

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO is produced by the **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** in partnership with **BEMIS - empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities**. It provides an overview of information of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland, including parliamentary activity at Holyrood and Westminster, new publications, consultations, forthcoming conferences and news reports.*

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Note that some weblinks, particularly of newspaper articles, are only valid for a short period of time, usually around a month, and that the Scottish and UK Parliament and Government websites been redesigned, so that links published in back issues of MEMO may no longer work. To find archive material on these websites, copy details from MEMO into the relevant search facility.

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Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-10279 Pauline McNeill (Labour): Increase in Homeless Refugees – That the Parliament is concerned regarding the increase in homeless refugees in Scotland in recent years; understands that, in 2014-15, the Scottish charity, Refugee Survival Trust, gave out 336 grants, while in 2017, it was more than 1,000 for the first time; believes there needs to be reform of the asylum system so that fewer individuals and families fall through the gaps in the system and find themselves destitute; understands that homeless refugees face particular difficulties outside the immigration system with no access to work or housing, and agrees with Owen Fenn, manager of Govan Community Project, that the Home Office's agenda "continues to punish the most vulnerable in our society".

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10279>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

British Nationality

Rosie Duffield (Labour) [125377] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support people with a family history that is (a) unclear and (b) unknown to verify their UK citizenship.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: UK Visas and Citizenship have two application types which allow those with unclear/unknown family histories to obtain definite evidence of their status.

These are:

A 'Status letter' application, made on Form NS – for those who believe they may have a claim to British nationality but who do not have the normal evidence required to prove this. The Form and Guidance are on the GOV.UK website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-confirmation-of-british-nationality-status-form-ns>

An application for a 'No Time Limit' card, made on Form NTL – which can be used by those who entered the UK before 1 January 1973 and have no evidence of settled status. The Form and Guidance are here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-to-transfer-indefinite-leave-to-remain-in-uk-form-ntl>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125377/>

Immigration

Stephen Gethins (SNP) [125206] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time taken is for (a) accepted and (b) declined priority applications to be resolved by UK Visas and Immigration in each of the last 3 years.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Published data on visa processing times, including the percentage of visas processed within published service standards, is published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data> (then listed by publication date under 'UK Visas & Immigration').

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-26/125206/>

Visas

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [125638] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of visa applications have been categorised as non-straightforward by the UKVI unit in the past 3 years.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The information on the number of visa applications categorised as non-straightforward is published as part of the Migration Transparency data, available at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125638/>

Immigrants: Employment

Gill Furniss (Labour) [124304] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 January 2018 to Question 120539 on Immigrants: Employment, what steps her Department is taking to simplify the employer checking service for (a) perspective employees and (b) employers.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Home Office has rolled out biometric residence permits to persons subject to immigration control to make it easier for them to evidence their status and simpler for employers to check their right to work.

We remain committed to simplifying the system of right to work checks for

migrants and employers, including through the development of automated checking tools.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124304/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-12-20/120539/>

Migrant Workers

Anneliese Dodds (Labour (Co-op)) [124494] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the named worker system for immigration applications was stopped; and what assessment her Department has made of the effect of that change on the quality of communication with applicants.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The department continually reviews its operation to improve performance and accountability. Customer feedback, including complaints, are taken into account to ensure we offer value for money; which includes improving the services we offer, the quality of the decisions we make and the provision of an excellent customer service.

Customers are able to contact the Border, Immigration and Citizenship System about their cases through customer contact centres, and members are able to contact the department through MP account management teams.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124494/>

Doctors: Migrant Workers

Michael Fabricant (Conservative) [124948] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has received representations on doctors from overseas being prevented from working in the NHS on account of immigration rules relating to their salaries; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: We have received representations concerning the recruitment of overseas doctors under Tier 2 (General), our main immigration work route for non-EEA workers. The minimum salary thresholds were set following consultation with the independent Migration Advisory Committee and are based on pay scales published by the NHS – and have not been recently changed.

When we receive more applications than the number of places available in any given month, priority is given – through the award of points– first to occupations in UK shortage as identified by the independent Migration Advisory Committee, then to PhD-level occupations, and followed by economically valuable jobs paying higher salaries.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-25/124948/>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [125420] To ask the Secretary of State for Exiting the European Union, whether it is the Government's policy to seek to ensure that EU nationals who come to the UK during an implementation period fall within the scope of the provisions on citizens' rights in the final withdrawal agreement between the UK and the EU.

Reply from Robin Walker: The citizens' rights agreement reached in December, and set out in our Joint Report, will provide EU citizens living in the UK before we leave the EU on 29 March 2019 with certainty about their rights going forward. This agreement does not cover those arriving after we exit the EU.

During the implementation period, EU citizens will be able to continue to visit, live and work in the UK as they do now, but we will introduce a registration scheme in

preparation for our future immigration system. This is an important step towards regaining full control of our borders.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125420/>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665869/Joint_report_on_progress_during_phase_1_of_negotiations_under_Article_50_TEU_on_the_United_Kingdom_s_orderly_withdrawal_from_the_European_Union.pdf

Refugees

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [124424] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Government's response to the Home Affairs Committee's Twelfth Report of Session 2016-17, Asylum accommodation, HC637, if she will publish the results of the pilot into UK Visas and Immigration contacting refugees and offering them an appointment with the Department for Work and Pension's Vulnerable Persons' service.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The new scheme was put in place to ensure that refugees who wish to apply for benefits are assisted with their application and receive a prompt first payment of any benefit for which they qualify. The scheme was tested successfully in the North East and Yorkshire and Humberside regions earlier this year and has now been rolled out to all areas of the country where asylum seekers are accommodated by the Home Office. The Government is carefully evaluating the implementation and impact of this new service and will complete its evaluation in due course.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124424/>

The Report referred to above can be read at

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/637/637.pdf>

and the Government response referred to above can be read at

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmhaff/551/551.pdf>

Refugees

The following two questions both received the same answer

Meg Hillier (Labour Co-op) [124655] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of refugees who will be resettled in the UK under the Gateway Protection Programme in 2018.

Meg Hillier (Labour Co-op) [124659] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of refugees who will be resettled in the UK under the asylum route in 2018.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Government's current commitment is to resettle 750 refugees each financial year under the Gateway Protection Programme

We do not resettle people under the asylum route and there is no provision within our Immigration Rules for a person to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum; a person must be in the UK in order to lodge an asylum claim here. All claims for asylum are considered on their individual merits, and where a genuine

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124655/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124659/>

Refugees

The following two questions both received the same answer

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [124809] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, what the eligibility criteria is for people to qualify under the mandate resettlement scheme.

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [124810] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many refugees resettled under mandate resettlement were (a) immediate family members of sponsors in the UK and (b) extended family members in the past three years.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Mandate plays an important part in facilitating the resettlement of refugees in various locations across the world. There is no specific quota or target for the number of people resettled via Mandate. The referral of cases (and the corresponding numbers of arrivals) under Mandate is dependent on the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) identifying cases which meet its criteria. This criteria can be found in the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook under the UK's country chapter available at <http://www.unhcr.org/40ee6fc04.html> We publish a breakdown of arrivals under our resettlement schemes as part of the Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release, which was most recently updated on 30 November, however we do not publish a disaggregation of those resettled to immediate or extended family members.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124809/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124810/>

Refugees: Employment

Kemi Badenoch (Conservative) [124937] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to update guidance on the gov.uk website on the rights of refugees to work.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Those granted refugee status or humanitarian protection, including those who are resettled to the UK, have the right to work here without any restrictions. There is guidance available on Gov.UK that provides information about the help that refugees can receive to find work, and the benefits to which they are entitled: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/refugees-guidance-about-benefits-and-pensions/help-available-from-the-department-for-work-and-pensions-for-people-who-have-been-granted-leave-to-remain-in-the-uk>.

Where applicable, employers can check whether an individual has the right to work using the Employer Checking Service. Guidance on using this service can be found on Gov.UK here: <https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work>.

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work in the UK unless their claim has been outstanding for at least 12 months through no fault of their own. Those who are allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List. This is made clear on Gov.UK at: <https://www.gov.uk/claim-asylum>.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-25/124937/>

Asylum

David Hanson (Labour) [124413] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people seeking asylum are being considered under the National Referral Mechanism.

