

**Written evidence submitted by Ms Maria Manzi (CHA0049)**

1. Sirs,
2. I wish to make the following comments and observations:

*Reasons behind the increase in irregular or illegal channel crossings, including economic and political drivers*

3. The sad fact that is once an illegal migrant has crossed the Channel and landed on the UK's shores, the likelihood of their being returned to either their country of origin or departure is small — and their return/removal is constantly delayed by a legal system which is not set up to adequately deal with the activities of those within it who, for 'human rights' reasons (and, often, personal financial gain), work hard to prevent their departure. This needs to change.
4. It is also clear that this country needs a national identity card scheme. Other countries in Europe seem to manage to operate such schemes without apparently hindering legal individuals' movements or impinging upon their rights.
5. Possession of a national identity card would be a clear differentiator in terms of who should be here and who shouldn't. In short, those who are within the law need have no fear of either the law or being a card carrier. By contrast, it would provide an immediate means of identifying those who are here illegally or even under duress, such as those forced into prostitution or domestic slavery.
6. A national identity card scheme is neither racist nor biased against the socially disadvantaged. It is a pragmatic solution to a large-scale problem.
7. There is also the case that state benefits are generous in this country — not just the financial but also the welfare, in the form of healthcare, education, housing provision and so on. We are obliged under international law to provide minimum, albeit not demeaning, levels of care. We are not obliged to provide a complete lifestyle choice. Many EU countries have used former military bases to house illegal immigrants whilst their claims to be there are processed. We seem rather late to this, and either providing social housing or hotel accommodation to those from economically impoverished parts of the world is a significant draw.
8. Politically there are many organizations, including NGOs, which are pushing an "Open Borders" agenda. While some may very well have legitimate humanitarian concerns, others have a political agenda: to see the end of the nation state. This has never been agreed to democratically in this country. Indeed, the vote to leave the EU would suggest that the aims of

some very vociferous and highly motivated groups and individuals are counter to what the country as a whole wants.

9. The political ambitions of these people need to be addressed in open session, and their intentions laid bare for all to see. It is not 'racist' to challenge efforts to undermine democracy. Such allegations of racism are too often used to try to stifle legitimate debate.
10. Finally, not enough is being done to counter the efforts of criminal gangs. That this is the case is evidenced by the numbers of people we see successfully making landfall in the UK. The effort to stop these gangs needs to happen away from these shores; it is too late once people have arrived here illegally.

*Actions taken by French and UK government personnel to reduce the risk to life for migrants crossing the English Channel in small boats*

11. It is clear to all that the only way to reduce the risk to life for illegal immigrants is to stop boats from being launched from France. I acknowledge that this is a difficult task and that at least some working within the French Government are putting in their best efforts.
12. However it is also clear that some European coastal state authorities are failing to enforce and are even keen to make the problem of small boats someone else's — the UK's — problem. We have seen press reports in recent weeks of French vessels escorting illegals into UK territorial waters. We need to evidence this and stop it.

*The legal position of migrants crossing the English Channel and the obligations of UK and French authorities and other parties to ensure their safety under UK and International (Maritime) Law*

13. This country is an island. It does not share land borders with any country on mainland Europe. Therefore, with the exception, potentially, of a small number of stowaways on aircraft arriving from foreign countries, we should not have a refugee problem.
14. By definition in international law, the people arriving here are coming from a safe country (France) where there is no conflict.
15. They are not refugees, they are economic migrants and they are arriving illegally. This is immutable, despite the efforts of some, including several members of Her Majesty's Opposition, to obscure that fact.
16. The people arriving here have no right to refugee status. They are engaging in acts of choice, not duress, and this should be taken account when dealing with them. In all cases, those

making Channel crossings imperil themselves. Although we have an obligation to preserve life, we have no obligation to treat 'new arrivals' as needing protection from harm.

17. We need action to assert, again publicly and unequivocally, the status of the people arriving here.
18. The UK government has for some time now, also been providing extra funding and resources to the French government, aid them in reducing and stopping 'irregular or illegal migration, from its northern coastal border area. What exactly is the British Tax payer, paying for?

