



HOUSE OF COMMONS



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1. Welcoming Letter

“Elections exist for the sake of the House of Commons and not the House of Commons for the sake of elections.” (Churchill, 1954)

Welcome delegates to CCBMUN’s first House of Commons session! It is an honor for us to preside over such a unique committee, and so we thank you for being up to the challenge. We have worked hard to create this space where your discourse and ideas can become influential.

The House of Commons determines the fate of millions of people living in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Your duty is to propose and implement collective solutions that improve and protect the wellbeing of the citizens. Or on the contrary, keep fueling the never ending party quarrels that are an obstacle for progress.

Therefore, we encourage you to look into the diverse political ideologies present in the committee. Most importantly, to analyze how their interactions can affect the course of the debate. For this, there is no better tool than history, looking back to the past. There is always a reason why these issues came to be.

We fully believe each one of you has a set of abilities that can lead the change. Do not be afraid of putting them to the test, as we are all here to enjoy the debate. Most importantly, remember that knowledge is power, preparation is key and communication is essential. We are devoted to helping you throughout the process so do not hesitate to contact us if needed. We certainly cannot wait to meet you and learn more from each other.

Sincerely,

Sara Velilla

316 2074 323

Samuel Osorio

318 2967 884

2. Introduction to the Committee

2.1. Historical Background

2.1.1. Origins

The House of Commons of the United Kingdom dates back to as far as the thirteenth century. Edward the III, reigning monarch at the time, allowed representatives of counties and towns to join the Parliament. Initially, these people (knights and burgesses) visited the Parliament to make petitions to the king or reinforce their commitment to pay taxes. In 1332, they were granted their own chamber and a name — the House of Commons— and eventually, they began debating issues separately from the king and his nobles (the Lords). Nonetheless, they all met annually in Parliament.

The representatives for the House of Commons were chosen through their constituencies or voting districts. In 1430, constituencies were divided into two categories: boroughs and counties. Parliament also had the power to determine who could vote for representatives in counties. For example, only men who were owners of property worth 40 shilling¹ or more could participate in the election. On the other hand, very few people could vote in the boroughs. Sometimes, even less than ten voters. Eventually, certain boroughs were eliminated in the Reform Act of 1832 because aristocrats used them to retain seats in the House of Commons. Nowadays, the only technical difference between boroughs and counties is the budget they receive.

1547 was the year when the Commons were allowed to meet in the Palace of Westminster for the first time. At this point in history, the Lords were the Upper House and the Commons were the Lower House of Parliament. This means that after a bill or proposal was passed in the House of Commons, the Lords would have to revise it thereafter. They had the final word to stop it from becoming a law or delaying it. However, the amount of power each held and the approval dynamics of a bill have shifted since then.

2.1.2. Modernity

The Parliament Act of 1911 abolished the House of Lords' right to veto or stop a bill originated in the House of Commons. Instead, they could only delay it for up to two years. Further on, in 1949, this period of time was reduced to one year only and the Lords lost the power to amend certain types of Bills. This caused the House of Commons to become the dominant legislative branch in the British government. (*House of Commons | British Government | Britannica, 2023*)

By 1945, it was evident that the House of Commons was defined by a two-party system. In the sense that two major parties (Labour and Conservatives) began to obtain more than 88% of the votes altogether. Their main disagreement lied on the influence of the government in services and taxations. As time passed, more parties such as the Liberals and the Scottish National Party (SNP) began to obtain more influence. Nonetheless, there remained a two-party dominance.

In 1979, the Conservative Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher came to power. Her government privatized several industries that had previously been nationalized by Labour. For some time, economic growth was evident. Eventually, monetary policies such as the "Community Charge"²

¹ Former English and British coin.

² Full explanation of the Community Charge:

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/humanities/dictionaries-thesauruses-pictures-and-press-releases/community-charge>

created discontent. Thatcher had to step down as Prime Minister in 1990. This was followed by several periods governed by Conservatives, until 1997 when Labour Tony Blair won the election.

Finally, it is important to note that the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is constituted by the countries of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Up until 1999, they had no autonomy to decide on certain national affairs such as their own health and education systems or housing. Then the British Parliament granted the power for their respective national parliament or assembly to decide over such issues. However, each one of them kept the right to have a certain number of seats at the House of Commons. As of 2019, Northern Ireland has 19, Wales has 40 and Scotland has 59 for a total of 650 seats, including 533 from England.

2.2 Functioning, Tasks and Powers

The United Kingdom has a head of state and a bicameral Parliament constituted by the House of Commons and the House of Lords. As mentioned before, the Lords are the Upper House, but they do not hold as much legislative power as the Commons. They can still propose bills and debate or delay proposals from the Lower House. Charles III is the head of state and holds the title of constitutional monarch. Even though the monarch possesses little political power, he has certain tasks in the Parliament. For example, the head of state is the one in charge of dissolving Parliament before a general election. He also grants Royal Assent which is the final stage of approval for a law.

The Commons therefore constitute the Lower House. It has 650 MPs (Member of Parliament) each one chosen through popular vote in their respective constituency or borough. Usually, MP's belong to a political party³. The party that achieves a majority of 326 seats in the House of Commons⁴ has the right to appoint their own Prime Minister. If no majority is achieved, a coalition is to be formed. The Prime Minister as the head of government then appoints their own Cabinet of ministers, which are MPs as well. Finally, the most influential figure in the House of Commons is the Speaker. The Speaker is an MP chosen by the rest of the House. They moderate the debate and must remain impartial at all times. The Speaker is also the representative of the House of Commons when meeting the monarch or in the House of Lords.

“The government’s main work in the Commons is to implement the legislative program on which it fought and won the last general election.” (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2023) This is achieved by passing bills that will eventually become Acts of Parliament. As a matter of fact, most proposals

³ Current party composition in the House of Commons: <https://members.parliament.uk/parties/commons>

⁴ Profile and information on each political party in the House of Commons: <https://www.parliament.uk/about/mps-and-lords/members/parties/>

originate in the Lower House. The Commons also have non-legislative duties. They must assess the performance of the current government and debate on national affairs.

2.2.1. Passing of a Bill

If a bill is initially proposed in the House of Commons, it must go through five stages before it is passed on to the House of Lords. These include First Reading, Second Reading, Committee Stage, Reporting Stage and Third Reading⁵. Once it reaches the Upper House, it will have to undergo the same process. If both Houses agree on the wording of the bill, it then applies for Royal Assent.

If on the contrary there are disagreements between the Houses, a process known as ‘ping-pong’ starts. In other words, amendments are proposed back and forth until consensus is reached. In practice, both Houses avoid several rounds of ‘ping-pong’ because it is inefficient. However, and under certain circumstances, a law proposed by the Commons can pass without the Lord’s approval. According to the Parliament Act of 1949, “The Lords can delay a bill for approximately 13 months (from when the bill initially received its second reading in Commons) before it is possible for a bill to be passed without their consent. In reality this is very rare.”⁶ (*MPs’ Guide to Procedure*, n.d.) The other exception comes because of the ‘Financial Privilege’ the House of Commons has over the Lords. Bills that involve taxes or spending can receive Royal Assent without approval in the Upper House.

2.2.2. Scrutiny Duties

Apart from legislating, the House of Commons also has the role of examining the work done by the government. They usually designate committees that look into policies and expenditures. Sometimes, official exchanges known as ‘Question Time’ take place between MPs. They require that ministers from the Cabinet answer questions related to their departments. It is seen as a way for the opposition to challenge certain government positions and raise awareness for certain issues. Most remarkably, they occur weekly.

