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Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme

Caroline Lucas (Green) To ask the Home Secretary to make a statement on the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Reply from the Minister for Afghan Resettlement (Victoria Atkins): I promised in my statement to the House on 13 September that I would update the House regularly on Operation Warm Welcome. I am in the process of drafting a “Dear colleague” letter, which will be sent to colleagues later this week, but the hon. Lady has beaten me to it. I am, of course, pleased to appear before the House today in the meantime.

The Government worked at pace to facilitate the largest and most complex

evacuation in living memory, assisting the Ministry of Defence and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to help more than 15,000 people from Afghanistan to safety in the United Kingdom. A huge programme of work is now under way across Government to ensure Afghans brought to the United Kingdom receive a warm welcome and the vital support they need to build bright futures in our country. That work spans across Government, charities, other organisations, local authorities and communities. The aim is to give Afghans arriving here the best possible start to life in the United Kingdom, while also making sure that local services can work effectively to support people.

On 13 September, I made a statement, and the Home Office published a comprehensive policy statement, confirming that the Government have committed to take around 5,000 people in the first year and a total of up to 20,000 people over the coming years under the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme. The statement also set out who would be eligible and who would be prioritised, and how we will work with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other organisations to ensure the ACRS provides a safe route for vulnerable people at risk. While we appreciate the need to act quickly, it is also important that we do this properly and ensure that any scheme meets the needs of those it is being set up to support.

Our work to support Afghan citizens has not paused while the resettlement scheme is being developed. The Home Office is continuing to work with partners across Government, including in the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, given that many of those requiring support are in fact British nationals, to provide permanent housing for the thousands already relocated here. Some of the people evacuated will form the first part of the 5,000 people being resettled.

I am pleased to tell the House that over 200 councils have agreed to house those who have been evacuated. I am extremely grateful for that and, as always, I continue to encourage councils that have not felt able to make offers or those that can perhaps offer more places of housing to do so. This is a national effort. We are all determined to give Afghan people a warm welcome in this country, and I look forward to working with colleagues across the House to achieve this.

Caroline Lucas: I am grateful to the Minister for her response. She says the Government are working “at pace”, but I can promise her it does not feel like that for the Afghans still stuck in Afghanistan with no idea if and how they will be able to get to safety or if and how the Government will deliver on their promises. It certainly does not feel like that to hon. Members who have been writing emails and making phone calls, desperate to get some kind of response from the Home Office and the Foreign Office, and who again and again, frankly, have just been fobbed off with standard, formulaic emails that do not address the problems we are raising with them on a daily basis.

The Afghan citizens resettlement scheme was announced on 18 August, and on 6 September the Prime Minister told the House that the scheme was “upholding Britain’s finest tradition of welcoming those in need.”—[\[Official Report, 6 September 2021; Vol. 700, c. 21.\]](#)

Yet two months on and counting, we have still heard nothing. That is utterly shameful: lives depend on that scheme—not just those who are at risk from the Taliban, but she will know of the deep and growing humanitarian crisis gripping Afghanistan, with about half the population starving.

Can the Minister tell us how much longer do we have to wait until the resettlement scheme opens? If the scheme is going to be by referral, when will those at risk get information about how their cases can be referred and assessed? Has the Government’s derisory 5,000-person cap on how many Afghan nationals will be helped in the first year already been reached or exceeded before the scheme is even open? Will the Minister tell us, on

behalf of all those desperate for safety, including former BBC staff and freelance journalists, how many places have already been allocated and how many are left?

Ministerial promises need to be kept, especially to Chevening families and alumni, so when will the scholars at Sussex University and others elsewhere be told if they are to be included in the ACRS? Will former Chevening scholars and their families get the help they are owed? Those who have been very high profile in their support of Government programmes, especially the president and vice-president of the Chevening alumni, live in daily fear. Why have they not been prioritised, and why have some current scholars been allowed to bring their wider families to the UK, and others not?

Local authorities such as Brighton and Hove, a city of sanctuary, want to know: when will they get firm written assurances that they will receive the promised package of financial support?

Lastly, will the Minister stop sending Afghan family members of British citizens still in Afghanistan into Kafkaesque nightmare situations with referrals to a visa process that the Home Office itself admits is not currently possible from within Afghanistan? Will it instead issue the visa waivers and the emergency travel documents that will help people get the safety they so desperately need?

Reply from Victoria Atkins: In answer to the hon. Lady's many questions, she may recall that, in the course of the oral statement on 13 September and indeed in the "Dear colleague" letter that accompanied it, I had to be frank with the House in relation to the emails Members of Parliament had been sending—about people in Afghanistan who are not constituents, but whose safety they understandably want to ensure if they have emailed been and contacted by them—that due to the new situation as it then was in Afghanistan, we would not be able to work those cases as we would expect to in other casework scenarios.

Regrettably, the situation in Afghanistan has not changed since I last addressed the House. We do not have a British Army presence in Afghanistan and we do not have a British consular presence. There are, of course, many members of staff in countries around Afghanistan who are doing their absolute best to work with those who have made the journey into surrounding countries, but we must be realistic about the situation in country. We are working with international partners to find ways and routes out of Afghanistan, but we must do so with the international community.

The hon. Lady mentions the ambitious target of 5,000 that the Prime Minister set for the first year of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, and that is in addition to the Afghan relocations and assistance policy, under which many thousands of people were evacuated both before and during Operation Pitting. The majority of Chevening scholars were evacuated, and we are working with international partners to try to find ways for those who remain. The foundation on which the Government are working is to try to do things in what are difficult and fast-evolving circumstances, and to do what is right for people who have already been evacuated here, and those we wish to evacuate in future. I am afraid these things take time, but I hope I have the support of the House in creating the scheme in a way that best serves the interests of Afghans. I understand why the hon. Lady secured this urgent question, but I suggest we will achieve this through day-to-day work and by working together to ensure that the scheme addresses the concerns she raised.