Slavery

David Hanson (Labour) [124417] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many outstanding decisions UK Visas and Immigration has on victims of modern slavery who have been referred under the National Referral Mechanism.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Data on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) are published regularly by the National Crime Agency and in the UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery. These reports are available via the following links:

<http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/publications/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/2017-uk-annual-report-on-modern-slavery>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124413/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124417/>

Asylum and Slavery

Carolyn Harris (Labour) [124330] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether an impact assessment was completed before her Department's announcements on the alignment of basic living costs for victims of modern slavery and asylum seekers.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The subsistence rates for victims of modern slavery are provided to cover the essential living needs of potential victims of modern slavery. When considering the level of these rates, the essential needs of potential victims were assessed to be comparable to the needs of asylum seekers. This is why the tested and established methodology that has been developed to measure the level of subsistence for asylum seekers will be adopted to measure the level of subsistence for potential victims of modern slavery. Within this policy, dependent children will receive a higher level of subsistence than they currently receive, and pregnant victims will receive an additional payment of £300. This will ensure that the most vulnerable individuals in NRM support will receive a greater level of finance. The policy for subsistence rates also includes the ability for individuals or their support providers to apply for further funding if there is a clear need for victims to receive more financial support to meet their essential living needs.

Where it has been identified that victims of slavery have needs above those of asylum seekers, these needs are met within the victim care contract, for example travel costs for counselling and medical appointments. We are working closely with the Salvation Army and the Independent Anti Slavery Commissioner to ensure that the implementation of this change is as smooth as possible.

Victims will continue to receive dedicated and expert support, which is tailored to their unique needs as victims of modern slavery. This includes access to legal aid, counselling, NHS medical and dental services. This will ensure there is a fair and consistent approach for all individuals receiving similar government support. Furthermore, more money is being made available to treble the period of "move on" support, which will help people leaving victim support with their transition to other arrangements. It is essential that we target support to confirmed victims, at the point they need it most.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124330/>

Asylum and Slavery

Carolyn Harris (Labour) [124586] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what account her Department is taking of provisions relating to the alignment of basic living costs for victims of modern slavery and asylum seekers under the EU Directive and Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in developing its reforms of the National Referral Mechanism.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The subsistence rates for victims of modern slavery are provided to cover the essential living needs of potential victims of modern slavery. When considering the level of these rates, the essential needs of potential victims were assessed to be comparable to the needs of asylum

seekers. This is why the tested and established methodology that has been developed to measure the level of subsistence for asylum seekers will be adopted to measure the level of subsistence for potential victims of modern slavery. Where it has been identified that victims of slavery have needs above those of asylum seekers or have additional entitlements under the Council of Europe Convention Against Trafficking in Human Beings, these needs are met within the existing Adult Victims of Modern Slavery Care Contract.

Victims will continue to receive dedicated and expert support, which is tailored to their unique needs as victims of modern slavery. This includes access to legal aid, counselling, NHS medical and dental services. This will ensure there is a fair and consistent approach for all individuals receiving similar government support. Furthermore, more money is being made available to treble the period of “move on” support, which will help people leaving victim support with their transition to other arrangements. It is essential that we target support to confirmed victims, at the point they need it most. We are working closely with the Salvation Army and the Independent Anti Slavery Commissioner to ensure that the implementation of this change is as smooth as possible.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124586/>

Asylum

Jo Stevens (Labour) [124731] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of trends in the average time taken to process asylum applications.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Home Office has a Service Standard to make an initial asylum decision within 182 days of the date of claim, which the Department has met for the last consecutive 39 months.

Despite this we are aware of the number of older cases in the system. These are more complex cases which generally have barriers that prevents an initial asylum decision being made. These barriers are often varied and require time to clear.

The Home Office is aware of the number of older cases and has plans in place to reduce the number of cases older than six months. These include a staff retention strategy to ensure it retains its highly skilled asylum decision makers, further expansion of digital processes to increase caseworking flexibility and the creation of a new team in Bootle which has been specifically established to tackle the older cases in the asylum system. This team has been designed to establish and roll out best practise in the management of older cases.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124731/>

Asylum

David Drew (Labour Co-op) [125290] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the home countries were of the people who were granted asylum on the basis of being illegally trafficked for each the last five years for which figures are available.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Home Office does not record the specific parts of the countries from which asylum claimants originate. Therefore, we cannot identify how many asylum claims have been granted or refused leave from specific parts of the countries of origin.

Published data relating to the outcomes of asylum claims from each country can be found in tab as_01 at volume 1 of the quarterly Immigration Statistics release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2017-data-tables>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125290/>

Asylum: Appeals

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [123923] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there are plans to provide financial assistance to asylum seekers who have to travel to Liverpool to appeal asylum decisions.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Asylum appeal hearings are not held in Liverpool. Asylum seekers are not required to travel to Liverpool to appeal against their asylum decisions or attend their asylum appeal hearing.

The Home Office implemented a new policy on 30 March 2015 which requiring all failed asylum seekers (FAS) who have exhausted their appeal rights, but who wish to make an asylum further submission, to do so in person. Those who wish to submit further submissions on asylum or human rights grounds are required to telephone the further submissions unit and book an appointment to submit their further submissions in person in Liverpool.

There are no plans to provide financial assistance to those individuals wishing to submit their further submissions in person in Liverpool. However, in exceptional circumstances, for example due to a disability or severe illness, further submissions from failed asylum seekers may be accepted either through local arrangements or by post, providing that supporting evidence is submitted, as specified within the published further submissions policy which can be accessed at the following:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/502334/Further_Submissions_API_v9_0_EXT.pdf

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123923/>

Immigration Bail

The following three questions all received the same answer

Stuart McDonald (SNP) [124276] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people who are released from immigration detention on immigration bail as a result of the repeal of section 4(1) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

Asylum: Appeals

Stuart McDonald (SNP) [124277] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the First Tier Tribunal on the (a) repeal of section 4(1) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and (b) provision of bail accommodation.

Immigrants: Detainees

Stuart McDonald (SNP) [124278] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the (a) the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government and (b) Ministers in the devolved administrations on the effect of releasing immigration detainees without bail accommodation on (a) local authorities, (b) street homelessness and (c) statutory homelessness applications.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Section 4(1) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 was repealed on 15 January on the coming into effect of new immigration bail provisions in Schedule 10 to the Immigration Act 2016, including new powers to provide accommodation in certain circumstances. The repeal of section 4(1) is not expected to have any discernible effect on the number of people released from immigration detention on immigration bail

There has been communication with the First-tier Tribunal about the implications of Schedule 10 to the 2016 Act, including the repeal of section 4(1) of the 1999 Act and provision of bail accommodation. Regular discussions have also taken place with Ministry of Justice officials from both HM Courts and Tribunals Service and HM Prisons and Probation Service. No discussions on this subject have taken place with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local

Government or Ministers in the devolved administrations.

Section 4(1) of the 1999 Act was used to provide accommodation to people released from immigration detention on bail and in limited circumstances to other categories of migrants who required support in order to avoid a breach of their rights under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights

Paragraph 9 of Schedule 10 to the 2016 Act replaces this with powers to provide accommodation to people released from detention on bail and to those who require it in order to avoid a breach of their Article 3 rights

Additionally, individuals granted immigration bail who are asylum seekers or failed asylum seekers still have access to support provided under sections 95 or 4(2) of the 1999 Act if they would otherwise be destitute and meet the normal eligibility criteria. Any migrant who is not entitled to support and who could leave the UK in order to avoid homelessness should do so.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124276/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124277/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124278/>

Human Trafficking

Tulip Siddiq (Labour) [124739] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 7 January 2016 to Question 21042, what steps her Department has taken following the conclusion of the pilots in West Yorkshire and the South West of the recommendations of the National Referral Mechanism review.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The national referral mechanism pilots ran in West Yorkshire and the South West from August 2015 until March 2017. They were fully evaluated. The evaluation was published in October 2017

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/an-evaluation-of-the-national-referral-mechanism-pilot>

This findings of this evaluation were used to inform the reform of the National Referral Mechanism. Details of the reform measures can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/modern-slavery-victims-to-receive-longer-period-of-support>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124739/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2016-01-05/21042/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Immigration: Statistics

Lord Northbrook (Conservative) [HL5077] To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration has been given to publishing student and non-student immigration figures separately.

Reply from Lord Young of Cookham: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the Authority to reply ...

John Pullinger, Office of National Statistics: ... The Office for National Statistics (ONS) currently publishes estimates of immigration by main reason as part of the migration statistics quarterly release (MSQR). This includes estimates of those who come to the UK for study for twelve months or more. The latest

estimates (for the year ending June 2017) of Long-Term International Migration (LTIM) were released on 30 November 2017¹.

We do not currently publish net migration figures broken down by reason. ONS continually reviews and improves the quality of our statistics to ensure that public debate is well informed. Alternative breakdowns of net migration figures may be considered where it would be helpful. Current sources that measure net migration limit the types of alternative variations that can be produced, for example, the International Passenger Survey (IPS) is not suitable for identifying how many students leave the UK in isolation since some non-EU students may remain in the UK after their studies and switch to non-study visas, apply for settlement and others may eventually become British citizens. However, administrative data sources are being developed that may provide a better understanding of student migration in the UK, particularly what students do following their studies.

