

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.

[New taskforce to support pension scheme engagement with social factors in ESG investing](#)

Social factors can include issues ranging from workforce conditions and supply chains to community engagement, consumer protection and modern slavery, among others.

The taskforce – led by the Minister for Pensions – will support pension scheme trustees and the wider pensions industry with some of the challenges around managing social factors, including the identification of reliable data and metrics.

Minister for Pensions Guy Opperman said:

I'm proud of the progress we have made in bringing environmental and climate issues up the pensions agenda, but climate change should not be trustees' sole consideration.

Financially material social factors also pose risks and provide opportunities to schemes' investments, and our taskforce will help

ensure that focus on social factors continues to grow among pension schemes and throughout the investment chain.

The UK is already a world leader in tackling climate risk. From October this year, 80% of UK pension scheme members will be invested in schemes measuring and publishing how their investments support the Paris Agreement climate goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

The responses to the government's Consideration of social risks and opportunities by occupational pension schemes Call for Evidence highlighted the need for a proactive approach to embedding social factors within pension schemes' investment decisions and stewardship policies.

The new minister-led taskforce will help identify reliable data sources and useful resources for pension schemes to assess and manage financially material social risks and opportunities. This work will contribute towards the development of wider principles, standards, and metrics.

To further drive progress in this area, DWP continues to encourage pension schemes to join the Occupational Pensions Stewardship Council – an industry-backed forum working to move the dial on stewardship through collective engagement and sharing best practice.

- The taskforce will be a minister led, cross-department working group, with invitations extended to financial regulators.

The full consultation response – [Consideration of social risks and opportunities by occupational pension schemes](#), can be found on gov.uk.

Media enquiries for this press release

Follow DWP on:

[Chancellor reaffirms the UK's unwavering support for Ukraine at first G20 meeting](#)

News story

Chancellor of the Exchequer Nadhim Zahawi today (Friday 15 July) virtually attended the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (FMCBGs) under the Indonesian Presidency.



- Chancellor of the Exchequer Nadhim Zahawi today (Friday 15 July) attended his first G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting virtually to discuss the global economic outlook
- He reaffirmed the UK's ongoing support for Ukraine, and strongly condemned Russia's invasion and its ongoing disinformation campaign about economic impacts of the war
- G20 partners also discussed efforts to support vulnerable countries and to tackle food and energy insecurity

The Chancellor used his first multilateral meeting to reaffirm the UK's unwavering support for Ukraine and joined the G7 and other like-minded countries in condemning Russia's illegal and barbaric actions. He also emphasised the economic impact of the invasion and spoke out against Russia's campaign of disinformation intended to deflect responsibility for its actions.

Russia's invasion is exacerbating the challenges faced by the G20 and others in the wake of the pandemic, and putting acute pressure on inflation and the rising cost of living globally.

During the meeting the Chancellor of the Exchequer said:

We are unwavering in our support for Ukraine.

The UK stands steadfast with our partners in condemning Russia's illegal and barbaric actions. Putin's illegal war has disrupted the supply of food, energy and other vital goods, has caused prices to rise and is exacerbating the challenges the global economy was already facing as we bounced back from the pandemic.

The Chancellor then called on the G20 to step up its support for the world's vulnerable countries, who have been especially impacted by the challenges facing the global economy.

He called on all G20 members to introduce swift implementation of the Common

Framework, which looks to ease sovereign debt challenges facing vulnerable countries to help them restore debt sustainability. He also commended the Indonesian G20 Presidency for putting food security at the top of the agenda and highlighted the UK's commitment to provide an additional £372 million this year to those countries impacted by higher food prices.

The Chancellor also highlighted the shared challenges many G20 countries – including the UK – face at home, including the rising cost of living.

Domestically, the government has provided £37 billion of targeted support to UK households most in need, with millions of households receiving £326 to help them with the cost of living.

Further information

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New bursaries to help learners to upskill and retrain

Learners who could struggle with study-related costs such as books and childcare fees can now apply for up to £2.5 million worth of targeted bursary funding to help them access new higher education 'short courses'.

As part of the government's pledge to offer tens of thousands of adults the chance to retrain in later life, gain in-demand skills and open further job opportunities, 22 universities and colleges across England will be offering over 100 short courses to students from this September as part of a three year trial.

Developed with the help of employers, the courses give learners the flexibility to gain an accredited certificate and valuable skills that can be applied in the work place in key areas. These courses that could be as short as six weeks – or as long as a year if studied part-time – in subjects vital for economic growth including STEM, healthcare and education.

To support this flexible study, learners can now apply for tuition fee loans created especially for the short courses to support them for the duration of their study and administered by the Student Loans Company.

Alongside this, bursary grants will be available for learners who need extra financial support to pay for additional costs associated with study. Anyone applying for a loan for one of these 'short courses' who faces financial barriers to their learning could be eligible for a bursary. This includes the costs of learning materials such as books, childcare fees and learning

support for disabled students.

Secretary of State for Education James Cleverly said:

This bursary will break down barriers to learning and give everyone the ability to upskill and retrain at a pace which suits them. It doesn't matter what their personal situation or background is.

For too long, our education system has focussed on traditional three-year courses which lock students in and give little flexibility. We are now moving towards a more modern way of learning to provide students with the opportunity to reach their potential whilst meeting the needs of the economy".

