



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

Kaukab Stewart MSP  
Minister for Equalities  
Scottish Government

**24 February 2025**

Dear Kaukab,

### Asylum seekers in Scotland

The Committee considered its work programme at its meeting on Tuesday 4 February.

As part of that discussion the Committee agreed to write to you seeking an update on how the Scottish Government is responding to the Committee's report on asylum seekers in Scotland, since its initial response to the report in February 2024.

A central recommendation was to extend concessionary bus travel to people seeking asylum. The Scottish Government announced in November 2023 that funding had been set aside to extend that provision. That was subsequently rolled back, however, we understand that the Scottish Government will reinstate this policy in 2026. We would be grateful of confirmation of this.

Moreover, the Committee would also welcome updates on the following matters since you last wrote to the Committee:

- the implications of the Illegal Migration Act for those seeking legal protection in the UK and residing in Scotland;
- how you are providing support and assistance to victims of trafficking residing in Scotland;
- the impact of the Illegal Migration Act and age assessment on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, how local authorities and the Scottish Government are working together to support those children and how the Guardianship Scotland Service is working;
- communication with the UK Government on matters including a right for asylum seekers to work and to access welfare;
- financial support to third sector organisations in order support people seeking asylum to understand their rights and access to services;
- how the Ending Destitution Together strategy is helping people who have been refused asylum and are appeal rights exhausted;
- the provision of ESOL learning and interpreters;

---

Contact: Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email [EHRCJ.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:EHRCJ.committee@parliament.scot). We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

- the impact of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy in enabling persons seeking asylum to access healthcare;
- how you will seek to put in place protections for people seeking asylum that were to be included in the Human Rights Bill.

I look forward to hearing from you on this matter. I would be grateful of a response by 21 March 2025.

Yours sincerely,

**Karen Adam MSP**  
**Convener**