On 24 August 2017, ONS published a detailed report on non-EU international student migration². This report showed that estimates of students emigrating after their studies derived solely from the International Passenger Survey (IPS) are likely to be an underestimate. The work does not provide evidence of an issue with overall net migration figures.

The data on former students leaving is based on asking people to recall their original reason for arriving and is often asked when their intentions to return are uncertain. We caution users from subtracting emigration after study numbers from immigration to study numbers. Users should therefore take caution in over-interpreting emigration by reason for originally coming to the UK, but should have confidence in the total net migration figures.

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/november2017>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/whats happeningwithinternationalstudentmigration/2017-08-24>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-24/HL5077/>

Immigration: Appeals

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4952] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many initial immigration decisions were overturned on appeal in (1) 1990, (2) 1995, (3) 2000, (4) 2005, (5) 2010, and (6) 2015.

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: The number of immigration appeals allowed by first-tier tribunals were:

2005 – 13,221

2010 – 35,563

2015 – 17,582

The equivalent information for 1990, 1995 and 2000 is not held centrally by HM Courts and Tribunals Service.

For information on immigration appeals allowed, the following Immigration and Asylum Tribunal categories have been combined: Managed Migration, Entry Clearance, Human Rights & EEA Free Movement.

Information on the number of Immigration and Asylum appeal decisions is published quarterly, from 2007/08 onwards:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2017.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4952/>

Migrant Workers: Doctors

Lord Beecham (Labour) [HL5054] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they

intend to reduce the Home Office salary threshold for granting visas in respect of overseas doctors seeking employment in UK hospitals; and if not, why not.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The minimum salary thresholds were set following consultation with the independent Migration Advisory Committee and are based on pay scales published by the NHS.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-24/HL5054/>

Refugees: Children

Baroness Stroud (Conservative) [HL4858] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children were resettled in the UK in each quarter of (1) 2016, and (2) 2017; and what were (a) the countries of origin, (b) the age, and (c) the gender of those children.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes a regular breakdown of the nationality of refugees resettled to the UK each quarter as part of the Immigration Statistics release available on the GOV.UK website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>. The most recent publication contains information on the number of resettlements up to 31 September 2017 inclusive

In the period 1 January 2016 to 31 September 2017, the UK welcomed 9,897 refugees under its schemes, approximately half of which were female and half were children.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-17/HL4858/>

Refugees: Children

Baroness Stroud (Conservative) [HL4962] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children were resettled in the UK under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme in each quarter of (1) 2016, and (2) 2017, for which figures are available; and what were countries of origin for those children.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes a regular breakdown of the nationality of refugees resettled to the UK each quarter as part of the Immigration Statistics release available on the GOV.UK website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>.

The most recent publication contains information on the number of resettlements up to 31 September 2017 inclusive. Between July 2016, the start of the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme, up to 31 September 2017, the UK welcomed 412 refugees under the scheme. There is no published breakdown of the number of children.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4962/>

Refugees: Children

The following three questions all received the same answer

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL5045] To ask Her Majesty's Government what extra funding and human resources they are providing to ensure that children eligible under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 are transferred to the UK without delay.

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL5046] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will send additional UK Liaison Officers to Greece and Italy to help process the transfer of children eligible under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 to the UK.

Refugees: France

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL5047] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by the Home Secretary on 19 January (HCWS415), whether they sought and were given guarantees that no excessive force would be used

against refugees and migrants by authorities in France as part of their supplementary agreement.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is fully committed to transferring the specified number of 480 unaccompanied children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 as soon as possible

As part of the Sandhurst Treaty, signed between the UK and France on 18 January 2018, we committed to deploying a UK Liaison Officer to France by 1 April 2018 to facilitate cooperation on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. We already have secondees based in Italy and Greece working on transfers of unaccompanied children to the UK under both the Dublin Regulation and section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

However, as set out in our published policy statement, it is for France, Greece and Italy to refer potentially eligible children under section 67 of the Immigration Act as the children are on their territory. The UK must operate within the national laws of our partner countries.

In addition, after extensive discussion with France, Greece and Italy, we have agreed to amend the eligibility date on an exceptional basis to ensure we can transfer the circa. 260 remaining unaccompanied children and meet our obligation under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. The Government had previously insisted on the previous eligibility date of 20 March 2016 to avoid establishing an open-ended relocation scheme from Europe, as this would increase the pull factor that puts children's lives at risk.

The UK and France share a special relationship and have a strong track record of cooperating with France to manage migration and to protect our shared border. The primary responsibility for refugees and migrants lies with the authorities of the country in which they are present. France has many of the same international obligations towards those on its territory as the UK, and President Macron has made clear that French authorities should behave in an exemplary manner.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5045/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5046/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5047/>

Asylum: Calais

The following two questions both received the same answer

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4849] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to co-operate with the government of France in establishing an asylum processing centre in Calais.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4850] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to President Macron's new initiatives to tackle the refugee crisis.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: This Government is fully committed to helping and supporting the most vulnerable refugees affected by the migration crisis. We continue to work closely with Greece and other EU Member States in respect of immigration matters. We have frequent contact with the Greek authorities, at official and ministerial level, to discuss the situation for migrants. The UK is providing support to help the Greek authorities, the European Asylum Support Office and the European Commission deal with flows of migrants, including by deploying experts and interpreters to the Greek islands as well as specialists to the EU Commission team in Athens.

The UK is also working very closely with EU Member States to support

unaccompanied asylum seeking children. However, the primary responsibility for unaccompanied children lies with the authorities of the Member State in which they are present; the UK Government does not have the authority to operate on the territory of another sovereign state without permission.

We share a special relationship with France and have a strong track record of cooperating with France to manage migration and to protect our shared border. As part of the Sandhurst Treaty, signed between the UK and France on 18 January 2018, both parties agreed to further enhance cooperation in a number of areas, including migration. This includes a number of further measures in respect of unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children, and a commitment to support France in its provision of accommodation facilities located outside the Calais and Dunkirk areas, such as Reception and Assessment Centres. Further information on the treaty can be found here:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2018-01-19/HCWS415/>.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-17/HL4849/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-17/HL4850/>

Asylum: Appeals

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4953] To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of asylum appeals were successful in (1) 1990, (2) 1995, (3) 2000, (4) 2005, (5) 2010, and (6) 2015.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on the number of asylum appeals received and determined, broken down by outcome, in the quarterly Immigration Statistics release. The latest figures are available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017>

Table as_14 in the asylum tables (volume 4) contains annual breakdowns of the number of appeals between 2007 and 2016. The table is attached for further reference.

Data prior to 2007 can be found in the national archives:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110218143229/http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbarchive.html>

Data for 1990 are not available as the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 came into force on 26 July 1993.

[Table as_14 - Asylum Tables \(vol 4\)](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4953/>

Asylum: Travel

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5044] To ask Her Majesty's Government what payment, if any, is available from Her Majesty's Government to help asylum seekers with travel costs.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The level of the cash allowance provided to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute is reviewed regularly to ensure that it is sufficient to cover their essential living needs.

The report on the 2017 review which contains consideration of the access to travel for asylum seekers has been published at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-on-review-of-cash-allowance-paid-to-asylum-seekers>

[Report on Review of Cash Allowance - 2017](#)

Asylum: Finance

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5043] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish a typical list of foodstuffs and other items that can be purchased for the £35.95 weekly Azure Card.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: There are no plans to publish such a list.

The Azure card is no longer provided to failed asylum seekers supported under section 4(2) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

People receiving this support are instead issued with an "Aspen card", which they can use to buy food and other essentials to the value of £35.39 per week. The Aspen card is a pre-paid debit card bearing the visa logo and can be used at any retail outlets that accept visa payments.

There are no restrictions on the types of food that can be purchased with the card.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5043/>

Asylum: Mental Illness

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5041] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers have required treatment for mental breakdown in each of the last five years.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Department does not hold data on the number of asylum seekers who have required treatment for mental breakdown in each of the last five years in a reportable format

However, UKVI has an Adult and Children Safeguarding Strategies in place to make sure vulnerable people, regardless of age, are protected. This includes identifying children and adults at risk and sensitively signposting them to appropriate support services.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5041/>

Asylum: Humanism

Baroness Bakewell (Labour) [HL4909] To ask Her Majesty's Government what protection is afforded to humanists seeking asylum in the UK on the grounds of religious persecution.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: All claims for asylum are considered on their individual merits, and where people establish a genuine need for protection, or a well founded fear of persecution, refugee status will be granted.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4909/>

Asylum: Children

The following two questions both received the same answer

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL4954] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of France about the timeframe in which the UK will accept unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who qualify under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 from France and other parts of Europe.