Finally, the concept of ‘Motion of no confidence’ is very important. When this type of motion is moved, it implies that a group in the House of Commons has lost confidence in the government. Followed by all MPs voting against it or in favor of. If it wins, the Prime Minister must resign and Parliament is dissolved. This leads to a general election. If on the contrary, it does not achieve a

⁵ For a detailed explanation of the five stages of the passing of a bill see the Delegate’s Handbook or visit: <https://www.timloughton.com/how-parliament-works-part-2-passage-bill-through-parliament>

⁶ List of conditions that enable the Parliament Act of 1949 to be used: <https://guidetoprocEDURE.parliament.uk/collections/FtUCoOZu/parliament-acts>

majority, the government is allowed to continue working. It is extremely difficult for a ‘Motion of no confidence’ to be granted in the first place, and if it is the case, for the government to lose it.

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3. Topic A: Measures Against Energy Crisis of 2021-2023

3.1. Historical Background

The first time the UK faced an energy crisis was in the early 1970's because of a perfect storm of variables. At the time, the energy industry was nationalized, which means it was owned and controlled by the government. Coal was the main source for generation of energy in the country back then, and the National Union of Mineworkers threatened to strike if their wages were not raised. Ultimately, the miners ended up going on strike in January of 1972. After a month, a state of emergency was declared because of the shortage in energy supply. In order to withstand the consequences, the government implemented temporary blackouts. However, such measure was

nowhere near enough for the economy to keep performing well. There was disruption in the industry and massive loss of employment.

Even though a deal was reached between both parties by February, the end of the crisis was nowhere to be seen. The Yom Kippur War broke out in the Middle East, and Arab nations embargoed oil shipments to nations that backed Israel. This quickly became a problem because oil was the second source of energy generation for the UK. Followed by further unreliability of both supplies, Britain entered a period known as 'The Three-Day Week'. "From the 1st of January 1974, electricity was severely limited. Businesses had to limit their electricity usage to three consecutive days a week, and within hours that were severely limited. People worked by candlelight and torchlight, wrapped themselves in blankets and duvets to keep warm and boiled water to wash in." (Roller, 2021)

In the late 1980's Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and the conservatives started to qualify the nationalized Central Electricity Generating Board as "inflexible, bureaucratic, secretive and largely outside of political control". (Gilbert & Kahn, 2007) As a consequence, the Electricity Act of 1989 was passed by Thatcher's government in which the privatization of energy suppliers was enacted. In other words, private companies were now in charge of supplying electricity. "The newly profit-hungry energy companies embarked on a 'dash for gas' – transitioning the British electricity generation away from coal towards modern natural gas-fired power plants, fuelled by newly discovered cheap gas supplies in the North Sea." (Macfarlane, 2021) Also, in comparison to alternatives like nuclear power, building natural gas power plants is substantially less expensive and quicker. Because it was deemed to be much more profitable, natural gas-powered stations were erected at a far faster rate during the privatization of the business in the 1980s and 1990s.

Some conservative MPs considered that the issue with state-run energy businesses was that they lacked the "ever present possibility of failure." (Moore, 1992) In an effort to appease politicians, this caused the managers of state-owned businesses to make unwise decisions. Private sector managers, on the other hand, were "harnessed to the satisfaction of their customers." (Moore, 1992) Something ironic to this whole economic shift is the fact that many of the once-state-owned assets in the British electricity industry were purchased by huge state-owned companies from abroad, such as Electricité de France. Technically, even the French government is profiting from the expensive energy bills from the UK. (Hazen, 2022)

Around the 2000's, extracting natural gas from the reserves in the North Sea was replaced by importing such resource from other countries. Huge gas storage capacity was required to keep the energy supply stable, although Britain lacked this type of facilities. The result was being vulnerable to the volatile markets without having much gas stored in case of a price surge. The latter being the

“practice of increasing the price of goods or services when there is the greatest demand for them.”
(Collins English Dictionary, n.d.)

3.2. Current situation

The 2021-2023 energy crisis has therefore been years in the making. In order to understand it, it is important to look into the UK’s current energy infrastructure, global and local causes and the countermeasures that the government has taken throughout the crisis.

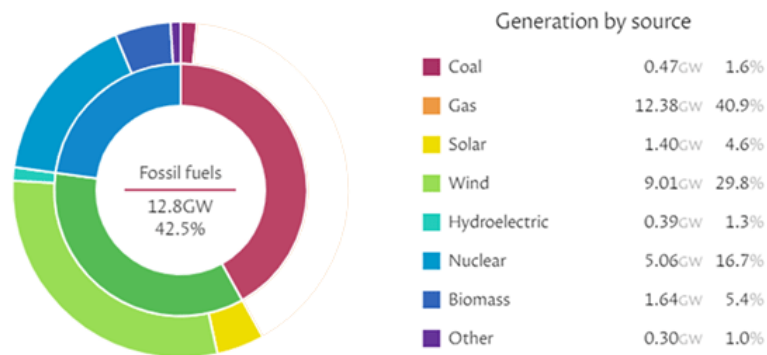


Fig 1. UK Power mix annually, 2022 <https://grid.iamkate.com/>

During the last years, natural gas was the dominant source for the generation of electricity in the UK. It is followed by wind, a green energy source, which covers almost 30% of the demand. However, when low winds strike the UK, natural gas-generated electricity tends to rise and supply 70% of the total grid. Either way, gas is very much vital to keep the lights running in the country. The next step is to come to an understanding about the present sources of natural gas. Despite having its own natural gas reserves in the North Sea, the UK cannot fulfill demand on its own. About one third of the gas comes from the UKCS (UK Continental shelf). The remaining thirds come from European countries and a significant amount is imported from the US as LNG or liquified natural gas. (Finnigan, 2023) Furthermore, Britain’s lack of storage has driven the system to operate on a ‘just in time’ strategy. This means deliveries arrive just when they are needed and in required quantities, so there is no waste and no time spent stockpiling the material.

This *modus operandi* was partly what caused the current energy crisis. June of 2021 saw an economic rebound after months of lockdown due to COVID-19. Businesses and industries worldwide went back to work on full capacity. The demand for energy supply grew immensely and prices began to rise as well. This was the first price surge that affected energy markets globally. And unfortunately, it was not good news for the energy sector in the UK, very vulnerable to market fluctuations. On top of that, as it relies on its economic allies for the gas imports, ‘interconnectors’ are vital to maintain the

flow of foreign energy into the country. They are “high-voltage cables that connect the electricity systems of neighboring countries.” (National Grid, 2023) The problems came when the IFA Interconnector, one of the most important, was damaged in a fire. This interconnector is used to import power from France and assist the UK grid maintain balance. It runs beneath the English Channel between both countries. While the supply of 1 GW⁷ was immediately restored, the remaining half of its capacity took longer to fix, which threatened market optimism and raised concerns about potential delays.

The situation quickly worsened once Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022. Europe, whose gas supply is particularly vulnerable due to its historical reliance on Russia, was expected to experience gas restrictions. First off, NS2⁸ (Nord Stream 2) is a gas pipeline that runs from Russia to Germany. Many in the UK considered it the ultimate alternative to finish the energy crisis off if fully operational. However, after the invasion, Germany ended all due contracts with Russia. NS1⁹, which was an already running pipeline, began to decrease its gas flows progressively. This caused the UK to encounter increased energy import costs, and fuel shortages.

