

The Viscount Goschen
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

16 June 2025

Dear Viscount Goschen,

BORDER SECURITY, ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION BILL: HOUSE OF LORDS SECOND READING

I am writing further to the debate in the Lords at Second Reading, where you asked (Official Report 2 June column 579) for details of intelligence on the factors believed to drive people to make dangerous journeys to the UK rather than stay in a safe country, for example France.

There has been significant commentary in recent years among European partners regarding the attractiveness of the UK to irregular migrants. To test this assertion, the Border Security Command (BSC) commissioned Home Office officials to conduct a review into the reasons why irregular migrants choose the UK as their destination over other countries in Europe.

There is no evidence of a universal, independent driving factor causing irregular migration to the UK specifically. Irregular migration is influenced by social networks, shared language, and diaspora communities in specific locations. Movement onwards from a safe country to the UK could be due to the aforementioned factors, as well as an unsuccessful asylum claim or an inability to generate a livelihood in that initial safe country. Migrants often make decisions based on their perceptions of a country, which may not reflect reality. Further, some irregular migrants are unable to 'choose' their destination country as it the journey could be decided through the influence of organised crime groups.

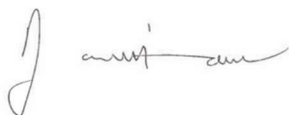
Given the range of factors which may impact irregular migration into the UK, a multi-faceted approach will be vital in tackling this issue. That is why the BSC is taking a wider approach, as set out in the Border Security Delivery Statement in December last year. The threat from Organised Immigration Crime is increasing in scale and complexity, spanning multiple countries, nationalities, and criminal methodologies, which is why our approach is so critical. While the techniques used by organised crime groups to facilitate irregular migration are growing increasingly sophisticated, the demand for their services also continues to rise as a result of global instabilities, ranging from conflict to climate and economic factors.

The BSC will lead and drive forward the required step change in the UK's approach to border security.

I look forward to further debate of the Bill as it progresses to Committee stage.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Hanson', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lord Hanson of Flint