Paula Sussex, CEO of SLC, said:

SLC is playing a fundamental role in the delivery of the Government's HE reform agenda. To deliver lifelong learning, we will be building an entirely new system of student finance for England; providing tuition fee loans for these short courses is an important first step in that process. Along with DfE and sector representatives, we will use this experience to help us support the planned introduction of the government's lifelong learning offers.

The scheme will be part of the data gathering for the wider Higher Education Short Course Trial, which will support the development of the government's lifelong learning offer which will be introduced from 2025. The bursary is for the time-limited trial only, as broader decisions on the lifelong learning maintenance support are still subject to government policy decisions.

UK-wide review of pig supply chain launched

The Government has today (15 July) launched a [review of the pig sector](#) to increase fairness and transparency in the industry.

The consultation follows recent challenges experienced by the sector due to global pressures including rising costs and labour shortages, which have raised questions about the functioning of the supply chain. It seeks views on issues such as transparency, price reporting, clarity of contractual terms

and conditions, and market consolidation.

It will run until 7 October 2022 and invites views from pig farmers, abattoirs, processors, retailers, marketing groups and all stakeholders involved in the pig supply chain across the whole country.

Today's announcement is the latest action from the UK Government and the Devolved Administrations to support farmers as they have been dealing with turbulence in international commodity markets, exacerbated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, leading to increased input costs, including feed, fuel, energy, and fertiliser.

Farming Minister Victoria Prentis said:

Recent months have been very difficult for pig farmers due to a range of pressures including rising costs and global labour shortages. We have engaged closely with the sector to support them in considerably reducing the backlog of pigs on farms and I continue to work with producers and retailers to support the sector.

I am a firm believer in 'Buy British' and supporting our domestic pig producers, and a fair and transparent supply chain is paramount. I hope the industry engages fully with this consultation so that we can help to address the challenges that they are facing.

Scottish Government's Secretary for Rural Affairs and Islands Mairi Gougeon said:

The Covid-19 pandemic and the continued lack of available skilled labour have had a disproportionate impact on the pig sector. It is imperative that we understand the current supply arrangements within the sector and explore the nature of the relationships between the various parties in the supply chain.

I welcome this consultation, with the hope that it effects proposals for a more consistent approach across the pig supply chain. I would like to encourage all producers and processors, across Scotland, to take part in this consultation and ensure that their voices are heard on this matter.

Welsh Government Minister for Rural Affairs and North Wales, and Trefnydd, Lesley Griffiths said:

These are challenging times for the pig sector and I encourage

everyone involved in the industry in Wales to respond to the consultation. This will enable us to gather important feedback and evidence about how supply arrangements in the pig sector currently function and to explore the nature of the relationships between the various parties in the supply chain.

We will continue to work collaboratively with the industry, as well as governments across the UK, to ensure a resilient future for our Welsh pig sector.

Northern Ireland Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Minister, Edwin Poots MLA said:

The pig sector has seen significant challenges recently with pig farmers being financially impacted by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, a marked reduction in skilled labour, increased feed costs and moving pigs off the farm for slaughter.

I am committed to raising the issue of fairness for pig farmers in the marketplace and exploring further any issues faced in the pig sector. I am pleased that Northern Ireland stakeholders will have the opportunity to take part in this UK wide consultation and I strongly encourage all Northern Ireland stakeholders to respond.

Once responses have been analysed, a summary of responses will be published to outline findings and propose any actions.

Government support to pig farmers:

- The UK Government have provided a package of measures to help address these unique circumstances and support the pig sector, including temporary work visas for pork butchers, and Private Storage Aid (PSA) and Slaughter Incentive Payment (SIP) schemes to facilitate an increase in the throughput of pigs through abattoirs. We are also working with industry to support their efforts on the longer term recruitment and retention of domestic workers.
- In England and Scotland, the two meat levy bodies, the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board and Quality Meat Scotland, suspended the statutory levy for pig farmers and producers during November 2021 – suspending payments of the levy pig farmers and producers are required to pay.
- Farming Minister Victoria Prentis has chaired three roundtables – in February, March and July 2022 – with pig industry representatives from across the UK to discuss the challenges that the sector has been facing in recent months. Following this, Minister Prentis met with representatives of the agricultural banking sector to discuss the

current situation in the pig sector. The banks confirmed that they are working closely with impacted pig farmers during this exceptionally challenging period and remain keen to be supportive.

- We have established the UK Agricultural Market Monitoring Group (UKAMMG), to monitor all key agricultural commodity markets. We and have also increased our engagement with industry to supplement our analysis with real time intelligence.
- Together with Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board (AHDB), we are working to both expand existing export markets and to identify new export markets for pork, particularly lightly processed pork. On 17 March this year, we were able to announce the opening of a new export market to Chile worth £20 million in the first 5 years of trade. This follows us gaining market access to Mexico, for fresh pig meat in September 2021 – with support from the UK Export Certification Partnership (UKECP) and pork producing establishments. Defra continues to work to expand the UK's access to the Mexico market to include offal and edible by-products.
- The Scottish Government have put measures in place to aid the pig sector and successfully ran a Private Storage Aid Scheme for pork processors at the beginning of this year. Also, a Pig Producers Hardship Support Scheme was made available and extended twice, providing much needed support for pig farmers of around £1.8 million in total.
- In Northern Ireland, DAERA launched a support scheme worth up to £2 million for pig farmers who have been financially impacted by the effects of weakening markets, increased feed costs and getting pigs moved off the farm for slaughter earlier this year.