



T: 0300 244 4000

E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Joan McAlpine MSP

Convener

Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations

Committee

The Scottish Parliament

Edinburgh

EH99 1SP

25 October 2018

I am today making appointments to an Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population, and I wanted to provide the Committee with more information on the membership and role of this group.

I believe it is essential for the discussion and debate on future migration policy, in the context of the UK leaving the EU and with a White Paper and draft Immigration Bill on the horizon, that we have the benefit of a rigorous and shared understanding of what the evidence tells us about policy options. The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has just completed its largest ever piece of work, responding to a commission from the Home Secretary on the impacts of migration on the UK labour market. While I disagree with many of the policy recommendations the MAC has made, I do recognise that they have amassed an impressive body of analysis and evidence which clearly sets out the benefit of migration to the UK economy.

For clarity, I have not established this Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population in opposition to or as a rival to the MAC. Instead, this Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population will be an independent source of advice and expertise on what the implications are of the evidence and policy choices on migration for areas of devolved responsibility in Scotland. I am very pleased that Professor Christina Boswell of the University of Edinburgh has agreed to Chair this group. Professor Boswell is Chair of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Working Group on Immigration and Diversity, and I am sure will be known to members of the Committee through her recent work on options for immigration policy after Brexit.



Professor Boswell will be joined by a range of experts from relevant disciplines, including Professor David Bell of the University of Stirling, Dr Andrew Copus of the James Hutton Institute, Professor Rebecca Kay of the University of Glasgow, and Professor Hill Kulu of the University of St Andrews. I enclose at Annex A with this letter short biographies of the Chair and Members.

The remit of the group is as set out in Annex B, and I also enclose a copy of my letter to the Chair setting out the first commission I have instructed the group to investigate. The group will have secretariat and administrative support from my officials in the Scottish Government, but its findings and any recommendations it makes will be independent.

I have asked the group to report on the initial commission early next year. In the meantime, I am of course very happy to provide further information that members of the Committee would find helpful.

*Best regards,  
Ben*

**Ben Macpherson**  
**Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development**



## EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP ON MIGRATION AND POPULATION

### BIOGRAPHIES

#### **Professor Christina Boswell (Chair)**

##### ***University of Edinburgh***

Professor Boswell is Dean of Research at the College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences of the University of Edinburgh. Her academic research has focused on the production and uses of knowledge in immigration and asylum policy and she is also chair of the Royal Society of Edinburgh Working Group on Immigration and Diversity, [www.pol.ed.ac.uk/people/academic\\_staff/boswell\\_christina](http://www.pol.ed.ac.uk/people/academic_staff/boswell_christina)

#### **Professor David Bell**

##### ***University of Stirling***

Professor Bell is Professor of Economics at the University of Stirling, specialising in labour economics and fiscal federalism. He was adviser to the Finance Committee of the Scottish Parliament from 2007 to 2013, and in 2015 was adviser to the House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee for its investigation into the financing of devolution. [www.stir.ac.uk/people/256197](http://www.stir.ac.uk/people/256197)

#### **Doctor Andrew Copus**

##### ***James Hutton Institute***

Dr. Copus joined the James Hutton Institute in 2013, and previously was a Senior Research Fellow at Nordregio (Nordic Centre for Spatial Development, Stockholm) and the Centre for Remote and Rural Studies, University of the Highlands and Islands. His research interests relate to the changing rural economy and rural/regional policy. [www.hutton.ac.uk/staff/andrew-copus](http://www.hutton.ac.uk/staff/andrew-copus)

#### **Professor Rebecca Kay**

##### ***University of Glasgow***

Professor Kay is Professor of Russian Gender Studies at the University of Glasgow, and is currently principal investigator of an ESRC-funded research project exploring Social Support and Migration in Scotland (SSAMIS). SSAMIS aims to study perspectives and experiences of the ways migrants make themselves socially, economically, personally and culturally secure in a new environment. [www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/staff/rebeccakay/](http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/socialpolitical/staff/rebeccakay/)

#### **Professor Hill Kulu**

##### ***University of St Andrews***

Professor Kulu is Professor of Human Geography and Demography at the University of St Andrews. He trained at the University of Helsinki, and has held posts at the University of Tartu, Estonia; the University of Wisconsin-Madison; and the Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research, Rostock, Germany. His substantive research interests lie in the field of family, fertility, migration and health studies. [www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gsd/people/hk49/](http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/gsd/people/hk49/)



## **EXPERT ADVISORY GROUP ON MIGRATION AND POPULATION**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **Remit**

The Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population ("the group") will give independent expert advice to the Scottish Government on migration, population growth and demographic change.

The group's responsibilities are to:

- Respond to written commissions from the Scottish Ministers;
- In doing so, consider the effects of migration, population growth and demographic change on (a) Scotland's economy, (b) Scotland's communities, (c) the operation of devolved public services in Scotland, and (d) any other area of devolved responsibility specified by the Scottish Ministers in a commission to the group.
- As appropriate, review evidence, undertake research and prepare analysis to inform the group's response to commissions from the Scottish Ministers.

#### **Resources**

The group will have access to administrative and secretariat support from officials in the Scottish Government. The group will also be able to request analytical input from relevant professional groupings in the Scottish Government as necessary.





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Professor Christina Boswell  
Chair, Expert Advisory Group on Migration  
and Population

by email

25 October 2018

*Dear Professor Boswell,*

I am grateful to you and the Members of the Expert Advisory Group on Migration and Population for agreeing to provide your independent expert advice to the Scottish Government on these crucial long-term questions for public policy. I am writing now to provide you with the first commission to the group from the Scottish Government.

While powers over immigration are reserved, issues of migration, population growth and demographic change have a clear impact on devolved responsibilities of the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Government. These include growth of the Scottish economy, the sustainability and wellbeing of communities, and the operation of devolved public services.

Within the terms of the remit attached to your appointment letter, the group should review the policy recommendations made by the Migration Advisory Committee in their response to the UK Government in their main report on labour market impacts, in order to identify the potential effects of those recommendations on immigration to Scotland. The group should consider and advise on how such changes to immigration might potentially impact areas of devolved competence in Scotland.

In line with the terms of reference for the group, you are able to draw on administrative and secretariat support from my officials in the Scottish Government. You are also able to request analytical support as necessary from the relevant economist, statistician and social research teams in the Civil Service. However, the findings of the group will be yours alone, and independent of government.

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It is up to you as Chair to determine how the group approaches this commission and draws on the available resources to support it in its work. You should prepare a workplan for agreement with my officials in the course of your first meeting, setting out how the group proposes to respond to this commission.

I look forward to your full response, which I would be grateful to receive before the Scottish Parliament recess in February 2019.

*Yours sincerely,*



**Ben Macpherson**  
**Minister for Europe, Migration and International Development**

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St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG  
[www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)