As a consequence, the Ofgem Price Cap began to rise. “The energy price cap sets a maximum price that energy suppliers can charge consumers for each kilowatt hour (kWh) of energy they use. How much you pay depends on how much energy you use.” (Ofgem, n.d.) In April of the same year, every household had to pay £1,971 annually. Estimates show that at the time 6.5 million households were in fuel poverty. “Fuel poverty is when a household needs to spend at least 10% of its income on maintaining a satisfactory heating regime.” (NEA.org, n.d.)

Nonetheless, soaring and unpredictable gas prices are only the tip of the iceberg in the energy crisis. In the UK, there is namely a significant demand for heating systems in households. However, the UK also ranks last in Europe when it comes to energy efficient homes. (Carrington, 2022) This means they use more gas and therefore energy to supply their heating systems, apart from poor infrastructure which allows heat to diffuse easier. To put the situation into perspective, “Just 1.8% of new homes in England meet the top efficiency rating, which means the other 98.2% need more energy to heat.” (Gelmini, 2022) This has led to the proposal of massive programs regarding the insulation of homes, or in other words, rewire their heat flow in order to optimize it.

⁷ How much is a GW? <https://bit.ly/what-is-a-gigawatt>

⁸ For more information on how Russia is cutting energy supplies to Europe through NS1: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-60131520>

⁹ NS2 causes controversy in the West regarding buying gas from Russia: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/1/25/ukraine-russia-what-is-nord-stream-2-and-why-is-it-contentious>

Finally, the role of renewable energy cannot be left behind. In 2019, renewable sources contributed to generating 37% of the national grid. (Rayner, 2021) Wind and solar panels dominate the market, but not without consequences. As these generation sources rely on weather conditions, fluctuations are not uncommon; sometimes there are low wind speeds or there are dark days. This causes energy generation to significantly drop. These variations mean that demand cannot be fully met by these renewable sources during some periods of the year. This issue also comes down to the lack of storage facilities that could compensate during the bad weather conditions. “We will need a complete range of renewable energy solutions including solar, wind, bioenergy and energy storage to ensure a secure low carbon flexible system: one that can respond to both peaks in demand, as well as changing, and frequently more extreme, weather conditions.” (Pitcher, 2022)

3.3. Previous Strategies on the Matter

The first time the government intervened to relieve the high prices was in May 2022, with the Energy Bills Support Scheme or EBSS. “This is a government scheme that will provide a £400 discount to your energy bill starting October 2022. This discount is available to all households who have a domestic electricity connection in Great Britain.” (Warrington Borough Council, n.d.) However, for September of the same year, the Ofgem Price Cap had been predicted to reach £3,549 in October. Liz Truss became Prime Minister for the conservative government in September 2022. She introduced the Energy Price Guarantee¹⁰ or EPG as an additional measure to the EBSS. The EPG would ensure that the Ofgem Price Cap stayed under £2500 during an indefinite period. In October, Rishi Sunak replaced Liz Truss as Prime Minister and announced that the EPG would last until April of 2024, and it might increase to £3,000 as time passed. However, as early as April of 2023 and after pressure put on the government by campaigners and charities, it was announced the EPG would remain at £2500 until July, when natural gas prices were expected to drop. Prices did indeed drop, “on the 1st of July the Ofgem Price Cap fell below the EPG, meaning for most the EPG no longer applies, as we pay the lower of the two.” (Casalis & Capstick, 2023)

The government also plans to extend certain subsidies for the rest of the year and early 2024, focusing on vulnerable groups of people. “Aside from the EBSS, there will be a £900 cash boost for more than 8 million eligible means-tested benefits claimants, including people on universal credit, pension credit and tax credits, paid into bank accounts in three installments between this spring and spring 2024.” (Jones & Lawson, 2023) There will also be a separate £150 for more than 6 million disabled people, due to be paid in the summer, and £300 for more than 8 million pensioners during winter 2023-24.

¹⁰ More details about the Energy Price Guarantee:
<https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/utilities/energy-price-guarantee-need-to-knows/>

When it comes to the impact of the measures in Scotland, it is important to understand the Scotland Act of 1998, when the Scottish Parliament was created. In the same document, it was stated that some powers were to be devolved, and some were still reserved to the House of Commons. In terms of energy policy, the Scottish Parliament has little legislative power. It cannot decide on the following matters: generation and supply of electricity, exploration and exploitation of natural gas and nuclear energy installations. However, under devolved matters, the Scottish legislative organ can decide on the development of renewable sources of energy and the overall planning¹¹. That is why most of the decisions made take place in the House of Commons. The EBSS, EPG and Ofgem Price Cap all apply to Scotland.

3.4. Parties' Stance on the Topic

3.4.1. Conservatives¹²

It is important to note that the 2021-2023 energy crisis saw three different conservative governments in charge— Boris Johnson, Liz Truss and the current PM Rishi Sunak. The Energy Security Strategy¹³ was released in March of 2023 by the government, and it is the latest plan regarding the matter. Sunak 's government will aim to achieve energy independence for the UK by furthering gas exploration in the North Sea, and then boosting the British gas industry. The new strategy also mentions ‘decarbonisation and clean energy’ as ultimate ideals. However, some government officials have insinuated several times that green policies are “unachievable.” (Savage, 2023). When it comes to this specific topic, there is clear division within the Conservative party. Sunak has allegedly received backlash from some of his own party members and warnings “to not back off the green agenda.” (Helm & Harvey, 2023). Not to forget, there’s also a disagreement on whether to lift the ban on onshore wind farms in England¹⁴, and the unfulfilled Sunak’s promises on the matter. Nonetheless, it is important to note that it was Sunak’s government that reinstated a fracking¹⁵ ban, prohibiting the activity in the North Sea.

¹¹ Planning regulates the use of land and granting building permissions

¹² Conservatives are informally called “Tories”

¹³ To see the full Energy Security Strategy, check the Supporting Links section.

¹⁴ This ban only applies to England, not Scotland. What is an onshore wind farm:
<https://www.nationalgrid.com/stories/energy-explained/onshore-vs-offshore-wind-energy>

¹⁵ What is fracking and its consequences:
<https://phys.org/news/2022-10-fracking-key-terms-negative-effects.html>

3.4.2. Labour

Labour seeks to reform the energy sector by nationalizing the industry once again through a publicly owned energy company named GB Energy. The latter would prioritize generating clean and green energy through nuclear plants, solar power and wind farms to drift away from gas overreliance. Also, emphasizing on the fact that the UK must consume ‘homegrown energy’, which would allegedly boost job opportunities in the country. Most importantly, Labour vows to overturn the ban on onshore wind farms established by the Conservatives and invest in massive insulation programs around the country. Affordable and decarbonized energy is their goal. The party also claims to want to stop oil and gas exploration in the North Sea, promising to respect licenses granted before the general election, should it come into government.

3.4.3. SNP (Scottish National Party)

The SNP is the majoritarian Scottish representation in the House of Commons. The party seeks to obtain a whole devolution of energy powers so that the Scottish Parliament gets to fully decide on the matter of energy policy. They will allegedly call on Labour to support the cause. The SNP also supports the generation of energy through onshore wind farms since the ban is not effective in Scotland. Most importantly, the SNP completely rejects the building of new nuclear plants in Scotland, as they would like to shape their energy policy with renewable sources. Worth highlighting is the fact that nuclear installations is a reserved matter only the House of Commons can decide on. However, and if there is ever need to, the Scottish Parliament proposes to halt its construction because it still holds full authority on planning matters. (Amery, 2022)

3.4.4. Liberal Democrats

The Liberal Democrats would prioritize funding for renewable energy sources such as wind, solar and tidal powers. They would also reconsider the conservative ban of onshore wind in England. They seek to give more power to local authorities to decide on renewable energy sources for each community. Most importantly, they would like to insulate all British homes by 2030. And, their policy would strive to build stronger relationships with EU members to build more interconnectors and boost the UK’s green technology on energy.