Baroness Sheehan (Liberal Democrat) [HL4955] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of France about the timeframe in which the UK will accept unaccompanied asylum-seeking children who qualify under family reunification rules from France and other parts of Europe.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is committed to close cooperation and collaboration with EU partners, including France, to ensure the

efficient and timely operation of the Dublin Regulation and national relocation schemes, namely to relocate and support unaccompanied children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

As part of the Sandhurst Treaty, signed between the UK and France on 18 January 2018, both parties agreed to further enhance cooperation in a number of areas, including migration. In respect of transferring the asylum claim of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children under Article 8(1) and Article 8(2) of the Dublin Regulation, we have committed to provide a decision on to France within 10 working days of the conclusion of engagement with the relevant UK local authority; and, if applicable, France will aim to transfer the child to the UK within 15 working days.

In addition, we announced the allocation of a £3.6M development fund, as part of the UK's overall £45.5M funding commitment, which the UK intends to use to work with France to identify projects which support genuine claims through the Dublin process and ensure that those with no prospect of transferring to the UK are informed of their options.

The UK is fully committed to transferring the specified number of 480 unaccompanied children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 as soon as possible. Over 220 children are already here and transfers are ongoing. After extensive discussion with France, Greece and Italy, we have agreed to amend the eligibility date on an exceptional basis to ensure we can transfer the circa. 260 remaining unaccompanied children and meet our obligation under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. The Government had previously insisted on the previous eligibility date of 20 March 2016 to avoid establishing an open-ended relocation scheme from Europe, as this would increase the pull factor that puts children's lives at risk.

In addition, we will deploy a UK Liaison Officer to France by 1 April 2018 to facilitate cooperation on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4954/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4955/>

Asylum: Children

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5039] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether and if so when, and under what authority, the specified number of young asylum seekers to be received into the UK was fixed at 480.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: In accordance with section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016, the Government conducted a comprehensive consultation with local authorities across the UK in 2016 on the number of children they would be able to accommodate and support in addition to the more than 4,500 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children already being looked after by local authorities across the country.

Following the consultation, in April 2017, the Government set the specified number of children to be transferred under section 67 at 480. This is a one-off commitment.

The Government maintains a continual dialogue with local authorities and Strategic Migration Partnerships. Any further places offered by local authorities will be gratefully received, and we will use them to fulfil our existing commitments, including ensuring a fairer distribution of unaccompanied asylum seeking children between local authorities through the National Transfer Scheme.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5039/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Lord Ramsbotham (Crossbench) [HL4947] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to introduce a robust screening process so that immigrants and asylum seekers who are survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, and others who are recognised as vulnerable under their adults at risk policy, are identified before they are detained.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: In response to the Stephen Shaw review the Government has introduced a range of measures to identify and safeguard vulnerable people liable to be detained for immigration purposes

The adults at risk in immigration detention policy, which came into force on 12 September 2016 has introduced a case-by-case evidence-based assessment of the appropriateness of detention for any individual, including victims of sexual or gender based violence, who is considered vulnerable, balanced against the immigration control considerations that apply in their case.

The policy is supported by the cross-cutting Detention Gatekeeper, which assesses vulnerability and provides challenge to decisions about who enters immigration detention, and scrutinises prospects and speed of removal.

The Detention Centre Rules 2001 (Statutory Instrument) and published Home Office guidance provide additional safeguards including individuals being offered a physical and mental examination within 24 hours of admission to detention, a requirement for immigration removal centre doctors to report to the Home Office any special illness or conditions (including torture) that might affect an individual remaining in detention and processes for staff to follow when there has been a change to the physical or mental health of a detainee, or a change in the nature or severity of their identified vulnerability, that may impact on the decision to detain.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4947/>

The Stephen Shaw review, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/490782/52532_Shaw_Review_Accessible.pdf

Press Releases

Migration: Number of asylum applications in the EU down by 43% in 2017

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/number-of-asylum-applications-in-the-eu-down-by-43-percent-in-2017_en

Legal support for those in immigration detention with mental ill health needs to be improved

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/legal-support-those-immigration-detention-mental-ill-health-needs-be-improved>

David Livingstone Fellowships expanded

<https://news.gov.scot/news/david-livingstone-fellowships-expanded>

New Publications

Guidance: Immigration status and current accounts

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/current-account-closed-or-refused-based-on-immigration-status/immigration-status-and-current-accounts>

An inspection of the review and removal of immigration, refugee and citizenship “status”

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677535/An_inspection_of_the_review_and_removal_of_immigration_refugee_and_citizenship_status.pdf

Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's report: An Inspection of the Home Office's Mechanisms for Learning from Immigration Litigation

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677536/Litigation_Home_Office_Response.pdf

Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector of Border and Immigration: An inspection of the Review and Removal of Immigration, Refugee and Citizenship 'Status'

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677538/Status_Reviews_Home_Office_Response.pdf

Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's report: An Inspection of the Home Office's Production and Use of Country of Origin Information

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/677540/Use_of_COI_Home_Office_Response.pdf

Safe but not Settled: The impact of family separation on refugees in the UK

https://d1tn3vj7xz9fdh.cloudfront.net/s3fs-public/file_attachments/rr-safe-but-not-settled-refugees-uk-310118-en.pdf

Out in the cold Homelessness among destitute refugees in London

http://www.jrsuk.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Out-in-the-Cold_Homelessness-among-destitute-refugees-in-London_A-report-by-JRS-UK_January-2018_FINAL.pdf

News

Most Scots hugely overestimate immigration numbers

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/most-scots-hugely-overestimate-immigration-numbers-1-4679008>

Theresa May softens stance on migration and foreign students

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/feb/02/theresa-may-softens-stance-on-migration-and-foreign-students>

Theresa May softens stance towards keeping students in net migration data

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-student-net-migration-data-china-boris-johnson-amber-rudd-a8190406.html>

EU migrant visas 'should be for those working antisocial hours'

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/31/eu-migrant-visas-should-be-for-those-working-antisocial-hours>

Skilled migrants protest against UK visa policies

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/30/skilled-migrants-protest-against-uk-visa-policies>

NHS doctor must leave the UK to look after daughter in Egypt

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/29/nhs-doctor-must-leave-the-uk-to-look-after-daughter-in-egypt>

'Unfair' restrictions on families are unsettling refugees in UK – report

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jan/31/unfair-uk-restrictions-refugee-families-unsettling-oxfam-report>

NHS chiefs urged to stop giving patient data to immigration officials

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jan/31/nhs-chiefs-stop-patient-data-immigration-officials>

Asylum seekers win case over smoking in immigration detention centres

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/01/asylum-seekers-win-case-over-smoking-in-immigration-detention-centres>

Home Office 'interfering' with people's right to observe Islam in detention centres, High Court rules

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-breaching-muslim-peoples-right-to-observe-islam-in-immigration-detention-a8189991.html>

Zambian doctors to be offered training in Scotland

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/zambian-doctors-to-be-offered-training-in-scotland-1-4681985>

That working-class lives are more fraught is not down to immigration

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/04/working-class-lives-more-fraught-not-down-to-immigration>

The refugee crisis isn't about refugees. It's about us

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/02/refugee-crisis-human-flow-ai-weiwei-china>

Man with mental health issues who sewed his lips together being 'unlawfully' held in detention

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/mental-health-police-detention-sewed-lips-together-unlawful-home-office-duncan-lewis-a8183696.html>

TOP

Community Relations

News

Young Roma photograph their lives in Govanhill

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-42875486>

Brit(ish) review – what does it mean to be black and British now?

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/jan/29/british-by-afua-hirsch-review-identity-race-nikesh-shukla>

TOP

Equality

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Promotion of Human Rights

Bill Kidd (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government how it is encouraging public bodies to do more to promote human rights. (S5O-01737)

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Communities, Social Security and Equalities (Angela Constance): Human rights are relevant to the work of every

public authority in Scotland. All public bodies have a responsibility to act in ways that respect, protect and promote human rights. The Scottish Government actively supports and encourages public bodies to act in ways that make human rights real for every member of Scottish society. We do so by working in partnership, by demonstrating leadership and, where necessary, by issuing guidance and bringing forward legislation.

Bill Kidd: Does the cabinet secretary agree that, now more than ever, the risks that have been created by Brexit and the United Kingdom Government's proposals to repeal the Human Rights Act 1998 mean that we must be resolute in encouraging human rights, which should be embedded in everything that we do, as they make a difference in helping people in live in dignity wherever their community is in Scotland, and whatever their circumstances?

