

Lord Alton of Liverpool
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

23 July 2025

Dear Lord Alton,

BORDER SECURITY, ASYLUM AND IMMIGRATION BILL: HOUSE OF LORDS COMMITTEE

I am writing further to the debate in the Lords Committee on 8 July, where I committed to write (Official Report 8 July column 1271) with details about the National Referral Mechanism.

The Home Office publishes regular data on decision made through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).

At the end of 2022 there were 29,275 cases awaiting a conclusive grounds (CG) decision in the NRM. This Government sought to address this and hired 200 additional decision makers to clear this backlog.

As of 31st March 2025, this backlog of cases was 52% lower at 14,033 cases awaiting a CG decision. A further 785 cases were awaiting a reasonable grounds decision. The average (median) time taken from referral to reasonable grounds decisions made from January to March 2025 across the competent authorities was 6 days, remaining unchanged from the previous quarter.

The average (median) time taken from referral to conclusive grounds decision for the same period (January to March 2025) was 797 days. This is compared to 744 days between October and December 2024. This indicates that cases which have been awaiting decisions for longer are being tackled, in line with the Home Office's backlog clearance objective.

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

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'J. Hanson', written in a cursive style.

Lord Hanson of Flint