministers acknowledged the prospect of a return of the US to the JCPoA and underlined their readiness to positively address this in a joint effort.

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## [Independent review into Criminal Legal Aid to launch in January](#)

Press release

The long-term sustainability of the criminal legal aid market will be the focus of an independent review, it was confirmed today (21 December).



- Review will take a look at the whole criminal legal aid market
- Diversity, funding, and efficiency of the sector will be considered
- Part of ongoing work to reform and improve the criminal legal aid system

Launching in January, the review will be led by former judge Sir Christopher Bellamy. It aims to ensure the legal aid sector can adapt to the changing criminal justice system, while continuing to provide high-quality advice and representation.

Ministers are determined to make sure the criminal justice system is fully equipped to deal with any increase in the number of cases, now and in the future.

The far-reaching review will look at the criminal legal aid market in its entirety, specifically it seeks to ensure that it:

- continues to provide high-quality legal advice and representation
- is provided through a diverse set of practitioners
- is appropriately funded
- is responsive to defendant needs both now and in the future
- contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System
- is transparent
- is resilient
- is delivered in a way that provides value for money to the taxpayer.

This is the latest step in the Criminal Legal Aid Review, which has already led to up to [£51mper year](#) in new payments for the sector that was announced in the summer. It forms part of wider work to ensure criminal defence remains an enduringly attractive career for practitioners.

The Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC MP, said:

Criminal defence lawyers play a crucial role in upholding the law, representing clients and protecting their right to a fair trial.

This independent review will be wide-ranging and ambitious, ensuring the criminal legal aid market remains effective and sustainable, while reflecting the diverse society it serves.

I am grateful to the sector for its continued cooperation and look forward to this important work commencing in earnest in the new year.

Chair of the Review, Sir Christopher Bellamy, said:

The criminal legal aid sector is a vital pillar of the justice system.

I look forward to engaging with all stakeholders on this review, which aims to give the criminal legal aid sector long-term sustainability.

The review will begin in January and report back later in the year. It will include input from a wide range of criminal defence practitioners who have been providing valuable data and insight for the Criminal Legal Aid Review.

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## November 2020 Transaction Data



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Please note this data shows what HM Land Registry has been able to process during the time period covered and is not necessarily a reflection of market activity.

In November:

- HM Land Registry completed more than 1,710,230 applications to change or query the Land Register
- the South East topped the table of regional applications with 409,245

HM Land Registry completed 1,710,237 applications in November compared with 1,761,236 in October and 1,771,884 last November 2019, of which:

- 271,496 were applications for register updates compared with 267,115 in October
- 935,949 were applications for an official copy of a register compared with 981,945 in October
- 216,933 were search and hold queries (official searches) compared with 212,982 in October
- 15,850 were postal applications from non-account holders compared with 15,506 in October

### **Applications by region and country**

<b>Region/country</b>	<b>September applications</b>	<b>October applications</b>	<b>November applications</b>
<b>South East</b>	405,032	422,216	409,245
<b>Greater London</b>	310,818	325,631	314,597
<b>North West</b>	192,764	196,957	191,689
<b>South West</b>	167,493	174,310	170,214

<b>Region/country</b>	<b>September applications</b>	<b>October applications</b>	<b>November applications</b>
West Midlands	143,282	148,009	143,935
Yorkshire and the Humber	134,097	134,139	135,951
East Midlands	122,933	124,686	122,093
North	80,185	82,547	80,300
East Anglia	72,439	75,586	72,154
Isles of Scilly	44	69	43
Wales	75,401	77,009	69,930
England and Wales (not assigned)	103	77	86
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,704,591</b>	<b>1,761,236</b>	<b>1,710,237</b>

## **Top 5 local authority areas**

### **November applications**

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>November applications</b>
Birmingham	24,481
City of Westminster	21,466
Leeds	20,003
Cornwall	17,912
Manchester	16,823

### **October applications**

<b>Local authority</b>	<b>October applications</b>
Birmingham	25,670
City of Westminster	22,889
Leeds	20,087
Cornwall	18,551
Wandsworth	16,548

## **Top 5 customers**

### **November applications**

<b>Top 5 Customers</b>	<b>November applications</b>
Infotrack Limited	97,950
Enact	40,101
TM Group (UK) Ltd (Search Choice)	25,647
O'Neill Patient	23,826
Optima Legal Services	23,808

## October applications

Top 5 Customers	October applications
Infotrack Limited	98,689
Enact	41,045
TM Group (UK) Ltd (Search Choice)	30,445
O'Neill Patient	25,566
Optima Legal Services	21,799

[Access the full dataset on data.gov.uk](#)

## Next publication

Transaction Data is published on the 15th working day of each month. The December data will be published at 11am on Friday 22 January 2021.

Published 21 December 2020

Last updated 21 December 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 21 December 2020

First published.

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## [Government announces refunds for rail and coach journeys booked for previous Christmas travel window](#)

News story

Refund guarantee for cancelled Christmas rail and coach trips.



- government is ensuring all domestic rail and coach passengers who have

cancelled their travel plans in England between 23 to 27 December (2020) are refunded

- passengers will not be left out of pocket for complying with the new Christmas rules
- people are reminded to stay at home in tier 4, stay local elsewhere and carefully consider if they need to travel

The government will provide cash refunds for domestic rail and coach tickets for the previous Christmas travel window between 23 to 27 December, bought before the change in regulations and guidance that were [announced by the Prime Minister on Saturday 19 December](#).

This will apply to [journeys in England booked on or after 24 November, when the Christmas travel window was announced](#).

The government recognises that many people will have booked their coach and rail tickets in advance based on previous government advice. This announcement ensures that people are not penalised for following the new rules, protecting themselves and others from the virus.

Operators will be able to issue refunds immediately and passengers should check the website of their operator for how to claim. We urge people to be patient as rail and coach operators will be processing high volumes of refunds over the coming weeks.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

It is imperative that we all follow the new measures and play our part in tackling this virus, protecting others and safeguarding our NHS.

If you booked a coach or rail journey between 23 and 27 December, you are entitled to a cash refund. This ensures no one is left out of pocket for doing the right thing – staying home in tier 4, and elsewhere staying local and only meeting your Christmas bubble on Christmas day.

Published 21 December 2020

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[\*\*Guidance if you are visiting your local coastline this winter\*\*](#)



[National lockdown rules apply in England](#). Stay at home.

Please take care and follow the rules remembering that you must not leave, or be outside of your home except where necessary.

If you are exercising at the coast with your household (or support bubble) or one other person, it should be limited to once per day, and you should not travel outside your local area.

See specific guidance for [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

We're in difficult times, but if you're in trouble at the coast, we're always here for you. In an emergency at sea or at the coast dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.

Published 2 December 2020

Last updated 6 January 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 6 January 2021

Guidance updated following national lockdown announced in England

2. 21 December 2020

Updated tiers listed to include tier 4

3. 2 December 2020

First published.