Reply from Angela Constance: It is imperative that we acknowledge that the UK Government's proposals to repeal the 1998 act or even to withdraw from the European convention on human rights, combined with the potential impacts of Brexit, present a real danger to the human rights protections that we currently enjoy. They put at risk the most vulnerable members of society and hit them the hardest. Therefore, the Scottish Government is committed to defending the existing human rights safeguards that are provided by the Human Rights Act 1998, the Scotland Act 1998 and European Union law, and to embedding human rights, equality and respect in everything that we do, so that everyone in Scotland can live a life of human dignity.

To that end, we want to go further. As members might recall, the First Minister recently established an advisory group on human rights leadership to make recommendations on how Scotland can continue to lead by example on human rights, including economic, social, cultural and environmental rights.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11337&i=103139#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

Race Equality

S5O-01743 Linda Fabiani (SNP): To ask the Scottish Government what guidance it issues to local authority education departments regarding race equality.

Reply from Angela Constance: As part of our commitment to excellence and equity in education, we routinely consider the needs of a diverse range of stakeholders during the development of policy and guidance.

We published the Race Equality Action Plan in December 2017 which includes a number of specific actions to support education authorities, including publishing the guidance Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures.

Additionally, we have recently reviewed and updated a number of pieces of guidance for education authorities, including the Additional Support for Learning Code of Practice, the National Approach to Anti-Bullying, and guidance on preventing and managing school exclusions. These reviews have allowed us to improve guidance to education authorities on how they can support children and young people whose learning may be impacted by a protected characteristic, such as race, in order to deliver their duties under the Equality Act 2010.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5O-01743>

Diversity in the culture sector

S5W-13989 Rachael Hamilton (Conservative) To ask the Scottish Government how it aims to increase diversity in the culture sector.

Reply from Fiona Hyslop: Culture contributes to the development of a fairer and

more diverse Scotland and as a Government we are committed to tackling inequality and making Scotland a stronger, fairer, more inclusive society, including within the culture sector.

We are developing a Culture Strategy for Scotland in collaboration with individuals, artists, cultural organisations and communities across the country which will ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from cultural engagement. We will work with the sector to encourage increased diversity.

Creative Scotland funds, develops, influences and advocates for the arts, screen and creative industries throughout Scotland. All these functions are underpinned by their commitment to equalities, diversity and inclusion. Creative Scotland have undertaken a major Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Review both in Creative Scotland and in the sectors they support. Creative Scotland consulted widely and supported further activity to deliver their Equality Outcomes, improving the mainstreaming of EDI policy and practice in all Creative Scotland activities, and in those they fund. They now require all their funded organisations to have Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plans in place as a condition of funding, and they are supporting organisations to be ambitious in the delivery of EDI. The EDI Review has been a comprehensive process resulting in revised EDI Outcomes 2017-21 being published including a focus on four revised outcomes and key actions being taken to support them along with a plan on measuring progress against them.

Creative Scotland's EDI Report was published last year and sets out the progress Creative Scotland are making to mainstream equalities and deliver their Equality Outcomes to 2017. This may be found here:-

[http://www.creativescotland.com/resources/our-publications/policies/equalities-in-creative-Scotland](http://www.creativescotland.com/resources/our-publications/policies/equalities-in-creative-scotland)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-13989>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Ethnic Groups: Equality

The following two questions both received the same answer

David Lammy (Labour) [123345] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he is taking to address the disparities and inequalities revealed by the race disparity audit, published on 10 October 2017.

David Lammy (Labour) [123346] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what resources he has dedicated to working on the Government's policy response to the findings of the race disparity audit, published on 10 October 2017.

Reply from David Lidington: Following the publication of the Race Disparity Audit's *Ethnicity facts and figures* website on 10th October, the Prime Minister reaffirmed the Government's commitment to tackle the disparities identified by the Audit.

The Government has already launched an initial programme of work to tackle some of the disparities. This includes the Department for Work and Pensions taking action to improve ethnic minority employment rates in twenty targeted areas, action by the Ministry of Justice to implement recommendations made in the recent Lammy Review and the Department for Education taking forward an external review to improve practice in exclusions. Further announcements on future Government work will be made in due course.

Tackling these disparities involve not just Government but local public services, the voluntary sector and businesses. The Government has made a commitment that it will "explain or change" key ethnic disparities identified by the Audit. Where

significant disparities between ethnic groups cannot be explained by wider factors, the Government will work with partners to change them.

The Race Disparity Unit in the Cabinet Office will be responsible for coordinating the Government's response to the Audit. The Unit consists of 20 members of staff, including digital, data and policy professionals.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123345/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-17/123346/>

The audit referred to above can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/650723/RDAweb.pdf

The website referred to above can be read at

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/>

News

Humza Yousaf calls for affirmative action for black and Asian MSPs

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15918601.Humza_Yousaf_calls_for_affirmative_action_for_black_and_Asian_MSPs/

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Oral Answer

Racism

Anas Sarwar (Labour): In the past few days, I have been inundated with stories of everyday racism and Islamophobia. They include the story of a young woman who had her hijab ripped off her head at the underground station; of a child who is scared to go to school because he is regularly called a terrorist; of a hotel worker who is regularly racially abused but is told by his employer that the customer comes first; and of a council worker who is convinced that he missed out on a promotion because of his colour and religion. That is not about one individual or one organisation; it is about a culture.

On Tuesday in the Parliament, we launched the cross-party group on tackling Islamophobia, with the support of more than 50 organisations. Will the First Minister commit herself and her Government to working constructively with us on the important issues that the cross-party group raises? It is in the interest of all of our citizens to defeat prejudice no matter the gender, religion or colour.

Reply from the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): Yes, I give that commitment. I also take the opportunity to pay tribute to Anas Sarwar. Although he and I are political opponents locally as well as nationally, I genuinely admired the way in which he spoke up this week and the bravery with which he did it. It would have been brave in any circumstances, but all of us know that raising issues that involve people in our own parties is even more difficult, and so the praise for having done so should be even greater.

Everyday racism, Islamophobia or any form of prejudice and bigotry is unacceptable, and it is unacceptable when Anas Sarwar, Humza Yousaf or anyone in our society is the subject or victim of it. I am proud that we have in the

Parliament today people who are celebrating hijab awareness week. Like any women, Muslim women should be allowed to wear exactly what they want. Scotland should never presume to think that it is immune from racism. Anas Sarwar has demonstrated that this week. We must unite against it. Many things divide us in the chamber—that is the mark of a healthy democracy—but racism is one of the issues that should absolutely unite us and it is to Anas Sarwar's credit that he has put it even higher up the agenda. All of us should resolve to do everything that it takes to ensure that Scotland is a place where there is zero tolerance of racism in any form.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11339&i=103184#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Motions

S5M-10173 Fulton MacGregor (SNP): UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – That the Parliament recognises that 21 March 2018 is the UN International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination; understands that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set out therein without distinction to race, colour or national origin; notes that racial inequality and racial discrimination continue to be prevalent and, at times, accepted in society, despite the ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination nearly 53 years ago; condemns all forms of racism and racial discrimination in Scotland; notes that the UN has urged taking comprehensive measures to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerances; welcomes the publication of the Scottish Government's Race Equality Framework for Scotland 2016-2030 and the Race Equality Action Plan 2017-2021, and notes the calls for there to be regular updates on actions taken to fully eradicate racism and racial discrimination in Scotland.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10173>

S5M-10202 Mary Fee (Labour): Celebrating Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller Community – That the Parliament celebrates what it sees as the rich social and cultural contribution that the Gypsy/Traveller community has made to society in Scotland since the 12th century; acknowledges that the Equality and Human Rights Commission has estimated that the country's Gypsy/Traveller population is between 15,000 to 20,000; understands that the term, "Gypsy/Traveller", refers to distinct groups, including Romany Gypsies, Scottish and Irish travellers, and others who regard travelling as being part of their ethnic identity; believes that they experience a variety of issues related to provision of adequate housing and access to public health services, with a much higher proportion rating their health as "bad" or "very bad" compared with the national average; believes that this contributes to a male life expectancy of 55 years, 12 years shorter than the average; understands that they are a disproportionately marginalised and discriminated group and are stigmatised by inaccurate myths and stereotyping about their culture; notes with distress that the most recent statistics from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey suggests that 31% of people would be "unhappy or very unhappy" about a close relative marrying a Gypsy/Traveller, and that 35% said that a Gypsy/Traveller would be "very/fairly unsuitable" as a primary school teacher, and notes the calls on the Scottish Government to increase its commitment to eliminating discrimination against the Scottish Gypsy/Traveller community in West Scotland and throughout the country through strengthening existing equality legislation and providing greater support for inclusivity and equality training to ensure greater protection.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10202>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Antisemitism

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [123962] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he has sought the input of the Haredi community on tackling anti-Semitism; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Heather Wheeler: As Minister for Faith, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth has discussed the issue of antisemitism with the Charedi community and has also visited a number of organisations providing services to the Charedi community.