Caroline Nokes (Conservative): This morning I attended an Afghan community day ... for Afghan families who are already settled here, or who have come here as part of the ARAP scheme. Their big concern is about families still left in Afghanistan, and they are desperately looking for detail and information about how the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme will work. My hon. Friend is right to point out the complexities, and we know that this will be harder than the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme, precisely because of the situation on the ground in Afghanistan. Will she please give us some hope that the

application and allocation scheme is on its way, and that we will be able to provide our constituents with some sort of update?

Reply from Victoria Atkins: I can certainly provide my right hon. Friend with that assurance. We want to get this right, which is why it is taking us a bit of time. I understand the concerns of colleagues, and also, as she said, the real concerns of Afghans already in this country. I have met many, and every one has raised concerns about their families and friends left behind. I understand that, but it will take a bit of time, and I ask the House to bear with us while we try to ensure we get it right.

Bambos Charalambous (Labour): I echo the concerns raised so far. It has been two months since the Kabul airlift, and as we know, many of those who needed to be evacuated, having been accepted as high risk, were left behind in Afghanistan and now face persecution under Taliban rule. I share the frustrations of many about the slow progress of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, and we are still waiting for details from the Home Office about how that scheme will operate in practice. The Government's website offering guidance on the scheme has not been updated since 13 September. At the same time, there have been increasing reports of violence against women and girls, and members of the LGBTI community in Afghanistan, and efforts must be made to step up help for those in desperate need.

The hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion (Caroline Lucas) mentioned Chevening scholars, and my office has raised concerns on behalf of Chevening scholars who remain at high risk in Afghanistan due to their links with the UK. They were eligible for evacuation but were not called forward, and since raising those cases I have had no response from the Government. Will the Minister provide an update on the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, and inform the House what measures have been taken to ensure that those most at risk are guaranteed safe passage and access to neighbouring countries? What support will former Chevening scholars who are a priority for assistance and still in Afghanistan be eligible to receive, and through which mechanism? I am not sure whether the Minister answered the question about whether they will be guaranteed a place under the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme. What steps will she take to speed up the community sponsorship scheme to help those in Afghanistan who may not qualify for the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme?

Reply from Victoria Atkins: I can deal with the hon. Gentleman's point on Chevening scholars. The scheme has not been launched yet. We want to get this right, so I am afraid that I will have to give him the holding answer, which is that we are working on the scheme. I know that he would not expect me to give details, thoughts or running commentary on how the policy is being developed before we have, as a Government, come to a collective agreement on it so that we can best ensure that the policy meets the very real needs that many in this House have raised.

I imagine that only today, we will hear not just about Chevening scholars but, for example, about religious minorities, about people who are LGBT+ and about extraordinary women who have done extraordinary things in Afghanistan in the last 20 years in pursuit of equality and the rights of women before the law. Those are all categories of people that we have set out in the policy statement that we want to help, but we have to do this in a managed and measured way so that we get the scheme right and, over the coming years, it delivers the sorts of changes and help that everyone in the House expects. ...

To continue reading this very lengthy question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-25/debates/186CFEC9-FDDD-4B1B-9E17-9A0C51DB606B/AfghanCitizensResettlementScheme>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

The 13 September statement referred to above can be read at www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Refugees

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [58938] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people in Afghanistan are still waiting for their applications for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy to be processed as at 19 October 2021.

Reply from James Heapey: We have received a huge number of applications for the ARAP scheme, the vast majority since the beginning of August. Substantial resource has been dedicated to processing these applications, which is a very high priority.

To date some 85,000 applications have been received. Of those, processing is complete for 57,000, in progress for 4,000 and has not yet started on 24,000.

The ARAP team are working hard to process these applications, with older applications being the first priority.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58938>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Afghanistan: Refugees

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [58937] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many cases relating to people in Afghanistan requiring assistance are still waiting to be processed by her Department.

Reply from James Cleverly: We carried out Operation Pitting, the biggest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history, bringing out of Afghanistan around 15,000 people, including around 8,300 British Nationals, 5,000 people through the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and approximately 500 special cases of particularly vulnerable Afghans, including Chevening scholars, journalists, human rights defenders, campaigners for women's rights, judges and many others. All these figures include dependants.

Additionally, under Operation Pitting 311 families eligible for relocation under ARAP were called forward but were not evacuated from Afghanistan, the vast majority of whom were Afghan nationals. Our efforts to contact and support vulnerable individuals and their dependants continues, and we are making every effort to assist them to reach the UK.

Since 28 August, over 500 more individuals eligible to come to the UK have been able to leave Afghanistan, and as well as more than 400 British Nationals and dependants.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58937>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: Afghanistan

Afzal Khan (Labour) [56188] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 30 September 2021 to Question 51826 on Refugees: Afghanistan, what her Department's timeframe is for notifying each person (a) under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and (b) those moving onto the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme of their Indefinite Leave to Remain status.

Afzal Khan (Labour) [57317] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 28 September 2021 to Question 51838 on Immigration: Afghanistan, whether her Department has a timeline for contacting all those Afghans nationals who have recently arrived in the UK to ensure they have the appropriate and correct leave arrangements.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Following the policy statement, the Government published on 13 September, we will be working through the cases of those who have recently arrived from Afghanistan and will be processing them in line with the published policy.

The Home Office is contacting those here in the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy and those moving onto the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, in order to assist them to obtain Indefinite Leave to Remain status from early November onwards.

No one will be required to leave the United Kingdom, or be disadvantaged in any way, while we work through their cases.