3.5. Chair recommendations

It is of great importance that you remain loyal to your party’s ideas. However, a Member of Parliament also represents a constituency or borough, and this cannot be looked over. Understand the needs your constituency or borough has regarding energy policy, as well as the affectations it might have faced during the crisis. There are several sources where you can find information about your Member of Parliament. They usually have their own webpage, which you can find if you type their

name followed by 'MP'. Some even have official Twitter accounts, now X, where remarkable exchanges between them take place.

There are several issues that should come up in the debate. The first one is the overreliance on gas that the country has in order to generate energy. In the second place, what role could more diverse sources of energy have to achieve energy security; specially renewable energy. Finally, the flaws in the energy infrastructure of the country that have contributed to the crisis. Following that train of thought, do not forget about the historical patterns and decisions that led to the current situation.

Finally, focus more on the solutions rather than the problems. It is important to debate the issues above, but we want to listen to collective measures that could be taken to improve the situation, both in the short and long term. Try to engage with other MPs, even if they belong to other parties. It lies upon you to avoid another crisis of this kind.

3.6. Guiding Questions

- Why should the United Kingdom stop or continue its reliance on natural gas to generate energy?
- Should the United Kingdom strive to achieve energy independence, or should it keep importing energy from other countries?
- How and to which extent could renewable energy help relieve the energy crisis?
- Which aspects of the energy infrastructure could be improved in the United Kingdom?
- How have the rising energy prices affected the living cost in your constituency or borough?
- Do the needs of your constituency or borough align with the current energy policy?
- Would your constituency or borough benefit more from renewable energy sources or gas exploration contracts?
- What measures could be taken to avoid another energy crisis and guarantee low prices and energy security?
- Has the current government taken adequate measures regarding the energy crisis? If not, how has it affected the situation?

3.7. Supporting links

Energy — Scottish National Party. (n.d.). Scottish National Party. Retrieved August 19, 2023, from <https://www.snp.org/policy-area/energy/>

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4. Topic B: Revision of the Illegal Migration Bill

4.1. Introduction to the Topic

The Illegal Migration Bill seeks to criminalize irregular migration in the UK. It stands out from previous legislation on the topic because "It will prevent those who travel via safe countries¹⁶ and enter the UK illegally from having their asylum claim considered by the UK." (*Nationality and Borders Act Compared to Illegal Migration Bill: Factsheet*, 2023) Most importantly, the Home Secretary of the UK will be in charge of the 'removals from illegal migrants', rather than a fair trial or a court. While they await said deportation, they will not have access to judicial review of the topic within the first 28 days of detention.

To analyze the implications of the new policy, it is necessary to understand the distinction between irregular migrants, illegal migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. "Irregular migrants are persons that move to a new place of residence or transit that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit and receiving countries." (*Migration and Home Affairs*, n.d.) It is important to add that, according to Article 31 of the 1951 Refugee Convention, such migratory status does not strip the responsibility of States to protect the person's rights. In addition, the Illegal Migration Bill seems to use the term *illegal migrant* instead of *irregular migrant*. In recent years, the referencing of irregular migration as a crime has prompted human rights and legal debates. "The term 'irregular' is preferable to 'illegal' migrant because the latter carries a criminal connotation, entering a country in an irregular manner, or staying with an irregular status, is not a criminal offense¹⁷ but an infraction of administrative regulations." (*Migration and Home Affairs*, n.d.) Cecilia Malstrom, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs said in 2010 "Let me be clear about my vocabulary too: illegal

¹⁶ Country where, according to the UK government, there is allegedly no fear of persecution, no potential inhumane treatment or torture and most probably, no ongoing armed conflict

¹⁷ If interested in the usage of the term and its legal implications:

- <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Issues/Migration/GlobalCompactMigration/CriminalisationIrregularImmigration.pdf>
- https://www.ippr.org/files/images/media/files/publication/2011/05/irregular_migration_1493.pdf?noredirect=1

migrants do not exist. People may come to the EU and might be required to use irregular ways...but no human being is illegal.” (UNHCR, n.d.)

Similarly, most of these irregular migrants are looking for international protection. In Europe, international protection is given after requesting asylum and the granting of *refugee* status. The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as

A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country or is unwilling to return to it. (Key Migration Terms, Migration Glossary | IOM, UN Migration, 2019)

The Convention states that all persons who fulfill this criteria can be considered refugees. However, it is not until a State formally grants them *refugee status* that they are entitled to special rights and protections which are also listed in the document. For example, right to decent work (Article 17 and 24), right to education (Article 22), right to not be punished for irregular entry (Article 31). (*The 1951 Refugee Convention*, n.d.)

Most importantly, the Convention also ensures an universal right to all migrants, irrespective of their migratory status: the non-refoulement principle states that there is a

Prohibition for States to extradite, deport, expel or otherwise return a person to a country where his or her life or freedom would be threatened, or where there are substantial grounds for believing that he or she would risk being subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, or would be in danger of being subjected to enforced disappearance, or of suffering another irreparable harm. (Key Migration Terms, Migration Glossary | IOM, UN Migration, 2019)

In that order of thoughts, “Not every asylum seeker becomes a refugee, but every refugee starts out as an asylum seeker.” (*Refugee and Asylum Seeker Facts | Australian Red Cross*, n.d.) It is vital to highlight that the principle of non-refoulement applies to both asylum seekers and refugees. This does not mean that an asylum seeker to whom the principle of non-refoulement is being applied to, will receive the official refugee status or all the special rights it entails.

Under the Illegal Migration Bill, asylum seekers coming in from illegal routes will not have the right to apply for refugee status in the UK. Even more concerning, as their applications will not be considered and reviewed in most of the cases, they will be deported back to territories where their

integrity is threatened. Therefore, the Bill will violate the principle of non-refoulement and several international laws that will be explained further on.

4.2. Historical background

Irregular migration to the UK increased in the 1990's. Asylum applications rose substantially to around 40,000 yearly. However, only a small percentage of applicants were granted official refugee status, because most were found to be economic migrants who allegedly had no fear of persecution back in their home countries. At the time, the Channel Tunnel was the most recorded route for irregular migrants. It is a railway tunnel that connects France and the UK. Irregular migrants would massively request asylum upon arrival in the English side.

Because of the influx of migrants coming in from the European continent, the United Kingdom decided to sign the Dublin Convention in 1997. Said convention completely changed the asylum system in the European Union. The document stated that asylum seekers and their request for international protection had to be processed in the first EU country they had arrived and been registered in.¹⁸ For 2003, there was already a fingerprints database to track the movement of irregular migrants through the continent. This implies that the UK could send asylum seekers back to certain EU member states¹⁹ where their fingerprints had initially been registered or where there was evidence of their previous presence.