In addition officials meet regularly with representatives of the Charedi community to discuss antisemitism and other concerns.

The department also funds through True Vision the police online reporting portal work to encourage the Charedi community to report antisemitism and to provide support during the court process to victims.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123962/>

Football: Racial Discrimination

Fiona Onasanya (Labour) [124243] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department has taken to support grassroots football organisations in tackling racism.

Reply from Tracey Crouch: Our aim is to get more children and young people playing football and volunteering in the game and the 2018 World Cup in Russia promises to be a great spectacle for inspiring young people to take up and remain in the sport. Through the year-on-year investment, we will be funding grassroots programmes in schools and clubs and in the provision of new facilities and all-weather pitches that encourage greater levels of participation up to, during and after the World Cup.

The Government is committed to ensuring that all children and young people, particularly those who are currently least active or from under-represented groups, have the best opportunities to engage in sport and physical activity.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124243/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Criminal Proceedings: Travellers

Baroness Whitaker (Labour) [HL4903] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Lord Keen of Elie on 19 December 2017 (HLWS365), who are the members of the Race and Ethnicity Board of Senior Officials; and how they plan for the Board to take account of discrimination against gypsy, traveller and Roma people.

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: As part of the Government's response to the Lammy Review, we have set up a Race and Ethnicity Board to monitor our progress on the recommendations, and the wider agenda of race disparity. The Board is chaired by the Ministry of Justice Director General for Offender Reform and Commissioning, Justin Russell. Membership of the Board includes senior level representation from departmental policy groups and operational agencies such as HM Prison and Probation Service and HM Courts and Tribunal Service. There is also representation at an appropriate grade from other relevant Government departments and organisations including the Parole Board, Welsh Government and the National Police Chiefs' Council.

The scope of the Board is the same as the Lammy Review, therefore due consideration will be given to the issues experienced by the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma community. The Board has already met and is considering how best to

engage the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-18/HL4903/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Lords/2017-12-19/HLWS365/>

The Lammy Review, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf

Press Release

Antisemitic Incidents Report 2017

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog>

New Publication

Antisemitic Incidents Report 2017

<https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/a/b/IR17.pdf>

News

Humza Yousaf: 'I fear for my life over racist death threats to me and my family'

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15918598.Humza_Yousaf_I_fear_for_my_life_over_racist_death_threats_to_me_and_my_family/

Anas Sarwar: Prejudice impacts on life chances and outcomes

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/anas-sarwar-prejudice-impacts-on-life-chances-and-outcomes-1-4682104>

Gross racial inequality belies Scottish myth, say experts

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/gross-racial-inequality-belies-scottish-myth-say-experts-1-4682102>

Too many of Jock Tamson's bairns are racists

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/euan-mccolm-too-many-of-jock-tamson-s-bairns-are-racists-1-4682089>

Sturgeon praises 'brave' Sarwar after alleged racist comment

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/homenews/15913810.Sturgeon_praises_39_brave_39_Sarwar_after_alleged_racist_comment/

Nicola Sturgeon praises 'brave' political rival Anas Sarwar for lifting lid on racism experience

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/nicola-sturgeon-praises-brave-political-11955191>

Councillor suspended by Labour 'stunned' by racism allegations

http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/15909902.Councillor_suspended_by_Labour_stunned_by_racism_allegations/

Speaking out about racism the right thing to do, Anas Sarwar says

http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/15909688.Speaking_out_about_racism_the_right_thing_to_do_Anas_Sarwar_says/

Labour race row councillor denies Anas Sarwar 'brown, Muslim Paki' claims

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/labour-race-row-councillor-denies-11946317>

Councillor Davie McLachlan 'stunned' over Anas Sarwar racism allegations

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-01/scotland/councillor-stunned-over-sanwar-racism-allegations-nxf228zwx>

Labour suspends councillor in Sarwar 'Islamophobia' row

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-42880755>

Labour councilor suspended pending an investigation over "Islamophobic" comments made to Anas Sarwar

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15907721.Labour_councilor_suspended_pending_investigation_into_Sarwar_comments/

Scottish Labour launch investigation into Anas Sarwar racism claims

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/homenews/15904293.Scottish_Labour_launch_investigation_into_Anas_Sarwar_racism_claims/

Labour suspends councillor after Anas Sarwar racism claims

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/labour-suspends-councillor-after-anas-sarwar-racism-claims-1-4677804>

Labour suspend councillor over claims he told Anas Sarwar Scotland not ready for a 'brown, Muslim Paki'

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/labour-suspend-councillor-over-claims-11941374>

Labour councillor Davie McLachlan suspended after racism claim by Anas Sarwar

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-01-31/scotland/labour-councillor-davie-mclachlan-suspended-after-racism-claim-by-anas-sarwar-mc8w5kkmp>

'Scotland's not ready for a brown, Muslim Paki' Anas Sarwar says he lost support because his wife wears a hijab

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/scotlands-not-ready-brown-muslim-11930373>

Sarwar accuses Labour councillor over racial slur

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-01-30/scotland/sarwar-accuses-labour-councillor-over-racial-slur-87wfk290f>

Britain First's Jayda Fransen racially abused woman wearing hijab, court told

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/crime_courts/15906514.Britain_First_s_Jayda_Fransen_racially_abused_woman_wearing_hijab_court_told/

Britain First leaders to stand trial for 'religiously-aggravated harassment'

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15903496.Britain_First_leaders_to_stand_trial_for_religiously_aggravated_harassment/

Britain First's Jayda Fransen 'caused woman to miscarry when she screamed racist abuse through letter box', court hears

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/31/britain-firsts-jayda-fransen-caused-woman-miscarry-screamed/>

Alarm as anti-semitic incidents surge across the UK

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15911154.Anti-semitic-hate-crimes-soar-to-record-high-in-UK/>

Antisemitic incidents in UK at all-time high

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/feb/01/antisemitic-incidents-in-uk-at-all-time-high>

Antisemitic hate crimes hit record high as violent assaults increase by more than a third in a year

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/antisemitic-hate-crimes-record-high-violent-assaults-community-security-trust-cst-a8187941.html>

Anti-Semitism in Labour Party helped fuel record number of attacks on Jewish community, charity says

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/01/anti-semitism-labour-party-helped-fuel-record-number-attacks/>

Len McCluskey claims alleged anti-Semitism in the Labour party is 'only a problem because the right wing media try to make it a problem'

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/04/len-mccluskey-claims-alleged-anti-semitism-labour-party-problem/>

Antisemitism must be called out every day

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-01-29/news/antisemitism-must-be-called-out-every-day-of-the-year-zlc06gs3h>

Darren Osborne guilty of Finsbury Park mosque murder

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-42910051>

The Finsbury Park attacker's trial shows us the route to hatred

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/02/the-finsbury-park-attackers-trial-shows-us-the-route-to-hate>

Life sentence for Finsbury Park mosque killer

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/life-sentence-for-finsbury-park-mosque-killer-1-4681580>

Darren Osborne jailed for life for Finsbury Park terrorist attack

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/02/finsbury-park-attack-darren-osborne-jailed>

'Heartless' Finsbury Park terrorist Darren Osborne jailed for minimum of 43 years

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-03/news/heartless-finsbury-park-terrorist-darren-osborne-jailed-for-minimum-of-43-years-flmk8t75f>

Finsbury Park attacker jailed for life: Darren Osborne to serve at least 43 years after ploughing van into Muslims

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/02/02/darren-osborne-jailed-life-loner-ploughed-van-muslims-finsbury/>

Form 696 is gone – so why is clubland still hostile to black Londoners?

<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/jan/31/form-696-is-gone-so-why-is-clubland-still-hostile-to-black-londoners>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-10165 Ruth Maguire (SNP): International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation – That the Parliament recognises that 6 February 2018 marks the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); believes that FGM is an unacceptable and illegal practice and abuse; acknowledges that it is an invasion of women and girls' basic human rights, including the right to be free from torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and the right to sexual and physical integrity; is clear that to claim it as a "cultural tradition" does not excuse either the act itself or the cruel and harmful impact that it has on the physical and mental health of millions of women and girls ever year; believes that it can be a hidden issue in Scotland, requiring specific interventions by the Scottish Government, NHS, police and social services, and welcomes the guidance that was published by the Scottish Government in November 2017, which it believes provides a framework in which agencies and practitioners can develop and agree processes for working collaboratively and individually to promote the safety and wellbeing of women and girls.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10165>

New Publication

Common UK Frameworks after Brexit

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/2018/2/2/Common-UK-Frameworks-after-Brexit/SB%2018-09.pdf>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Faith Schools: Security

The following three questions all received the same answer

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [124573] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Secretary of State plans to reform the planning system to ensure that Jewish religious schools can develop barriers and other security infrastructure to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [124574] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Secretary of State plans to reform the planning system to ensure that Muslim religious schools can develop barriers and other security infrastructure to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Andrew Gwynne (Labour) [124575] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to reform the planning system to allow Christian religious schools to develop physical barriers and other security infrastructure to ensure the safety of pupils and staff.