More information can be found in the Afghanistan Resettlement and Immigration Policy Statement

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement-accessible-version#afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56188>
and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/57317>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51826>
and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51838>

Immigration: Afghanistan

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [56158] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's process is for considering leave beyond six months for Afghan people (a) whose visa requirements were waived to facilitate evacuation from Afghanistan and (b) who are also part of a family unit where one person is a British national.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We will be offering indefinite leave to remain in the UK to those Afghan nationals and their close family members, and the Afghan close family members of British citizens, who were evacuated, called forward or specifically authorised for evacuation, by the Government during Operation PITTING. This will apply to those who have already arrived in the UK or arrive after the evacuation. This will give them certainty about their status and the right to work and contribute to society. A full policy statement on this matter published on 13 September 2021 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement-accessible-version>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56158>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Mark Hendrick (Labour Co-op) [56807] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme is not yet live.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The first to be resettled through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will be those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk – including women's rights activists, prosecutors and journalists. The ACRS is not yet open. Officials are working urgently to stand up the remaining elements of the scheme, amid the complex and changing picture.

The Government will continue to work closely with other government departments, non-governmental organisations, charities, local authorities and other partners and relevant organisations in the development and implementation of the ACRS.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at

www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56807>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Afghanistan: Refugees

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [58936] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what support the Government plans to make available to the people of Afghanistan who do not meet the criteria of the Afghanistan citizens' resettlement scheme but who have a connection with the UK.

Reply from James Cleverly: The Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will provide those put at risk by recent events in Afghanistan with a route to safety. The ACRS is one of the most generous schemes in our country's history under which we will welcome up to 5,000 vulnerable Afghans over the next year and up to a total of 20,000 in the coming years. There will not be a formal application process for the ACRS. The scheme is not yet open and further details, including eligibility criteria, will be announced in due course by the Home Office. Further details on the scheme will be published here: Afghanistan resettlement and immigration policy statement - GOV.UK. Unfortunately not all who wish to leave Afghanistan will be eligible under the ACRS. The Government continues to do all it can to ensure safe passage for the most vulnerable Afghans and is committed to supporting the people of Afghanistan.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58936>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Afghanistan: Refugees

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [59794] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what recourse Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy scheme applicants have to appeal a rejected application.

Reply from James Heapey: When applicants for the ARAP scheme are rejected on grounds of eligibility, they are invited, if they believe the decision to be incorrect, to submit any additional evidence they consider to be relevant to the decision. Any applicant who does so will have their case reviewed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-20/59794>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at

Refugees: Afghanistan

Kim Johnson (Labour) [59991] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, which cities Afghan refugees are being resettled to in the UK.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We continue to work with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation as quickly as possible for Afghan families who were evacuated to the UK. So far, over 300 local authorities across the UK have offered to house Afghan families. There are more than 11,000 individuals accommodated temporarily in bridging hotels across the UK, who were evacuated as part of Operation Pitting.

Children who have recently arrived from Afghanistan are entitled to a full time education and one of our priorities is to ensure they receive it. The duty to provide sufficient education for all school-age children rests with local authorities and the government is working closely with local authorities in whose areas Afghan families are resident to ensure they can access education as soon as possible.

In addition, we are urgently making available additional funds to support local authorities to provide educational support and help Afghan children and young people settle into their local schools and communities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-20/59991>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Kirsty Blackman (SNP) [62740] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people evacuated from Afghanistan are currently housed in bridging hotels.

Kirsty Blackman (SNP) [62741] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people evacuated from Afghanistan who are currently housed in bridging hotels have been given access to legal support.

Kirsty Blackman (SNP) [62742] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what access to legal support her Department is facilitating for Afghans who were evacuated and are currently housed in bridging hotels.

Kirsty Blackman (SNP) [62743] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to ensure that all Afghan people who were evacuated from Kabul and are housed in bridging hotels are able to access legal advice and support as a matter of urgency.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: A significant cross Government effort is underway to ensure the thousands of Afghans who were evacuated to the UK receive the support they need to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education, and integrate into local communities. We continue to work with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation as quickly as possible, although we have had to use hotels as a temporary measure due to unprecedented demand. In the meantime, we are providing wrap around support to enable families to build successful lives in the UK.

Legal Aid is available to all those entitled to it who are currently accommodated in the bridging hotels.

There are around 11,000 people in bridging accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/62740>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/62741>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/62742>

and

Refugees: Afghanistan

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [62775] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) Afghan refugees and (b) families who have arrived in the UK through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme (i) have been resettled into housing and (ii) remain in bridging hotels; what steps she is taking to ensure that all refugees are resettled, and what her timeframe is for that matter.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: There is a significant cross Government effort underway to ensure Afghans arriving in the UK receive the support they need to rebuild their lives. This includes working at pace with NGOs, local authorities and the commercial sector to secure housing and ensure they have the support they need, while also making sure that local services aren't put under undue strain.

Figures will be released in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/62775>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Jessica Morden (Labour) [56655] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to expedite biometric residence permit applications for Afghans evacuated under Operation Pitting and who have been in bridging hotels for over a week.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The government has announced that those arriving under ARAP and ACRS will receive Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR). Following the policy statement the Government published on 13 September in relation to ILR, we are working through the cases of those who have recently arrived from Afghanistan and are processing them in line with the published policy.

No one will be required to leave the United Kingdom, or be disadvantaged in any way, while we work through their cases.

More information can be found in the Afghanistan Resettlement and Immigration Policy Statement

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement-accessible-version#afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56655>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Andrew Rosindell (conservative) [56321] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of people from religious minorities in Afghanistan who are able to resettle in the UK.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) the UK will relocate up to 20,000 people at risk. It will prioritise those who have stood up for values such as democracy and women's rights in Afghanistan, as well as vulnerable groups, including ethnic and religious minorities.

Further information on the eligibility, prioritisation and referral of people for the

ACRS is set out in the policy statement published on gov.uk on 13 September, available at

www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56321>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [56318] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of whether the Christian community in Afghanistan requires refuge.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Whilst we have not made a specific assessment on the Christian community, all asylum and human rights claims, including those based on religion or belief, are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56318>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Gill Furniss (Labour) [59911] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timescale is for bringing to the UK unaccompanied Afghanistan refugee children currently in temporary camps in Qatar who have relatives in the UK.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Home Office is aware of a group of unaccompanied Afghan minors with family links to the UK in Qatar and officials are working closely with UNICEF, the UNHCR and the US State Department to ensure the most appropriate outcomes for these children. Our priority is to ensure that the children will be safe and well cared for and to ensure any outcome is in the best interests of the children.