Several global conflicts caused an increasing number of irregular migrants entering the European continent as early as 2011, when the Syrian Civil War began. Further on, 1.3 million people requested asylum in Europe only in 2015, most of them from Syrian origin. Many tried to reach Western European countries entering through Balkan nations. Throughout the years, instability in African countries opened new routes, such as crossing the Mediterranean Sea hoping to reach Italy, Spain or France. Either way, a number of these irregular migrants kept moving north once they had reached Europe, seeking to find a way to request asylum in the UK. In 2016, informal refugee camps were set up in the French coastal city of Calais.²⁰ “The majority of the migrants living in the camps come from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Sudan. Migrants from war torn countries such as Iraq and Syria are also there, along with Somalians and other Africans seeking political asylum, as well as displaced Kurds and Palestinians.” (Fox, 2016) The camp was the last destination before entering the UK through transportation vehicles, the most popular method at the time. In 2015, around 37,000 irregular migrants were intercepted in the Channel Tunnel.

¹⁸ For more information about how the Dublin Regulations are applied, see the Supporting Links section

¹⁹ Said EU member state should be a Dublin Convention signatory

²⁰ Informally called the Calais Jungle

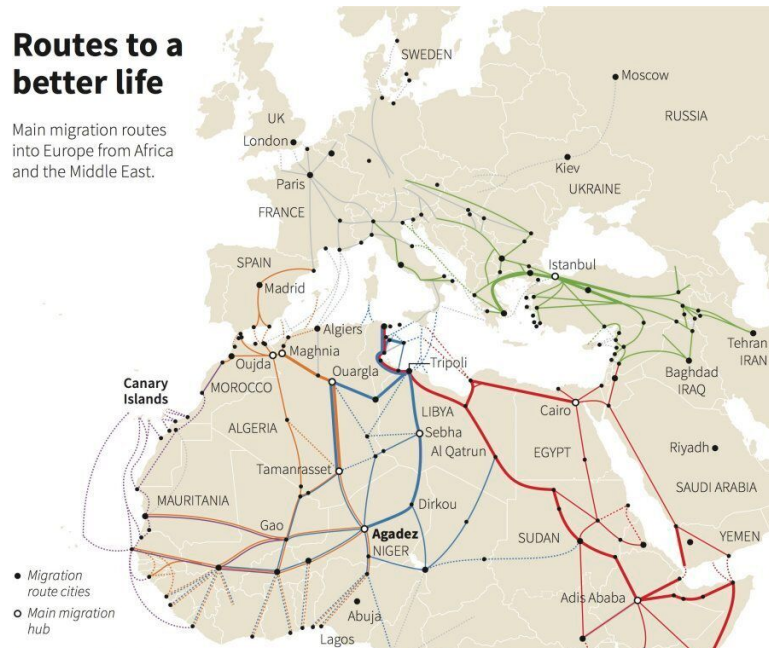


Fig 2. Main migration routes into Europe from Africa and the Middle East

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2015/08/21/migrants-routes-to-europe-map-proves-uk-not-only-destination_n_8021348.html

For 2018, new migration routes began to emerge. British and French officials had intensified vehicle searches on trains, lorries or ferry boats where the irregular migrants used to stow away. Irregular migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats²¹ began to be common, many of whom were returned to France, following the Dublin Convention. Nonetheless, from 2019 to 2020 the number kept increasing rapidly as can be seen in the graph below. One of the suspected reasons for the sudden influx of irregular migrants was the rumored exit of the United Kingdom from the EU known as ‘Brexit’. There was legal uncertainty regarding the new asylum system, and whether it would be more complicated to apply for international protection under new British laws.

²¹ Consider small boats as a small inflatable boat. For reference:
https://www.newagebd.com/files/records/news/202306/204600_142.jpg

Number of migrants crossing the English Channel on small boats

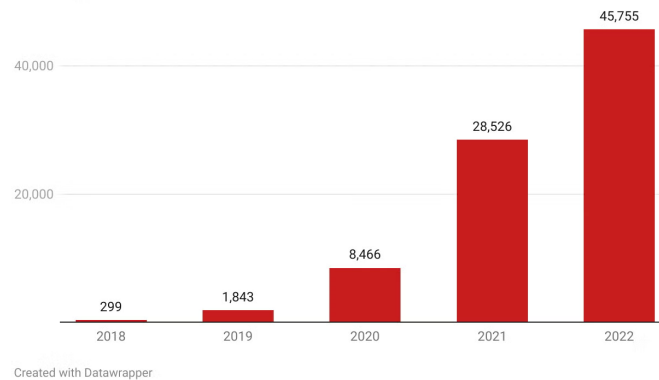


Fig 3. Number of migrants crossing the English Channel on small boats, 2023

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrants-crossing-channel-record-sunak-b2355858.html>

The United Kingdom and Northern Ireland left the EU in January of 2020. However, the Dublin Regulations and its asylum system stopped applying for the UK in early 2021. Under the new legislation, a legal route to claim refugee status because of family reunification was more complicated to achieve, even for unaccompanied minors. Secondly, the ability to return asylum seekers to Dublin countries was not possible anymore, unless there were bilateral agreements. The proposal to return them to a safe third country²² emerged.

4.3. Previous Strategies on the Matter

The COVID-19 pandemic also had an impact on the increasing number of small boats coming through the English Channel. The United Kingdom Resettlement Scheme or UKRS had been put to a stop because of the global emergency in March of 2020. Through this resettlement program, irregular migrants in refugee or informal camps abroad could request asylum to the UK government. If accepted, they would be granted the official refugee status and be reallocated in the UK with access to support and benefits.²³

On other hand, with less vehicles moving from France to the UK, stowaways had no irregular route to travel through rather than small boats. For 2021, the asylum system could not cope with the amount of applications. The government began to place the applicants in illegally small processing centers or even booking hotels for them to stay in. There was a clear lack of suitable accommodation.

²² Country that is not a member of the EU or where EU citizens have no free movement

²³ For full details of the UKRS Policy see the Supporting Links section

Then, the Nationality and Borders Act was passed in 2022. The Act would speed up the expulsion of irregular migrants from the UK and discourage unlawful entry into the country, according to the government. Depending on how they entered the UK, the new rule divides irregular migrants into two categories. “Group 1 asylum seekers are those who arrive directly from a country where their life or freedom was in danger and present themselves to the UK authorities right away.” (*Nationality and Borders Act Compared to Illegal Migration Bill: Factsheet*, 2023) Group 2 asylum seekers traveled via a safe country before arriving in the UK, or have ties to another safe country²⁴ where they should have applied for asylum.²⁵ If recognized as refugees in the UK, they will only be granted temporary protection status. Therefore, refugees will be treated differently based on how they reached the UK. This completely undermines the 1951 Refugee Convention that states no refugee can be punished for how they entered the country.

In addition to the use of reception centers that would be enabled while asylum seekers get their application processed. Said reception centers would have a hostel-type of accommodation, depriving asylum seekers from being reallocated in communities around the country while their request is being processed.

The Act also establishes regulations for the use of offshore processing for asylum applications. This entails moving asylum seekers to a third nation that will handle their asylum claim processes. The administration has previously disclosed that it has reached an agreement with Rwanda on which would be in charge of handling some asylum cases. According to the United Nations, this new provision fully violates the non-refoulement principle.

Finally, the law introduces provisions that endanger the protection of victims of human trafficking. According to the legislation, they have a limited amount of time to give any pertinent information regarding their position as a victim of slavery or trafficking. This is because allegedly, several asylum seekers falsely claimed they were victims of trafficking.

