

# Programme 2021-2023

# MIGRATION POLICY SCOTLAND

**Migration Policy Scotland exists to promote a constructive approach to migration. We seek to provide a home for open discussion and an informed response to the opportunities and challenges migration brings.**

Migration is a global phenomenon with wide-ranging impacts. Migration policy includes those policies that seek to govern migration flows, such as rules stipulating conditions of entry and stay. Migration policy can also be taken more broadly to encompass policies that seek to affect the experience of migration for both migrants and the communities of which they are a part. These stretch from policies that aim to support migrant integration generally by facilitating inclusion, to policies that exclude certain migrants in the name of immigration enforcement and/or deterrence. Migration can impact, or be impacted by, other areas of policy in ways that are unanticipated and unintended. Finally, at different junctures migration can become a touchstone issue that acts as a proxy for wider discontents.

Against this backdrop, Migration Policy Scotland aspires to bring together a wide range of people and organisations to navigate this complex and cross-cutting terrain in ways that prioritise clarity over controversy in the search for better solutions on migration for Scotland.

The UK policy landscape on migration has a gap in Scotland. A stocktake shows that fewer than 10% of UK charitable migration organisations are registered in Scotland, with almost half of larger organisations based in London<sup>1</sup>. Scoping work in 2019 found demand for more policy capacity on migration

(outside asylum and refugee migration) across a wide range of stakeholders in Scotland<sup>2</sup>. There is need for an independent, impartial voice for Scotland on migration that prioritises those issues that are pertinent in Scotland, but may not attract attention at UK-level.

**Migration Policy Scotland aspires to bring together a wide range of people and organisations to navigate this complex and cross-cutting terrain in ways that prioritise clarity over controversy in the search for better solutions**

By increasing policy capacity on migration in Scotland, Migration Policy Scotland seeks to benefit policymakers and other stakeholders in Scotland by providing a stronger evidence base and more opportunities for engagement. We want to play a key role in supporting issue framing on migration, bringing together different actors and disciplines to respond to the real-world opportunities and challenges migration brings. We want to actively engage with

decision-makers, communities, and migrants themselves in Scotland on the questions migration raises for them. We will develop a programme of policy research that places a focus on migration and its impacts in Scotland front and centre. We also want to play our part in reflecting approaches and perspectives from Scotland to inform UK level considerations and policy. Migration Policy Scotland will promote dialogue on migration that reflects the diversity of approaches available and promotes fuller consideration of the options at all levels of government.

<sup>1</sup> [Migration Exchange \(April 2020\) Taking Stock and Facing the Future: The infrastructure and resources of the UK migration and refugee sector](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Kyambi, S \(Feb 2020\) Migration Policy Scotland Project: Report of a scoping exercise on the need for greater policy capacity on migration in Scotland](#)

# Our Approach

Migration Policy Scotland seeks to meet the need for more migration policy capacity in Scotland in constructive and evidence-based ways. As a charity registered in Scotland, our work is independent and non-partisan. We believe that responses to migration should be shaped by both expert stakeholders and the people and communities that experience migration.

We promote better informed and more inclusive action on migration in two ways.

## Thought Leadership

We promote fresh thinking and seek to play a leading role in developing a learning approach to migration in Scotland. We do this by:

- Undertaking policy research on key issues
- Bringing in learning from other countries and other policy areas

We plan to carry out in-depth policy research that explores issues of particular concern drawing on diverse methods and perspectives including lived experiences of migration. This will bring together different stakeholders and expertise, seeking to work in partnership wherever possible.

## Infrastructure Development

We support new ways of working on migration in Scotland and build capacity on these issues. Migration Policy Scotland aims to facilitate productive and inclusive engagement, exchange and dialogue across a wide range of partners. We do this by:

- Developing networks and creating opportunities for dialogue
- Acting as a broker and facilitator

We aspire to develop a Platform on Migration Issues for Scotland that provides regular opportunities for networking and information exchange for those working on migration and migration-related issues.