We are working with the utmost urgency to ensure that, where appropriate, these children are brought to the UK. However, we need to conduct assessments of the relatives the children will be living with to ensure the children's safety, and that moving to the UK is in their best interests. As soon as these assessments are made, and we are content moving to the UK is in the best interests of the children, arrangements will be made to bring them to the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-20/59911>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [58939] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people who have come to the UK from Afghanistan and are waiting for resettlement are residing in (a) quarantine and (b) bridging hotels was at 19 October 2021.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We can confirm that on 19 October, none of the individuals evacuated from Afghanistan as part of Operation Pitting were in managed quarantine hotels as they had already completed their quarantine period; Save for those already permanently settled in accommodation, who have their own means of accommodation, or are a third country nationals in transit. All those evacuated under Op Pitting are currently in bridging accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58939>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [59946] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) longest and (b) median length of stay is of Afghans evacuated under Operation Pitting who remain in hotel accommodation.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: A significant cross Government effort is underway to ensure the thousands of Afghans who were evacuated to the UK receive the support they need to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education, and integrate into local communities.

We continue to work with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation as quickly as possible, although we have had to use hotels as a temporary measure due to unprecedented demand. In the meantime, we are providing wrap around support to enable families to build successful lives in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-20/59946>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration

Shabana Mahmood (Labour) [56945] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help ensure that all immigration applicants understand the immigration application process, including processing times and what happens after the receipt of a decision.

Shabana Mahmood (Labour) [56950] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the average length of time it takes to process an application for (a) refugee status, (b) indefinite leave to remain, (c) citizenship and (d) for settled status as of 15 October 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office is committed to ensuring all applications are considered without unnecessary delay. Information on our immigration routes with service standards and whether they have been processed against these standards is available as part of our transparency data, at:

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

If an application is deemed complex and expected to take longer than the standard processing timescale, UKVI will write to the customer within the standard processing time and explain what will happen next. The published information on processing times for complex/ non straightforward visa applications is published as part of the Migration Transparency data, at the above link.

All asylum claims are carefully considered on their individual merits on the evidence available to the decision maker. Although we concentrate on oldest cases there may be reasons where some applications may be prioritised due to several factors such as vulnerability. Delays may also occur where we require further information/investigations before a decision can be made on the application.

The Home Office issues an information leaflet to asylum claimants at the point of claim which outlines the asylum process and the claimant's responsibilities within the process. This information leaflet is periodically reviewed. Independent guidance and advice are also available to asylum claimants provided by Migrant Help.

Migrant Help are present in initial accommodation where destitute asylum seekers are initially housed and their services can also be accessed via their website or by phone. Their website is available in multiple languages, and the helpline is free and accessible in multiple languages.

UKVI work closely with our key partners and stakeholders to seek and share feedback to identify ways in which we can improve the quality of experience of people seeking asylum in the UK. Our Customer Experience Management Team, based across the UK, work closely on a local level with stakeholders, to identify key areas to improve the overall experience for people seeking asylum in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56945>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56350>

Visas: Married People

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [58568] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether a person who has recently married a UK national is eligible to apply for the Spouse Visa while their Marriage Visitor Visa is still valid.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Visitors must leave the UK before applying for another type of permission, including as a spouse. An application may be made outside the UK whilst the marriage visit visa is still valid.

The applicant should apply in the country in which they are living. Further details on the spouse visa are available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-family-visa/partner-spouse>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/58568>

Domestic Violence: Migrants

Feryal Clark (Labour) [59094] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to assess the adequacy of access to refuges for migrant victims of domestic abuse.

Reply from Rachel Maclean: This Government is committed to supporting all victims of domestic abuse, regardless of immigration status. We know that access to safe accommodation can be a vital lifeline for those fleeing an abusive situation. In April this year the Home Office launched the £1.5 million Support for Migrant Victims Scheme to support migrant victims of domestic abuse who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The pilot is being run by Southall Black Sisters and their delivery partners for a duration of 12 months and provides accommodation and wrap-around support. We have also appointed an independent evaluator, Behavioural Insights Ltd, to assess the Scheme, with a view to producing a final report in Summer 2022. The Scheme will help the Government secure an accurate picture of the support needs of migrant victims of domestic abuse and will inform subsequent policy decisions.

We already offer support to migrant victims of domestic abuse in the UK as a partner under the family Immigration Rules, through our Destitute Domestic Violence Concession, which enables individuals to access public funds for three months and can be used to fund safe accommodation. These victims can also apply for settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain) under the Domestic Violence Indefinite Leave to Remain Rules.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/59094>

The following two questions both received the same answer

British National (Overseas): Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [58754] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps has his Department taken to support into employment Hong Kongers with BN(O) passports who are struggling to find jobs.

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [59722] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what estimate he has made of the number and proportion of BN(O) arrivals in the UK who have found full time employment.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: The DLUHC Hong Kong BN(O) Welcome Programme seeks to support BN(O) status holders as they make their homes and lives in the UK - this includes finding employment. Our network of Welcome Hubs across the UK can provide support and practical advice, alongside the Welcome Pack, published on GOV.UK in both English and Cantonese, which provides guidance on searching for employment.

The BN(O) route is a generous offer that the Government is making to BN(O) status holders and their dependants, and who are expected to be self-sufficient. To be eligible for the BN(O) route, applicants must prove they are able to sustain themselves and their families in the UK for six months, allowing time to settle in the UK and seek employment. However, we do recognise and expect that BN(O) status holders will want to contribute to UK society as soon as possible, and we appreciate the challenges of finding full-time employment and that this may take time. To further support BN(O) status holders into employment, we announced £2.6 million of Voluntary Community Social Enterprise (VCSE) grant funding in July, and we are presently assessing applications for the funding. These grant schemes will see various integration initiatives, including employability support based on best practice with a focus on skills, employment sustainability and combating under-employment.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58754>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-20/59722>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Hywel Williams (Plaid Cymru) [60355] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she made of the number of outstanding applications to the EU Settlement scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)'. Data on the number of applications and concluded applications in total and for Wales to 30 June 2021 are published in '[EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, June 2021](#)', tables EUSS_MON and EUSS_05 respectively.