Reply from Heather Wheeler: The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) sets out guidance in creating safe and accessible communities. The NPPF recommends that local planning authorities ensure their policies and decisions aim to create safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.

Reference should also be made to the guidance "Protecting crowded places: design and technical issues" jointly published by the Home Office and National Counter Terrorism Security Office, which can be found here:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124573/>

and

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/302016/DesignTechnicalIssues2014.pdf.

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124575/>

The National Planning Policy Framework, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/60777/2116950.pdf

The Planning Practice Guidance, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

"Protecting crowded places", referred to above, can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97992/design-tech-issues.pdf

Faith Schools

Jo Stevens (Labour) [125493] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether he has any plans to revise the inclusivity and community and engagement requirements for new faith schools.

Reply from Nadhim Zahawi: All schools must promote integration, and social cohesion whatever their character and ethos. The Department's consultation document, 'Schools that work for everyone', set out proposals to replace the 50% cap on faith admissions in faith free schools with new safeguards to support inclusivity and integration. These are aimed at building on existing inclusivity requirements and those to promote fundamental British values to help ensure children and young people are prepared for life in modern Britain. The Department plans to respond to the proposals in 'Schools that work for everyone' in due course.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125493/>

The consultation referred to above can be read at

https://consult.education.gov.uk/school-frameworks/schools-that-work-for-everyone/supporting_documents/SCHOOLS%20THAT%20WORK%20FOR%20EVERYONE%20%20FINAL.PDF

Ritual Slaughter

The following two questions both received the same answer

Anna Turley (Labour Co-op) [123953] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he is taking to regulate the non-stun slaughter of animals.

Anna Turley (Labour Co-op) [123954] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will bring forward legislative proposals on banning the slaughter of non-stunned animals.

Reply from George Eustice: The Government encourages the highest standards of welfare at slaughter. The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, but respects the right of the Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs.

We have stricter national rules aimed at reducing stress and providing protection

for animals slaughtered in accordance with religious rites. These national rules include requirements for sheep, goats and bovines to be slaughtered immediately that they are restrained and not to be released from restraint until they are unconscious and at least 20 seconds have elapsed, in the case of sheep and goats, and at least 30 seconds have elapsed in the case of bovines. This year the Government is introducing mandatory CCTV recording in slaughterhouses. This will further enable official veterinarians to monitor and verify animal welfare standards in the slaughterhouse and ensure strict adherence to stand still time rules.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123953/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-22/123954/>

Coroners: Working Hours

Edward Davey (Liberal Democrat) [124681] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to implement the recommendation of the Chief Coroner, set out in his Annual Report 2016 - 2017, that coroner areas should provide an out-of-hours service to meet the needs of those whose faiths require early burial.

Reply from Phillip Lee: Out of hours services in London are funded and arranged by local authorities and the Metropolitan Police Service. The Government is clear about the importance of out of hours' coroner services and in recent years it has worked with local authorities and the police to encourage the deployment of additional staff. Last October eight additional members of staff who will work out of hours took up post, recruited and employed by the police, but the Government will continue to work with local authorities and the police on this.

The availability of out of hours services in London will benefit the whole community, not just people of any particular faith.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-24/124681/>

UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

Faith Practices

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Amber Rudd): The Government have today published the independent review into the application of Sharia law in England and Wales. The review has been laid before the House (Cm 9560). Copies of the report will be available from the Vote Office and it is also available on the Home Office website.

The review was commissioned by the then Home Secretary in May 2016 and was chaired by Professor Mona Siddiqui, an internationally renowned expert in Islamic and inter-religious studies. Professor Siddiqui was supported by a review panel of experts that included experienced family law barrister Sam Momtaz QC, retired High Court judge Sir Mark Hedley, and specialist family law solicitor Anne Marie Hutchinson OBE QC. The panel was advised by two religious and theological experts, Imam Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi and Imam Qari Asim.

Sharia law has no jurisdiction in England and Wales and the decisions of Sharia councils are not legally binding. The review focused on whether and to what extent the application of Sharia law by Sharia councils may be incompatible with the law in England and Wales. This included ways in which Sharia law may be being misused or exploited in a way that may discriminate against certain groups, undermine shared values and cause social harms.

To gather evidence the review team issued a public call for evidence and ran a number

of oral evidence sessions. During the course of the review, the review chair and panel heard evidence from stakeholders including users of Sharia councils, women's rights groups, academics, lawyers and Sharia councils. I am grateful to Professor Siddiqui for the thoroughness of her review and for the review team's comprehensive report.

The review found that most of the work of Sharia councils concerns Islamic divorces, and that the applicants are mostly women. While there are a number of reasons women desire an Islamic divorce, a significant driver is that some Muslim couples do not have a civil marriage as well as an Islamic ceremony. The review also found evidence of a range of practices across Sharia councils, both positive and negative. The review concludes with a series of recommendations to Government.

The review made three recommendations:

- Recommendation 1 (legislative change): amendments to marriage law to (a) ensure that civil marriages are conducted before or at the same time as the Islamic marriage ceremony and (b) establish the right to a civil divorce.
- Recommendation 2 (building understanding): proposes developing programmes to (i) raise Muslim couples' awareness that Islamic marriages do not afford them the protections under the law that come with a civil marriage because their partnership is not recognised as a legal marriage; and (ii) encourages Muslim couples that have or are having an Islamic marriage to register for a civil marriage as well.
- Recommendation 3 (regulation of Sharia councils): proposes regulating Sharia councils through the creation of a state-established body that would create a code of practice for Sharia councils to accept and implement.

The Government will carefully consider the review's findings. The review team's failure to reach a unanimous agreement on recommendation three (regulation of Sharia councils) demonstrates the complexity of the issues. The Government consider that the proposal to create a state-facilitated or endorsed regulation scheme for Sharia councils would confer upon them legitimacy as alternative forms of dispute resolution. The Government do not consider there to be a role for the state to act in this way. Britain has a long tradition of freedom of worship and religious tolerance and regulation could add legitimacy to the perception of the existence of a parallel legal system even though the outcomes of Sharia councils have no standing in civil law, as the independent review has made clear. Many people of different faiths follow religious codes and practices and benefit from their guidance. The Government have no intention of changing this position and for this reason cannot accept recommendation three.

The review found some evidence of Sharia councils forcing women to make concessions to gain a divorce, of inadequate safeguarding policies, and a failure to signpost applicants to legal remedies. This is not acceptable. Where Sharia councils exist, they must abide by the law. Legislation is in place to protect the rights of women and prevent discriminatory practice. The Government will work with the appropriate regulatory authorities to ensure that this legislation and the protections it establishes are being enforced fully and effectively. [HCWS442]

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-01/debates/18020149000008/FaithPractices>

New Publication

The independent review into the application of sharia law in England and Wales

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678473/6.4_152_HO_CPFGR_Report_into_Sharia_Law_in_the_UK_PRINT.pdf

News

Register Islamic marriages under civil law, sharia review says

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2018/feb/01/sharia-councils-review-islamic-marriages-uk-law>

Sharia councils: shedding some light

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/feb/02/the-guardian-view-on-sharia-councils-shedding-some-light>

Muslim couples 'should have civil weddings'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-02/news/muslim-couples-should-have-civil-weddings-2hlqg8mvp>

Sharia marriages should be registered under UK law, says independent review

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/sharia-marriages-uk-law-registered-islamic-review-muslim-wedding-womens-rights-a8189541.html>

Sharia marriage should be recognised in British law, review commissioned by Theresa May concludes

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2018/02/01/sharia-councils-should-not-banned-could-forced-underground-review/>

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Other News

Judge agrees to judicial review of 'cab rank' rule for unexplained deaths

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/02/judge-agrees-to-judicial-review-of-cab-rank-rule-for-unexplained-deaths>

Judge bans man from taking daughter out of the country for the next 11 years over FGM fears

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/01/29/judge-bans-man-taking-daughter-country-next-11-years-fgm-fears/>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

**** Domestic Abuse Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/103883.aspx>

Stage 3: proposed amendments

<http://www.parliament.scot/Domestic%20Abuse%20Scotland%20Bill/SPBill08AMLS052018.pdf>

Stage 3

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11339&i=103185#ScotParlOR>

Stage 3 debate

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11339&i=103186#ScotParlOR>

Bill as passed

<http://www.parliament.scot/Domestic%20Abuse%20Scotland%20Bill/SPBill08BS052018.pdf>