## Question & Answer

MPS Director Sarah Kyambi

### Why have you established MPS?

Migration Policy Scotland is a response to the current gap on migration policy in the Scotland (outside refugee and asylum migration). We aim to meet the need for an independent, impartial voice on migration for Scotland.

### What do you hope to achieve?

We hope that our work will contribute to more informed and inclusive responses to migration. Migration Policy Scotland's purpose is to promote a constructive approach to migration. We want to support policymakers and others to consider the full range of options.

### Who are you looking to work with?

We want to work with a wide range of partners across the public, private and third sectors. We believe that a multifaceted approach can bring together different disciplines and ways of working to include diverse experts, sectors and experiences. The cross-cutting nature of migration requires better joined-up responses.

### What will you do in the next year?

We plan to develop our programme of work around two key themes: migration systems and migration experiences. Our focus in the coming year will include the impacts of Brexit and Covid on migrants and migration in Scotland, as well as monitoring the roll-out of the UK's new immigration system.

Migration Policy Scotland will also be building up the ways in which we work with others to strengthen networks and facilitate information exchange. To that end, Migration Policy Scotland will develop a Platform on Migration that brings individuals and organisations together across Scotland in 2022. We are also planning a Lived Experience Panel to inform our work from the perspective of migrants themselves.

## Areas of Focus

Migration Policy Scotland's approach will draw on a range of disciplines and looks to bring in learning from other countries and other policy areas to develop policy options and recommendations that are innovative, robust and well-evidenced. We aim to find better ways of communicating and problem-solving on migration by drawing on developments in framing, messaging and consultation. Our programme has two initial areas of focus:

### Migration Systems

Migration Policy Scotland's work is set in the context of a broader understanding of the flows and dynamics that make up migration systems and the factors that influence these. Within this, we focus on immigration systems through which governments seek to control or manage migration. Migration Policy Scotland:

- **Tracks migration stocks and flows to Scotland and the UK**
- **Monitors the UK's immigration system and its impacts in Scotland**
- **Investigates the scope for differentiation within the UK's immigration system**
- **Assesses the strengths and weaknesses of different immigration regimes**
- **Examines the interrelationship between migration in Scotland and other policy and practice areas**

Given our focus on the issues that have particular pertinence to Scotland, we want to work on how immigration systems can best address demographic challenges. How can the immigration system support Scotland's aim to attract and retain migrants? What factors determine where migrants settle and what levers are available to government at different levels that can influence settlement? How should decisionmakers at local authority and city level approach issues relating to migrant integration? How can the role migration plays within the Scottish economy and labour market be optimised? What are the trade-offs to be considered when drawing on migration to support productivity and workforce skills? How does migration, and particularly immigration enforcement, intersect with areas of devolved policy and what is the scope for change? We expect our work to have a strong focus on the impacts of Brexit and Covid19, exploring how these may require changes to immigration regimes and practices.

### Migration Experiences

Migration Policy Scotland studies how migration is lived in Scotland. We want to know more about the experiences of migrants in Scotland and the experiences of communities living with migration. Our aim is to elaborate the roles different stakeholders (public, private and third sector) can play to help to make migration successful. To do this Migration Policy Scotland aims to:

- **Research the experiences of specific migrant groups (especially those that are new, changing or marginalised)**
- **Research specific issues that affect migration experiences**
- **Survey public attitudes and community experiences of migration**
- **Develop mechanisms for integrating the lived experience of migrants across our work**

We expect to engage with questions that are particularly relevant to the Scottish context. For example: What are the implications of the changing profile of the migrant population in Scotland for delivering services? Do changes in the size, profile and distribution of the migrant population in Scotland affect how policymakers should think about migrant integration? What do migrants' experiences tell us about the factors driving their decisions to come to Scotland and to stay here? How can decision makers draw on this to better attract, receive and retain

migrants? How can policymakers seek to improve the experiences of new and/or marginalised migrant groups such as people arriving on Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visas and Gypsy/Traveller communities? How are migrants faring in the aftermath of Brexit and

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Covid19, for example in relation to poverty and equality indicators? How do communities in Scotland view migration and how is this changing? How can an approach to migration that is constructive and well-informed be promoted and sustained?