Summary statistics of total EUSS applications and concluded applications to 30 September 2021 are published on the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)' web page.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-21/60355>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [56477] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the EU Settlement Scheme Policy Equality Statement (PES) dated 22 May 2019, published on 7 September 2021, and the section on page 27 on Evidence of abuse by non-EEA nationals, detailing the National Risk Assessment approach towards undocumented non-EEA family members, for what reason that section was redacted from the updated version of the statement; on what date that redaction was made; whether her Department has issued internal guidance to caseworkers on decision making on (a) EEA Family Permits or (b) EUSS applications that reflects the substance of that approach; and whether it is her policy to continue to apply the outcomes of a National Risk Assessment to all EUSS applications.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office released on 7 September 2021 an outdated version of the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) Policy Equality Statement (PES) dated 22 May 2019, with redactions, following a Freedom of Information Act request and in compliance with a 9 August 2021 decision of the First-tier Tribunal on Information Rights.

The redactions implement the Tribunal's finding the publication of the relevant information would, or would be likely to, prejudice international relations and effective law enforcement and would therefore be detrimental to the public interest. The May 2019 PES is an outdated version of the comprehensive PES for the EUSS published in November 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-policy-equality-statement/policy-equality-statement-eu-settlement-scheme>

Neither the published PES nor the EUSS or family permit guidance for caseworkers places any reliance on the National Risk Assessment, which is not routinely used in connection with all EUSS applications.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56477>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Cat Smith (Labour) [57113] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will update the EU Settlement Scheme to ensure that people with pre-settled status do not have that status automatically removed from their online permit when they apply for settled status.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Anyone with pre-settled status who applied for settled status on or after 15 July 2021 will continue to see a pre-settled status profile on their eVisa.

For pre-settled status holders who applied for settled status before 15 July 2021 and whose eVisa was updated to show a Certificate of Application (CoA), work is underway to change their eVisas back to a pre-settled status profile automatically. In the meantime, anyone in this position who would like their eVisa changed back to pre-settled status can contact the UKVI Resolution Centre, who can arrange to manually update their eVisa.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/57113>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [51680] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the number of illegal small boat Channel crossings.

Peter Gibson (Conservative) [51847] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to prevent illegal channel crossings in small boats.

Jonathan Gullis (Conservative) [52616] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of small boat Channel crossings.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: I refer the Honourable Gentleman to the answer given to the Member for Romford on 20 September. These crossings are dangerous and unnecessary, and we are determined to bring them to an end and to tackle the criminality behind them.

From January to September 2021, Immigration Enforcement has arrested 46 individuals engaged in small boats activity, with 8 individuals already convicted and a further 94 investigations ongoing. Recognising that much of the criminality involved lies outside of the UK, we are also supporting wider law enforcement activity to tackle the threat of organised immigration crime. In its first 12 months, the Joint Intelligence Cell was involved in almost 300 arrests relating to small boats activity in France.

We must ensure that those involved in people smuggling are punished with the severity it rightly deserves. The Nationality and Borders Bill ([Nationality and Borders Bill](#)) will enable this and will also act as a much stronger deterrent for those tempted

to pursue that despicable path. These long overdue reforms will break the business model of the criminal trafficking networks and make their activities unviable.

There remains an immediate challenge and a need to stop the boats leaving France in the first place and we are working closely with the French to tackle these crossings, both on a policy and operational level. In July 2021 UK/French joint action led to strengthened law enforcement deployments along the coast of France, more than doubling again equipped police resource focused on addressing illegal migration; enhanced intelligence-sharing; greater use of surveillance technology; and more border security at key transport infrastructure along the Channel coast. Progress so far this year between January and September 2021 has resulted in the French stopping more than 15,000 people from crossing. This is a significant increase on the same point last year.

Our New Plan for Immigration will address the challenge of illegal migration for the first time in over two decades through comprehensive reform of our asylum system, making big changes and building a new system that is fair but firm.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51680>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-20/51847>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-21/52616>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-09-07/44236>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Luke Pollard (Labour) [56139] To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what guidance he has provided to the Royal National Lifeboat Institution on the potential risk of that organisation's activities being defined as illegal when rescuing migrants from the English Channel in respect of the Government's plans to bring forward new legislative proposals under the Government's Our New Plan for Immigration.

Reply from Robert Courts: The MCA are engaged with DfT and Home Office officials on the drafting of new legislative proposals under the Government's Our New Plan for Immigration. This has included work to ensure that the activities undertaken by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution when responding to Search and Rescue incidents and rescuing migrants in the English Channel are not considered as illegal activity.

The MCA is also in regular dialogue with the RNLI Executive teams to brief them on our activity in ensuring their action is not considered as illegal when they are tasked to Search and Rescue Incidents to rescue migrants in the English Channel.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56139>

Asylum: Standards

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [58570] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the reasons are for the delays in processing asylum applications; and what steps she is taking to tackle the backlog of applications in the asylum system.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The asylum system has been under mounting pressure for several years, but this has been exacerbated by the pandemic. At the start of the COVID outbreak, whilst intake reduced, so did interview and decision making capacity. We put in place recovery plans and continue to develop these in light of recent intake surges.

The Home Office is pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision. This includes increasing the number of decision makers and providing

improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. This investment in our people will speed up processing times and increase the throughput of asylum decisions.