4.4. Current situation

Rishi Sunak became Prime Minister in October of 2022, months after the Nationality and Borders Act was introduced. Even after the strengthening of the measures through the Act, thousands of irregular migrants were still washing up on the British coasts in small boats. Taking into account the situation, Sunak announced stopping small boats was one of his government’s top priorities. He

²⁴ Ties to another country means an irregular migrants has either crossed it, applied for asylum or had been eligible to do so in said country but didn’t

²⁵ This implies that the government expects irregular migrants to ‘stay in the first safe country they reach’

would do so by supposedly introducing harsh laws. That is how the The Illegal Migration Bill²⁶ was proposed by the Secretary of State for the Home Department– Suella Braverman –in March of 2023.²⁷

Under the new legislation, anyone arriving through irregular migration routes to the UK, would have no right to claim asylum. Similarly, the government will have the power to return these irregular migrants to safe third countries, without having to review their application. In other words, asylum seekers that fall under the category 2 stated in the Nationality and Borders Act, will have to be removed from the country without further considerations in most cases.

The Illegal Migration Bill, upon proposal, has been condemned by several international and domestic organizations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees said in a press release, “We urge the Government, and all MPs, to reconsider the Bill and instead pursue more humane and practical policy solutions.” (*Statement on UK Asylum Bill, 2023*) The same concerns were raised in a letter from the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, Dunja Mijatović. “In short, my assessment is that the Bill would have serious consequences both for the rights of refugees, asylum seekers and migrants in the UK, and for the upholding of the UK’s international obligations more generally.” (2023)

The governments of the other countries enclosed within the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland also spoke up against the Bill. The government of Scotland showed their disapproval in a letter to the Immigration Minister. “The Scottish Government does not support the Bill for a variety of reasons and urges you to reverse your plans and not progress this damaging bill.” (*Illegal Migration Bill: Letter to UK Government, 2023*)

The Welsh Social Justice Minister Jane Hutt said, “The Welsh Government has a vision of Wales as a nation of sanctuary. Immigration policy is not devolved to Wales but responsibility for supporting and integrating sanctuary seekers rests with the Welsh Government. Our efforts to do this are fundamentally undermined by the approach taken by the UK Government.” (2023)

4.5 Aspects to be revised of the Bill

4.5.1. Duty to Make Arrangements for Removal

Section 2(4) and Section 2(6) As mentioned in the introduction, the Bill requires the Home Secretary to make plans for a person's removal from the United Kingdom if they entered the country

²⁶ See supporting links for the original Bill

²⁷ The Illegal Migration Bill received Royal Assent to become an Act in July of 2023. This after passing through all the stages of Parliament. However, this committee will work as if the Bill has not been voted yet in the House of Commons. See Chair recommendations for more information.

illegally or traveled through a safe country on the way there. Section 8(1) If a person meets the requirements for removal, they must be removed along with any family members, including children, unless the Home Secretary determines that "exceptional circumstances" exist that prohibit their removal. Section 3(1) "The Home Secretary is not required to remove unaccompanied children but may do so, or has the power to make arrangements for their removal as soon as they turn 18." (Donald & Grogan, 2023)

4.5.2. Disregard of Certain Claims

Section 4(1) "The duty to make arrangements for their removal is unaffected by the making of a protection claim or a human rights claim or an application for judicial review. Any protection claim or human rights claim is by statute inadmissible and carries no right of appeal." (*Illegal Migration Bill - Hansard*, 2023) This means that a detainee may not appeal their removal on the grounds that coming back to their home country would put them in danger of persecution or other circumstances.

4.5.3. Removal

Section 5(3) "People within the scheme will be removed either to their home country (where it is deemed safe) or a third country where their claim for asylum will be processed to start a new life in said territory." (Donald & Grogan, 2023) The Illegal Migration Bill includes a list—officially called 'Schedule' – in which a group of allegedly safe countries²⁸ are laid out. However, the only country listed in the document that has an official agreement to receive asylum seekers from the UK is Rwanda.

4.5.4. Powers to Grant Immigration Bail

Section 13(3b) "In addition, the law makes it almost impossible to apply for release via immigration bail²⁹ or judicial review during the first 28 days of detention. Judicial review provides a vital tool to people in immigration detention, allowing the Court to assess whether their detention is compliant with regulations." (Jones, 2023) A fair trial to approve an immigration bail will not be automatically granted after 28 days.

4.5.5. Modern slavery

Section 21(1) and Section 21(3) The Bill prevents victims of modern slavery and trafficking who enter the UK illegally from receiving life-saving protection and assistance. The 28-day detention period does not provide survivors of trafficking with any protection against deportation. These

²⁸ To see the list, refer to page 58 of: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0262/220262.pdf>

²⁹ Immigration Bail is the process by which one applies to be released from detention, in exchange for fulfilling certain conditions. For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/bail-immigration-detainees/conditions-of-your-bail>

provisions put individuals at danger of imprisonment and expulsion, and also prevent them from requesting asylum, even if they are acknowledged to be verified victims of trafficking. The exception is for those who assist law enforcement in investigations into their exploitation where the Home Secretary determines that their presence in the UK is required.

4.6. Breaches to International Law

Many of UK's duties under international law, particularly those derived from the 1951 Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), may undoubtedly be violated by the provisions under the Illegal Migration Bill. On the first page of the Bill, the Home Secretary Suella Braverman wrote that “I am unable to make a statement that, in my view, the provisions of the Illegal Migration Bill are compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights, but the Government nevertheless wishes the House to proceed with the Bill.” (2023) What also implies a massive violation of the Rule of Law. This means that the government considers that it has the power to break international law and that is not an obstacle in order to pass the Illegal Migration Bill.

Article 31 of the 1951 Refugee Convention “Requires states to determine whether individuals meet the criteria to be recognised as refugees, and where they do meet the criteria to protect them.” (Bingham, 2023) However, under the Illegal Migration Bill, asylum seekers arriving through the UK via safe countries will have no right for their application for official refugee status to be considered. As mentioned before and included too in Article 31, refugees may not be punished for how they entered a territory. However, the Bill does make a clear distinction between the treatments asylum seekers and refugees may receive based on their route taken.

The Bill also undermines core concepts from the Convention. The first one, and already mentioned above– the non-refoulement principle. In the second place, the Convention offers a general view that “Protecting refugees should be a shared responsibility among states.” (Bingham, 2023) The Bill, on the other hand, by implying that irregular migrants should stay in the safe first country that they reach, states a completely unworkable notion. According to the UNHCR, 90% of global refugees cannot take direct routes to the UK and would also overwhelm certain countries with huge flows of irregular migrants.

The European Convention on Human Rights, of which the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland is a signatory, “Creates an obligation for all Member States to “secure to everyone within their jurisdiction the rights and freedoms defined in Section I of the Convention” (Bingham, 2023). One of which is the right to non-refoulement, previously discussed. The non-refoulement principle is contained in Article 3 and obliges “States not to remove individuals where “substantial grounds” have

been shown for believing that the person in question would face a “real risk of being subjected to ill-treatment in the receiving country.” (Bingham, 2023)

Article 4 against slavery is at risk because of the few protections the Bill offers to victims of human trafficking. Even if a victim’s testimony is confirmed to be true, they shall not receive assistance unless they provide authorities with information about the criminals. Article 5 that ensures the right to liberty is also breached by the Bill because individuals can be detained as long as the Home Secretary deems it necessary to complete the process. Not to mention that even if an asylum seeker’s life is known to be at risk of persecution, their application will not be considered because of their irregular status.