*Actions taken by the French and UK governments to identify, apprehend and prosecute criminals involved in the traffic of migrants across the English Channel and determine the financial gains being made from human trafficking*

19. I have little doubt that the police, intelligence services and other relevant agencies are on both sides of the Channel and across wider Europe putting time and effort into investigating, arresting, breaking up and prosecuting the various individual criminals and large organised criminal organisations that are profiting from the suffering of others.
20. Sadly the reality, as with any criminal activity, is that the miscreants will always have the advantage over those who follow the law and uphold it.
21. We need more robust action against the criminal gangs that are exploiting this situation. At present, the impression is that there is a lack of political will when it comes to dealing with the issue. The public pronouncements of certain Opposition MPs, pressure groups and the mainstream media are at odds with the sentiments of the majority of the population.
22. They do not however expect it being difficult to then be used as an excuse, to allow and encourage complacency or lack of political will to do so.

*Future arrangements for safe, legal routes for family reunion and claiming asylum in the UK, and the effectiveness of current Government initiatives to re-unite families*

23. The fundamental issue is that clearly the 1951 Refugee Convention is no longer working as intended. It reflects the intentions of the time in which it was drafted and passed into both national and international law. It urgently needs revision.
24. It is a sad reality that no individual nation can solve the ills of the world, nor can any single transnational organisation. Moreover, there is no responsibility in international law to do so — not if it will cause a sovereign nation state to renege on its responsibilities to its own citizens.

25. It is clear that there is no real intention from the UN to help with any revision of the legal situation. The UN is failing to adequately address the migration issue and the criminality behind it.
26. Currently, the 1951 Refugee Convention protects those from an outside nation, rather more than it protects the citizenry of a nation from being overwhelmed by non-citizens. In the case of the UK, the country's citizens are being expected to pay the bill for illegal economic migration. There should not be an automatic or implied right for them once in the UK to expect family unification, particularly when this seems to be interpreted as being an extended family.
27. The simple truth is that the UK as a nation cannot afford such largess. The strategic and civil infrastructures are not capable of doing so. Lastly, at no time have the British people been asked by ballot if they wish to allow unfettered migration. All the while footing the bill for such a policy to be implemented.
28. The UK's various mainstream political parties' manifestos have all promised to reduce or better manage both legal and illegal migration. They have all failed while in government.

*Conditions in migrant camps in France and other states such as Italy and Greece*

29. Conditions within the migrant camps in France are not a matter for the UK Government.
30. It is a sad truth that the migrants themselves, are responsible in part for the violence and degradations, found in many official migrant camps, in part because of the differing ethnic and cultural tensions they claim to be fleeing from. They widely seem to hold expectations that they will be individually housed and provided with infinite resources, despite no nation being able to do such freely for its own citizens
31. It cannot be ignored that for the majority who have undertaken to illegally cross borders, openly state they have the primary intension of reaching in the main the UK, and refuse to claim asylum in Europe. The perception by 'irregular or illegal migrants' that the UK is boundless in its generosity and 'the streets are paved with gold'.

*The care provided for unaccompanied children arriving in the UK.*

32. There is a difficult balance to be achieved here, in that criminal gangs are clearly using unaccompanied children and females as human shields or a means of emotional blackmail in the media. By ensuring that each boat which is predominantly filled with young men has either one or two unaccompanied children or females onboard, they hope to give the impression that the illegal migrants making such crossings are families fleeing war. Nothing could be further from the truth and it is disingenuous to suggest otherwise.

33. In many cases, unaccompanied children will have to be accommodated. However, they are a strain on an already overburdened social infrastructure. They are not economically active and in many cases will not be economically contributive for quite some years. More effort needs to be made to prevent the illegal movements of minors in particular.

34. It would also be difficult to suggest that such children will have either documentation or abilities to give information about where they are from and why they have been trafficked, of any value to either returning them or assisting in the prosecution of those responsible for them being trafficked, including the parents' who have allowed such a thing to occur.

#### Conclusion

35. It is sadly clear to see that there is wide spread abuse being undertaken by individuals, criminal organisation and some institution of both state and the judiciary. These are both exasperating any reasonable measures a nation state would undertake to protect integrity of its borders, and its ability to govern for the good primarily of the nation.

36. The public purse is not bottomless and the good will and generosity of the British public is not without limit.

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