We are continuing to develop existing and new technology to help build on recent improvements such as digital interviewing and move away from a paper-based system. We are streamlining and digitalising the case working process to enable more effective workflow, appointment booking and decision-making. Asylum Operations are also working to reintroduce a service standard and will be looking towards aligning potentially with changes being brought about by the New Plan for Immigration

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/58570>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Standards

Emma Hardy (Labour) [56330] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to process the backlog of asylum applications.

Emma Hardy (Labour) [56335] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that decisions on asylum claims are made within 12 months of the date of the application.

Emma Hardy (Labour) [56341] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that decisions are taken on asylum applications that were made over 12 months ago.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office is committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay. We have already made significant progress in prioritising claims with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Additionally, we are prioritising older claims and those where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required.

The Home Office are pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision. This includes almost doubling decision makers number to c.1,000 and providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. This investment in our people will speed up processing times and increase the throughput of asylum decisions.

We are continuing to develop existing and new technology to help build on recent improvements such as digital interviewing and move away from a paper-based system. We have three key areas of focus in the short to medium term to reduce the number of outstanding asylum cases by improving efficiency and productivity, reducing the number of outstanding claims and building high performing teams.

We are streamlining and digitalising the case working process to enable more effective workflow, appointment booking and decision-making. We have recently appointed a new lead who is responsible for creating a new enhanced and enlarged workflow function for Asylum Operations. This will allow Asylum Operations a greater degree of management and control over the flow of cases to our decision-making units.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56330>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56335>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56341>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Deportation: Afghanistan

Neil Coyle (Labour) 58901] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan nationals were issued with Notices of Intent under the inadmissibility rules in each month from June to September 2021 inclusive.

Deportation

Neil Coyle (Labour) 58902] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum claimants issued with Notices of Intent have since been admitted for substantive consideration before the six month long-stop as a result of there being no reasonable prospect of removal.

Asylum: Standards

Neil Coyle (Labour) 58903] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many cases there have been where an asylum claimant has had their claim suspended for longer than six months under the Inadmissibility Rules.

Neil Coyle (Labour) 58904] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time is between asylum claimants' claims being suspended under the Inadmissibility Rules and those claims being admitted for substantive consideration.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of notices of intent issued and can be found online at:

[How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?](#)

A breakdown of these figures into nationality is not currently available however we are working to bring inadmissibility and nationality data in line with current reporting and hope to publish that information in the near future.

Timescales between inadmissibility decision points is fluid and continually evolving. Such data is not currently held in a reportable way and to gather it could only be achieved at a disproportionate cost.

Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the code of practice for statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and availability of data. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58901>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58902>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58903>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58904>

Asylum: Scotland and Northern Ireland

Emma Hardy (Labour) [56348] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to notify asylum seekers in (a) Scotland and (b) Northern Ireland of the decisions on their applications.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The UK has a proud history of providing protection to those who need it, in accordance with our international obligations. All asylum claims are considered on a case by case basis and in line with published policy, which applies across the UK.

The Home Office is committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay. We have already made significant progress in prioritising claims with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Additionally, we are prioritising older claims and those where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required.

The Home Office are pursuing a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives which will speed up decision making, reduce the time people spend in the system and reduce the numbers who are awaiting an interview or decision. This includes almost doubling decision makers number to c.1,000 and providing improved training and career progression opportunities to aid retention of staff. This investment in our people will speed up processing times and increase the throughput of asylum decisions.

Once a decision has been reached on an asylum application, the Home Office will endeavour to serve the decision as soon as possible, either in person where there is a need to safeguard, via the legal representatives or to the applicant themselves.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56348>

Asylum

Peter Gibson (Conservative) [56631] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department are taking to help asylum seekers to (a) integrate with local communities and (b) rebuild their lives.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Our accommodation providers (ClearSprings, Mears and Serco) work closely with Local Authorities to ensure asylum seekers are accommodated where shops, hospitals, places of worship and other facilities are within manageable travelling distance.

All asylum seekers have access to a 24/7 AIRE (Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility) service provided for the Home Office by Migrant Help. Here asylum seekers can raise any concerns regarding accommodation or support services, and they can get information about how to obtain further support.

Positive Move On advice is designed to help Service Users to integrate in the UK. It will assist with organising important issues like accommodation, finances and employment for when someone leaves the Home Office support and/or accommodation. Migrant Help offer both telephone and face to face appointments to help service users understand their circumstances and signpost to relevant organisations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56631>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Children

Neil Coyle (Labour) [63738] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page 5 of her Department's New Plan for Immigration, published on 16 September 2021, when she plans to increase access to legal aid for children undergoing the asylum process.

Neil Coyle (Labour) [63739] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to page 12 of her Department's New Plan for Immigration, published on 16 September 2021, what estimate she has made of the number of additional children undergoing the asylum process that would gain access to legal aid as a result of extending the eligibility criteria to those children.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Nationality and Borders Bill is part of our New Plan for Immigration, delivering the most comprehensive reform of the asylum system in decades

Asylum-seeking children are already supported through every stage of the asylum process, from their application to representation at interview and any appeal.

The legal aid scheme does not generally distinguish between services provided to children and adults, and as such, the following services will be available to both children and adults who meet the eligibility criteria for them.

The New Plan for Immigration provides for an expansion of legal aid provision in two circumstances.

The first is for up to 7 hours of legally-aided advice for recipients of a Priority Removal Notice (PRN), to help recipients understand what the PRN is and what action they need to take as a result of being served with one. This access to legal aid will be available to anyone served with a PRN, including children, although it is not envisaged children will be considered a priority for removal or deportation and therefore it is unlikely they will be served with a PRN.

The second is the provision of legally-aided advice on the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This is designed to support individuals who may be victims of modern slavery by helping them to understand what the NRM is and the support available under it, and to seek a referral where appropriate. These individuals must already be receiving legally-aided advice on an asylum or non-asylum immigration matter, and these individuals could be adults or children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-26/63738>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-26/63739>

The above questions relate to the Equality Impact Assessment for the New Plan for Immigration, which can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1018188/Nationality_and_Borders_Bill_-_EIA.pdf

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [56928] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people accommodated in Napier Barracks as at 18 October 2021 have tested positive for covid-19.