4.7. Parties’ Stance on the Topic

4.7.1. Conservatives

It is important to start with the fact that it was a conservative government that passed both the Nationality and Borders Act and the Illegal Migration Bill. It is safe to say that a majority of conservatives in the House of Commons support the proposal. As a matter of fact, almost all of the southern coast constituencies have a current conservative Member of Parliament.³⁰ The same constituencies have been the most hit during the small boats crisis. Especially, because the massive detention centers and hotels where asylum seekers were being kept were located in the region. The conservatives also argue that the past asylum system was being exploited and taken advantage of by economic migrants and ‘alleged human trafficking victims.’ Nonetheless, a small faction of the Tories, has threatened to rebel against the Bill because of the severity of some clauses, specifically those regarding unaccompanied children.

4.7.2. Labour

Labour poses the biggest opposition to the Illegal Migration Bill. Apart from the ‘inhumane’ measures and condemning the breaches to international law, key aspects of the Bill remain unclear and unworkable for the party. Where are asylum seekers going to be detained? Where will they be removed to? For Labour, removing thousands of asylum seekers to Rwanda is unthinkable, both under logistical and security reasons. Instead, their immigration policy would aim towards dismantling the traffickers or gangs that profit from irregular migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats. Secondly, the party would seek to negotiate agreements with the EU that would allow the UK to return irregular migrants to the continent. In the third place, reforming the decision-making process for accepting or denying asylum claims, by scrapping the previous Illegal Migration Bill measures. Finally, to boost and fix flaws in the resettlement programs similar to the UKRS. The government

³⁰ For the constituencies map and party see: <https://maproom.net/demo/election-map/0.html>

would specially focus on resettlement schemes in Afghanistan, as a majority of irregular migrants in small boats are nationals to that country.

4.7.3. SNP (Scottish National Party)

The SNP and the Scottish Government have actively supported the opposition against the Illegal Migration Bill. Just as Labour, they will always strive for a more humane system of irregular immigration policies. The party has accused the government of stripping away basic human rights from people in fear of persecution. The SNP has been very vocal about the issue, especially because the Scottish Government cannot actively decide on immigration policy because it is a devolved matter. This means they must submit to decisions taken in the House of Commons. However, they will continue to warn UK government's of the consequences the Bill has.

4.7.4. Liberal Democrats

The Liberal Democrats recognize that migration has been a positive aspect for the United Kingdom in terms of history, economy and diversity. They do not welcome the hostile language and policies suggested by the conservative government. This party, joining Labour and SNP, strives for a much fairer asylum system. The Liberal Democrats have also accused the government of preventing irregular migrants with valuable skills (doctors, nurses, teachers) from coming into the country. They have also raised concerns about the risk LGBT+ asylum seekers must face if their claim is deemed inadmissible and have to return to a hostile environment.

4.8. Chair Recommendations

The committee will work with a summarized version of the original Illegal Migration Bill. The document will be sent to the Members of Parliament as soon as their contacts are available. The document will only contain the summarized aspects mentioned and explained above.³¹ The number and letter indicative to some sections might change due to the shortened version, but the text will remain the same.

It is important to remember that in the committee's reality, the Bill has not been voted on by the House of Commons. Therefore, events brought up in the committee for this specific topic should have only taken place before the 26th of April of 2023, when the original version was read for the last time in the House of Commons.

The committee does not seek to amend the Bill, but to discuss the implications of the chosen and summarized aspects. The final result will be a Press Release from every party or coalition. For a

³¹ This includes: Duty to Make Arrangements for Removal, Disregard of Certain Claims, Removal, Powers to Grant Immigration Bail and Modern Slavery.

more specific explanation of the drafting procedure for the Press Release, see the Delegate's Handbook.

Needless to say, it is important that you remain loyal to your party's stance. Especially, because such an issue has marked a clear separation between conservatives and the opposition in the House of Commons. If your Member of Parliament belongs to the opposition, we want to hear alternatives that would both help relieve the growing small boats crisis and still comply with international law. Most importantly, justified counterclaims against the conservative's plan. If your Member of Parliament is a conservative, it is your task to convince the committee that tough measures must be taken, and to provide information about how the plan would actually be applicable and efficient. However, we would also hear discussions about the root causes of the influx of irregular migrants and to what extent the government can do something about them. We suggest you look into how their resettlement schemes have performed in the last years.

Finally, there are several sources of information you can use. The Chair suggests and will allow to take inspiration in order to build arguments from speeches, documents or similar sources published or released after the 26th of April. As long as they do not entail the naming of an event that happened after the mentioned date. Remember to check your Member of Parliament's official website and Twitter, and to never forget about the needs that your constituency or borough has.

4.9. Guiding Questions

- How have previous strategies on the matter positively or negatively affected the situation?
- What is the connection between the UK's resettlement schemes and the influx of irregular migrants?
- How has the small boats crisis impacted your constituency or borough?
- How would it be possible to design a much more humane asylum system?
- Are the measures suggested by the Illegal Migration Bill sustainable and applicable? Why or why not?
- Within the Illegal Migration Bill, what changes could be made to avoid breaches of international law?

4.10. Supporting Links

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5. List of Members of Parliament

1. Richmond (Yorks) - Prime Minister Rishi Sunak (Conservative)
2. South West Surrey - Chancellor of the Exchequer Jeremy Hunt (Conservative)
3. Welwyn Hatfield - Secretary of State for Energy Grant Shapps (Conservative)
4. Fareham - Secretary of State for the Home Department Suella Braverman (Conservative)
5. Newark - Minister of State for Immigration Robert Jenrick (Conservative)
6. Cities of London and Westminster - Nickie Aiken (Conservative)
7. North East Somerset - Jacob Rees Mogg (Conservative)
8. Blyth Valley - Ian Levy (Conservative)
9. Isle of Wight - Bob Seely (Conservative)
10. Holborn and St Pancras - Leader of Opposition Keir Starmer (Labour)

11. Doncaster North - Shadow Secretary of State for Climate Change Edward Miliband (Labour)
12. Birmingham Yardley - Shadow Minister for the Home Office Jess Phillips (Labour)
13. Islington North - Jeremy Corbyn (Labour)
14. Hove - Peter Kyle (Labour)
15. South Shields - Emma Lewell-Buck (Labour)
16. Aberdeen South - Stephen Flynn (SNP)
17. Kilmarnock and Loudoun - Alan Brown (SNP)
18. Kingston and Surbiton - Edward Davey (Liberal Democrats)

6. Delegate's Handbook

Understanding the special nature of this committee, the procedure that will be used for the functioning has been adapted from the official customs of the House of Commons mentioned in EAFIT MUN Delegate's Handbook. However, some motions, points and procedures remain the same as in CCBMUN's Delegate's Handbook.

6.1. Roles

- **Chair:** The Chair in the House of Commons receives the name of Speakers. They are the supreme authority in the chamber, the place where the Commons meet, and the ones in charge of moderating the debate.
- **Delegates:** In the House of Commons, delegates receive the name of Members of Parliament. They actively participate in the debate and the drafting of proposals.
- **Logistics:** Logistics assistants in the chamber will be named Serjeant in Arms. Their role is to enforce the wishes of the Speakers and to keep order in the chamber.
- **Strangers:** In the House of Commons, persons who are external to the chamber and do not belong to categories mentioned above are called Strangers. For example, the press assistants or sponsors.

6.2. Procedure

6.2.1. Voting process

Before introducing the motions and points, it is important to understand how the voting process takes place. Following the customs of the House of Commons, votes are to be taken verbally. The Speakers will indicate the motion and then proceed to ask “Those for it”; that implies voting in favor of the motion. In response, MPs should shout “aye”. Then the Speakers will ask “Those against”, and that means one is against the motion. MPs should shout “nay”.

