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House of Lords  
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Lord Sharpe of Epsom  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

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[www.gov.uk/home-office](http://www.gov.uk/home-office)

12 March 2024

Dear Lord Coaker,

## **SAFETY OF RWANDA (ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION) BILL: HOUSE OF LORDS COMMITTEE STAGE**

I am writing to follow up the debate in the Lords on day three of Committee (Official Report, 19 February 2024, column 387) where you asked about the Government's assessment on the numbers of people this Bill applies to.

How the provisions within the Illegal Migration Act apply to an individual depend upon that person's date of illegal entry to the UK. Individuals who arrived between 7 March 2023 and 19 July 2023 are subject to the leave to enter, settlement and citizenship bans only. Individuals who arrived from 20 July 2023 (date of Royal Assent for the Illegal Migration Act) are subject to the bans and the duty to remove (section 2 of the Illegal Migration Act) once commenced.

The exact number of people in each of these two cohorts will only be confirmed once the full triage of all arrivals during those periods is completed. Whilst we know that the majority of illegal arrivals will have claimed asylum, that is not the total number, and the Illegal Migration Act provisions apply to both those who seek protection and those who do not.

The Government's published data (available here: [Statistics relating to Illegal Migration - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-relating-to-illegal-migration)) sets out that during those periods we saw c.22k asylum applications prior to 20 July 23 and c.33k asylum applications up to end December 2023. As noted above, caseworking of these cohorts has not been completed, therefore the Government cannot yet confirm how many of these people will be eligible for relocation to Rwanda.

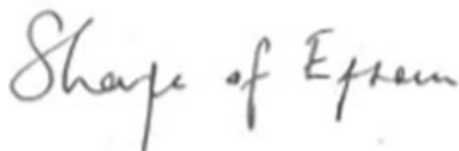
Through the UK's partnership with Rwanda, all individuals, apart from unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, who have (a) arrived in the UK through dangerous, illegal and unnecessary methods since 1 January 2022, and (b) whose cases that are considered suitable for safe third country inadmissibility will be considered for relocation to Rwanda. This is set out in our published inadmissibility guidance ([Inadmissibility – third country cases: caseworker guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inadmissibility-third-country-cases-caseworker-guidance)).

The Government's priority is to deter individuals from making dangerous, illegal and unnecessary journeys to the UK. Acknowledging this and in order to avoid creating perverse incentives, the policy applies retrospectively. The Government has taken considerable steps to further increase the protections offered to asylum seekers relocated to Rwanda to ensure flights can take place as soon as possible once the Treaty between the UK and Rwanda comes into force and the Safety of Rwanda Bill receives Royal Assent.

I am copying this letter to Lord Scriven, Lord Purvis of Tweed, Lord Green of Deddington, Baroness Chakrabarti, Viscount Hailsham, Lord Falconer of Thoroton, Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle, Lord Wolfson of Tredegar, Lord Kerr of Kinlochard, Lord Coaker and Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede.

I will also place a copy of this letter in the library of the House.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sharpe of Epsom".

**Lord Sharpe of Epsom**  
**Parliamentary Under Secretary of State**