Reply from Kevin Foster: 253 people have tested positive for coronavirus whilst accommodated at Napier Barracks since September 2020.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/56928>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Human Trafficking: Prosecutions

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [58924] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Potential Victim of Trafficking cases have been received by her Department in each of the last 5 years.

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [58925] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the average length of time taken to assess Potential Victim of Trafficking cases received by her Department over the last 5 years.

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [58926] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of Potential Victim of Trafficking applications being handled by her Department that are yet to be resolved and were made over (a) one, (b) two, (c) three, (d) four and (e) five years ago.

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [58927] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to introduce a target timeframe for the determination of Potential Victim of Trafficking cases.

Reply from Rachel Maclean: The Home Office publishes quarterly and annual statistics regarding the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). These include how many Potential Victim of Trafficking cases have been received each year. The latest published NRM statistics can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

Statistics prior to Q2 2019 were produced by the National Crime Agency (NCA) and can be found here: [Publications - National Crime Agency](#)

There is no target timeframe in which to make conclusive grounds decisions in the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). A decision can only be made fairly and reasonably once sufficient information has been made available to the competent

authority for it to complete the decision. When the competent authority has received sufficient information for it to complete a decision it should seek to do so.

This is done as soon as possible once a potential victim has been provided with a minimum of 45 calendar days of the recovery period they are eligible for, during which they may access the support and protections of the NRM. Timescales on individual decisions can vary according to the relative complexity of each case and on sufficient information being made available to the competent authority by the parties involved.

In the course of the last year the Single Competent Authority has been recruiting a significant number of new decision makers across the UK to increase capacity for NRM decision-making and bring down decision making timescales.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58924>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58925>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58926>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-19/58927>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Migration

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green): To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to promote (1) knowledge, and (2) understanding, of the contribution of migration to society. ...

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford):

... We greatly value the contribution that migration makes to our society. People from every part of the world have chosen and continue to choose the UK as their home and build their lives here. It is an undeniable fact that immigration has enriched and continues to enrich our nation immeasurably.

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle: ... I have visited the clearly well-funded, spectacularly housed migration museums in Paris and Hamburg. New York has two migration museums. If the Government want to think about the place of global Britain in the world, the fact is that Britain has contributed huge numbers of emigrants to the rest of the world and immigrants have contributed a great deal to us. The Migration Museum currently exists in temporary headquarters here in London and relies on hand-to-mouth funding. Will the Minister meet me and representatives of the Migration Museum, or arrange for another suitable Minister to meet us, to discuss how we might enhance its place and its funding?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: ... The Migration Museum project received a culture recovery fund grant of £65,000 to support it through the pandemic. It has also received project funding from the Arts Council in previous years, with a £40,000 grant in 2017, £124,000 in 2019, I think, and £24,700 in 2020, which has supported education and outreach as well as other activities. On top of that, we would be hard pressed in this country to find a museum that did not in some way refer to migration as part of our cultural offer. I also find it interesting that an immigrant is asking an immigrant a Question.

Baroness Whitaker (Labour): My Lords, a recent survey by the Petitions Committee of more than 500 teachers found that they lack confidence when teaching about migration, which they think of as a "difficult subject". Do the Government agree that the proposed permanent Migration Museum for Britain, which illuminates the central role that migration, both into and out of the country, has always played in our history, as the Minister said, is

a really important addition to Britain's cultural landscape and that its education programme should play a valuable role in supporting teachers in engaging with this very sensitive topic at a time when it could not matter more? Can the Government recommend this to schools?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I find it interesting that migration is a "difficult subject" given that, it is true to say, we are nation of immigrants. On the funding of specific museums and organisations, I was lucky to be able to speak to the noble Baroness, Lady Bennett, yesterday. I will have to go back to my colleagues in DCMS and ask them about the noble Baroness's question.

Lord Balfe (Conservative): My Lords, while I am pleased that this museum exists in the constituency that I used to represent, I point out that the Question is about knowledge and understanding of the contribution of migrants. I hope that the Department for Education and other areas of government that promote information will continue at all times to stress the positive contribution that migrants have made to this country, including both the Minister and me, who hail from outside the UK—or our families do, to be more exact.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: ... I was just thinking how one of the awful moments for the Home Office was the Windrush scandal. One of the huge contributions that was made to this country after the war was by the Windrush generation. It has come to the forefront of people's minds in the last few years, more than ever before, how people such as those in the Windrush generation helped this country, as did the Irish.

Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede (Labour): My Lords, do the Government agree that a lack of care workers is adding pressure on to the NHS? During the passage of the immigration Bill, the Government committed to this House to review skill shortages in the adult care sector and to look at visa options and immigration policy to plug the gap. The Government have commissioned a review from the Migration Advisory Committee. Has this review started, when can we expect the results and will there be an interim report?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I think that the work has started, but I will correct that if I am wrong. The threshold, as the noble Lord knows, was previously set at degree level jobs. Modelling by the MAC suggests that the new border RQF 3 threshold strikes a much more reasonable balance between controlling immigration and business access to labour, so that will capture some of the cohort that he talks about. On the broader point, as we have seen in a number of sectors, employers will now have to think about paying their workers a more competitive salary to attract people such as care workers to do the valuable work that they do and have been doing throughout the pandemic.

Lord Green of Deddington (Crossbench): ...I hope that she will agree that what matters about immigration is its scale and nature. Does she agree that, despite their public focus on highly skilled immigrants, the Government have thrown open our borders to the semi-skilled from the entire world, with much lower skills requirements, lower salary requirements and no cap on numbers? As a result, about 7 million jobs are now open to worldwide competition and none of them needs to be advertised in advance. How can the noble Baroness defend this total surrender to business interests at the expense of British workers?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I have been fortunate to be able to discuss and debate the question of a cap on numbers with the noble Lord. He is absolutely right to say that our immigration scheme is now a whole-world scheme. It is up to us in time to be able to flex our policies to ensure that the people who live and work here are not being crowded out by others who might, in the words of the public, "take their jobs" and that we have a fair but controlled immigration system.