In case there is no hearable difference, which means the result is not clear, the Speakers are to call for “division”. In other words, each MP is going to be called one by one following the order of the list to hear their respective vote. MPs are expected to answer “aye” or “nay”.

6.3. Motions and Points

Motions are to be submitted by MPs or the Speakers. The MPs would present the motion saying “I beg to move that (name of the motion)”³² Then the Speaker would ask the House “The question is to (proposed motion)” and proceed to hear for the voting of the motion. Although motions keep having the same function, the way they are presented are the following:

- **Open/Close and Suspend/Resume the Sitting:** A sitting is the equivalent to a session. The sitting is to be suspended/resumed when the committee is entering the respective breaks and be closed on the last day of the model.
- **Establish the Agenda:** Remains the same as in CCBMUN’s Delegates Handbook.
- **Reading of Written Statements:** A written statement is the equivalent of an opening speech. Written statements should not be longer than one minute and are to be sent before the model to the Speakers.
- **Add to the Registry:** Remains the same as in CCBMUN’s Delegates Handbook.
- **Reading of the Bill:** This motion is of special character of the House of Commons, and is expected to be used only on the second topic of the committee. The motion is stated as “I beg to move that the Bill (name of the Bill) is now read”. The voting process is to be followed and the Speakers will read the Bill for the first time. The Bill will be sent by the Speakers days before the model.
- **Introduce a Draft Resolution/Press Release:** Remains the same as in CCBMUN’s Delegates Handbook.
- **Pass to Final Voting:** Remains the same as in CCBMUN’s Delegate’s Handbook.

³² In order to learn more about the usage of first, second and third person in the committee, see the Description of Members in the Chamber subsection

- **Substantive Debate:** Is the equivalent of a moderated caucus or informal debate. MPs should state the time for the substantive debate or leave it up to consideration of the Speakers.
- **Adjourn the House:** The adjournment of the House is the equivalent of lobby time. The House is expected to be adjourned to debate without the Speaker's moderation on the topics of the committee and work on solving the problems proposed. The original language of the House of Commons is mandatory during the adjournment of the House.
- **Emergency Debate:** It is a unique form of debate in the House of Commons. An emergency debate is a period of time when the chamber debates a special matter that does not necessarily affect the final result of the draft resolution or is not a direct issue related to the topic that is being discussed. The debate has a limit of 3 minutes per intervention. For example, “devolved matters” and their implications in the topics can be pertinent for this type of debate.
- **Suspend/Resume Debate:** Remains the same as in CCBMUN’s Delegate’s Handbook.

Most of the points in the House of Commons remain the same as stated and listed in CCBMUN’s Delegate’s Handbook. However it is important to make a distinction between the following:

- **Point of Information to the Speakers:** Is the equivalent of a point of information to the Chair.
- **Point of Information to the Member of Parliament:** Is the equivalent of a point of information to the speaker. Because of the customs of the House, MPs cannot direct questions to other MPs, so questions are to be asked to the Speakers like the following example, “Speakers, is the honorable member aware of” or “what does the honorable member think about” and MPs answering should respond directing to the Speakers as well.

6.4. Development of the Session

- **Entrance of the Speakers to the Chamber:** When the Speakers are to enter the room, the Serjeant in Arms will shout “Speakers! Hats off, Strangers” Subsequently, all Members of Parliament must rise while facing the entering Speakers.
- **Roll Call:** The Speakers will proceed with the Roll Call by calling each Member of Parliament by its constituency. They should respond with “Present”. If there is quorum, the Speakers will entertain or propose motions.
- **Opening/Resuming of the Sitting**
- **Establish the Agenda**
- **Reading of the Bill (second topic)**
- **Reading of Written Statements**
- **Debate**

- **Introduction and voting of Drafting Resolutions or Press Releases:** This will only occur when the debate of a topic is coming to its closing. During the first topic, both drafting resolutions and press releases are allowed. However, during the second topic, the Speakers will only consider press releases.³³
- **Suspend/Close the Sitting**

6.5. Having the Floor and the Word

When there is a debate ongoing and the chamber has gone quiet, the Speakers can state “I am waiting” to motivate MPs to raise their placards, if no MP is willing to speak the Speakers would say “I am late waiting”, after the third call, the Speakers will decide if the House is to be adjourned or has the power of calling the Prime Minister to talk.

When an intervention is ongoing, Members of Parliament may agree to what is being stated by saying “hear, hear” or “aye”. However, if the Speakers consider such sounds are starting to become very repetitive, they may warn the committee.

Finally, Points of Information to the Member of Parliament follow the same procedure as in the CCBMUN’s Delegate’s Handbook. They will take place after an intervention.

6.5.1. Description of Members in the Chamber

Members of Parliament must follow certain rules when speaking in the chamber. When talking about himself or herself, the MP must use the first person.

MPs shall not refer to each other directly. Instead, they must talk to the Speakers.^{34 35} MPs must never use the actual name of other MPs, only the Speakers are allowed to do so. Instead, they should refer to other MPs as “The Honorable Member for (their constituency)” or if it is a member of the same party “My Honorable Friend for (their constituency)” can be used. Ministers, Secretaries, the Chancellor and Prime Minister can be referred to by using their charge, for example “the Secretary of State.” The use of “you”, “he” and “she” is forbidden. Only the Speakers are allowed to refer to MPs with the second person.

³³ To see details of the drafting of final documents in each topic, see the Drafting of Final Documents section.

³⁴ The Chair may be referred to as Mr. Speaker and Madam Speaker or Speakers.

³⁵ Example when referring to another MP in an intervention: “Mr. Speaker and Madame Speaker, the Honorable Member for Edinburgh South has presented unviable proposals.”

6.6. Discipline and Warnings

When the chamber is being disruptive or disrespectful the Speakers are allowed to shout “order” and then everyone has to be seated. When a specific member is being disruptive or not following the customs, the Speakers state “Mr/Mrs (name of the MP) you are being an annoyance to this house” then the member shall sit and abstain from committing the same mistake to prevent a Naming. Naming a MP is the equivalent of receiving a warning. The process of Naming MPs consists of the Speakers stating “I name Mr/Mrs ...”. Punishment after numerous Namings would be considered the same as Warnings on CCBMUN Delegate’s Handbook.

6.7. Drafting of Final Documents

6.7.1. Topic A: Measures against Energy Crisis of 2021-2023

Topic A does not involve the revision or debate of a specific Bill. Instead, it will entail the discussion of measures that should be taken in the light of an ongoing situation. Therefore, the Chair expects two blocs to form and each to propose a Drafting Resolution, following the average format presented in CCBMUN’s Delegate’s Handbook and using Preambulatory and Operative Clauses. Press Releases as final documents will only be allowed if a Member of Parliament deems it impossible to join either bloc.

6.7.2. Topic B: Revision of the Illegal Migration Bill

Topic B does involve the reviewing and discussion of a Bill. However, and as mentioned in the Guide, the Chair will send a summarized version of the Bill that will be read in the committee weeks prior to the Model. Said Bill will not be amended. Instead, after a thorough debate has taken place, Press Releases will be drafted individually, on behalf of a party or a coalition. However, said Press Releases must be extremely detailed and complete. They must quote sections, subsections or paragraphs from the Bill and recommendations or observations regarding those provisions. The Chair will be available at all times to assist with the drafting of such documents.

6.8. References

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