Press release: Justice for domestic abuse survivors

<https://news.gov.scot/news/justice-for-domestic-abuse-survivors>

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

UK Parliament

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/immigrationcontrolgrosshumanrightsabuses.html>

Children Act 1989 (Amendment) (Female Genital Mutilation) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/childrenact1989amendmentfemalegenitalmutilation.html>

EEA Nationals (Indefinite Leave to Remain) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/eeanationalsindefiniteleavetoremain.html>

**** European Union (Withdrawal) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/europeanunionwithdrawal.html>

Second reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-30/debates/4F0C20C9-C072-4E51-B76F-C8ECAABE779D/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-30/debates/4F0C20C9-C072-4E51-B76F-C8ECAABE779D/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-30/debates/DEF7D976-EE5D-4150-BC6D-2F2C928719C5/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-30/debates/DEF7D976-EE5D-4150-BC6D-2F2C928719C5/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-31/debates/6E9F9C26-27A7-4157-B6FF-115044A62448/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-31/debates/6E9F9C26-27A7-4157-B6FF-115044A62448/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-31/debates/1E0DE5FF-2281-4ED2-8D68-168B86721E0E/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-31/debates/1E0DE5FF-2281-4ED2-8D68-168B86721E0E/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

UK Parliament Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee Report

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201719/ldselect/lddelreq/73/73.pdf>

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaverytransparencyinsupplychains.html>

Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaveryvictimsupport.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionbill.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) (No. 2) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionno2.html>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/unaccompaniedasylumseekingchildrenlegaladviceandappeals.html>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

EU funds in the area of migration (closing date 8 March 2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/eu-funds-area-migration_en

Electoral Reform (closing date 12 March 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529431.pdf>

Human Rights (closing date 16 March 2018)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/106453.aspx>

A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger communities (closing date 27 April 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00530204.pdf>

Police Scotland: Your view counts (open all year)

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/decision-making/public-consultation/local-policing-consultation>

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Job Opportunities

[Click here](#) to find out about job opportunities.

[Click here](#) to find out about Graduate, Modern, and Foundation Apprenticeship opportunities.

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

New Scots: Refugees and VPRS Resettlement

6 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

19 April 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the issues facing Syrian refugees as they move from countries around Syria to the UK, and highlight the challenges and opportunities they face as they build new lives in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/jt93fog> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** this week!**

Rape Crisis Scotland training information evening

7 February 2018 in Glasgow (6.30-8.30)

Rape Crisis Scotland is looking for self-identified women to volunteer on the national helpline supporting survivors of sexual violence.

Rape Crisis Scotland information evening for people who would like to benefit from a supportive atmosphere, excellent training, and personal and professional development. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y9vbgotf> or contact Mridul Wadhwa 0141 3314188 / volunteer@rapecrisisScotland.org.uk

**** this week!**

Unaccompanied Refugee Children

8 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-4.30)

2 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to better understand where unaccompanied refugee children are, and how you can help them in their journey. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y7mz5uuv> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Introduction to Policing Programme

18 February 2018 in Edinburgh

24 February 2018 in Tulliallan

4 March 2018 in Edinburgh

10 March 2018 in Edinburgh

Police Scotland four-day course for people from minority ethnic communities to provide an insight into being a police officer. Includes input from specialist departments, fitness test, and an opportunity to visit the unique training facility at Tulliallan. For information see https://www.scojec.org/memo/files/18ii_ps.pdf or contact recruitmentpositiveactionteam@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

20 February 2018 in Edinburgh (9.30-12.30)

27 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-12.30)

PAiH training to explain fundamental issues of housing, employment and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals and we will explore how service users might prepare themselves to avoid possible threats of Brexit. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

20 February 2018 in Edinburgh (1.30-4.30)

27 February 2018 in Glasgow (1.30-4.30)

PAiH training to explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant and the process involved in making a claim for asylum. The course will also explore the barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers building a new life in Scotland and their respective entitlement to services. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Age Assessment Awareness

21 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

The Age assessment process is used to establish the approximate age of an unaccompanied young person who may have been trafficked or otherwise separated from their families, so that their Rights and entitlements can be fulfilled. This Scottish Refugee Council course provides social workers and other relevant staff with an awareness of the components that are used to build a picture of a person's age. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see

<http://tinyurl.com/y8f2z7p4> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** Challenging Perceptions – Breaking Barriers for Muslim Women In Scotland**

21 February 2018 in Dundee (10.00-2.00)

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre conference to explore the rich diversity of Scotland's Muslim community, the barriers experienced by Muslim women when seeking paid employment and income generation, examples of best practice in providing front-line service provision, and future-proofing employability support. For information see <http://www.mwrc.org.uk/events/1347/> or contact 01382 787 450 / info@Mwrc.org.uk

Supporting Those Affected by Forced Marriage

21 February 2018 in Edinburgh (10.00-4.00)

Scottish Women's Aid workshop to demystify forced marriage and help those attending to gain the knowledge they need to provide appropriate support to those affected. For information contact 0131 226 6606 / info@womensaid.scot or see <http://womensaid.scot/training-event/supporting-affected-forced-marriage/>

**** Lunchtime Equality Workshop: Gender Paygap Reporting**

21 February 2018 in Kirkcaldy (12.00-1.30)

Fife Centre for Equalities workshop to provide information about the Equality Act 2010 and how it applies to yourself and your organisation. For information contact 01592 645 310 / elric@centreforequalities.org.uk

New Scots: Refugees and the Asylum Process

1 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

17 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine why people might need to flee their own country, how they seek asylum in the UK and what opportunities they have for rebuilding their lives here in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/z68a5k8> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Working with Interpreters

8 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

22 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the process of using an interpreter, where the responsibility lies for the success of the interpreted session, examines the pitfalls and their consequences, and sets out best practice for using interpreters. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/zy436gr> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Immigration Act 2016: "The Hostile Environment" basics

13 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-12.30)

PAiH training for people providing services to or working with immigrants need up to date information to make sure their clients are able to access services without delay and prepare for being excluded when it is inevitable. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

20 March 2018 in Perth (9.30-12.30)

20 March 2018 in Perth (1.30-4.30)

PAiH training outlining the fundamentals of how to create a respectful, supportive and inclusive working environment for a diverse staff and volunteer group. For information

see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Refugee Rights to Housing

21 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to identify the different groups of asylum seekers and refugees most likely to seek housing in Scotland, learn how to identify their legal rights, and the duties and obligations on local authorities and other housing organisations towards them. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y9pvpl5r> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Scotland: Raising Awareness, Strengthening Collaboration, Breaking the Chains**

23 March 2018 at the Scottish Parliament

UN House Scotland conference to raise awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, building new and strengthening existing partnerships to make Scotland slavery free. For information see <https://www.unhscotland.org.uk/human-trafficking-conference> or contact 0131 220 6870 / hello@unhscotland.org.uk

Engaging Hard to Reach Groups

28 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course looking at the various approaches, tools and techniques we can adopt to reach out to people who are seldom heard. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8tg2x4k> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

First World Congress on Migration, Ethnicity, and Health

17-19 May 2018 in Edinburgh

(‘earlybird’ deadline (for reduced fee) is 3 February 2018)

The aims of the Congress include improved research, population health and health care for migrants and other discriminated-against populations, and considering the health effects of social, environmental and demographic change associated with population migration, and the effects on diseases and their causes. For information see <http://www.merhcongress.com/> (full programme now available on the conference website) or contact merh@in-conference.org.uk / 0131 336 4203.

Refugee Community Sponsorship

24 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

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Useful Links

Scottish Parliament <http://www.parliament.scot/>

Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/>

UK Parliament <http://www.parliament.uk/>

GovUK (links to UK Government Departments) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations>

UK Government Honours system <https://www.gov.uk/honours/overview>

European Parliament <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/>

One Scotland <http://onescotland.org/>

Scottish Refugee Council <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk>

Interfaith Scotland <http://www.interfaithscotland.org/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Equality Advisory Support Service <http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com>

Scottish Human Rights Commission <http://scottishhumanrights.com/>

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

SCVO <http://www.scvo.org.uk/>

Volunteer Development Scotland <http://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) <http://www.oscr.org.uk/>

Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel <https://www.goodfundraising.scot/>

Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS) www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services

Disclosure Scotland <https://www.mygov.scot/working-jobs/finding-a-job/disclosure/>

BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>

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The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



BEMIS is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. (Scottish Charity, no. SC027692) <http://www.bemis.org.uk/>



The **Scottish Government** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and social justice for all those who live in Scotland. **One Scotland** is the Scottish Government campaign designed to tackle racism. It aims to raise awareness of racist attitudes, highlight its negative impact and recognise the valuable contributions that other cultures have made to our society – and make Scotland no place for racism. <http://www.gov.scot/>

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