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town: ... I am pleased that the Minister touched on Windrush. One of the recommendations in the lessons learned was that the Home Office should teach its staff more about celebrating Britain's long role in welcoming people to these shores. Does she therefore accept that, if we were able to get the Migration Museum

going, it could be a great resource for the sort of education that could go on for the Home Office's staff when they have to deal with these issues?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Nobody is keener than the people who work in the Home Office to learn the lessons of Windrush. I do a number of events with staff from all levels of the Home Office and it is the question that always comes up, because people are very keen to learn the lessons of Windrush. As I said to the noble Baroness, Lady Bennett, museums all over the country have a positive and negative slant on migration. The International Slavery Museum in my area shows the real abuse of some of the people who came to this country, willingly or unwillingly.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, four years ago we formed the Citizens of the World Choir, which is made up of mainly asylum seekers from 27 countries. Last Saturday, they sang at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, showing that when people are given the opportunity, they can grasp hold of it. Can we send a message to all the voluntary organisations that are doing magnificent work with incomers and say how much we support them and wish them well in all their endeavours?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, we can and we do. That is the point that I am trying to make. It is an absolutely wonderful story. The Citizens of the World Choir has no better champion than the noble Lord, Lord Roberts of Llandudno.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-10-28/debates/7857BA52-D096-413D-96D5-266B671D2F50/Migration>

Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme

The Minister read the statement given in the House of Commons – [see above](#).

Lord Rosser (Labour): The Government had 18 months to prepare for withdrawal but clearly did not. It is over two months since the Afghan citizens settlement scheme was announced but it has still not been opened, yet the lives of those left behind in Afghanistan are at stake.

The Government's Statement says that some of the people already evacuated will form the first part of the 5,000 people being resettled under the resettlement scheme. How many of the 5,000 places in the first year have in reality already been filled by people already in this country? What is the exact financial package that councils housing those evacuated will definitely receive, and when?

Finally, the Commons Minister said that approximately 11,000 people were still in bridging hotels and agreed that actions to target them by far-right extremists were unlawful and illegal. How many arrests have been made of those targeting Afghan refugees in bridging hotels?

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, it is fair to say that the Government worked at pace. In particular, there were officials in the Home Office who worked almost day and night to facilitate the largest and most complex evacuation in living memory. They were assisting the Ministry of Defence and the FCDO to help more than 15,000 people from Afghanistan to safety in the UK.

Currently, a huge programme of work is under way across government to ensure that Afghans brought to the United Kingdom receive a warm welcome and the vital support that they need to build brighter futures in our country. That work spans across government, charities, other organisations, local authorities—as the noble Lord pointed out—and communities. The aim is to give Afghans arriving here the best possible start to life in the UK while making sure, as the noble Lord said, that local services can work effectively to support people.

On the local authority effort, we have had over 200 pledges from local authorities and have housed over 1,700 individuals. I can clarify that that is under ARAP.

On local authority funding, councils that support people through the ACRS, the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, or the Afghan relocations and assistance policy, or ARAP, will receive £20,520 per person over three years for resettlement and integration costs. Local councils and health partners that resettle families will also receive up to £4,500 per child for education, £850 to cover English language provision for adults requiring this support, and £2,600 to cover healthcare. A further £20 million-worth of flexible funding will be made available to support local authorities that have higher cost bases with any additional costs in the provision of services. In addition, the previously announced Afghan housing costs fund will increase from £5 million to £17 million and will run for two extra years to help local authorities to provide housing and to give certainty that funding will be available in future.

The funding and support will be modelled on the VPRS, or vulnerable persons resettlement scheme, which resettled over 20,000 refugees who fled conflict in Syria over a seven-year period from 2014 to this year.

Baroness Jolly (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, there is absolutely no doubt that we owe Afghan interpreters and their families a great debt. Can the Minister estimate how many Afghan interpreters in the UK are still without permanent accommodation, and do we have any intelligence as to the numbers of interpreters still remaining in Afghanistan who are hoping to come to the UK?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): As I said, 1,700 individuals, mostly from Operation Pitting, have moved into permanent local authority housing. Two hundred local authorities have pledged to support families, with a further 6,000 places in accommodation pledged. We are also seeing people matched with jobs, with over 200 of the cohort having been offered employment. The other thing I am keen to see, because it is very helpful in promoting integration, is community sponsorship; 120 community sponsorship schemes are already in place, and I would like to see that expanded.

On the specific question of interpreters placed, I will not give the noble Baroness a figure today because I do not have it—or, if I have it, I cannot see it in my notes. However, I will get her that exact figure.

Baroness Coussins (Crossbench): My Lords, can the Minister clarify whether Afghan nationals who were employed directly by or under contract to the British Council would qualify under the citizens resettlement scheme or under ARAP as the interpreters do?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): Some contractors are eligible, and many have indeed come under ARAP. We are in the process of updating ARAP guidance now that the evacuation effort is over. Under the vulnerable persons resettlement scheme, which is now the ACRS, without going into the detail of each case, people may well come under that scheme or under general immigration routes if their employment and qualifications allow.

Lord Cormack (Conservative): My Lords, none of us will forget the moving and memorable statement of the Secretary of State for Defence during that dreadful period in August when he said, “They will not all get out.” What is the current estimate of those who have not got out—including, of course, the interpreters mentioned by the noble Baroness, Lady Jolly? This was a shameful incident, and we need to know.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): It is very difficult to give a figure for those who have not got out. I have given the figure for those who have got out—15,000—but it is difficult to know how many have not. Anybody contacted—and many people have contacted me—is signposted to GOV.UK to check the latest information on resettlement schemes. It is very difficult. There are people in your Lordships’ House who are desperately worried about family, friends and colleagues.

Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick (Labour): What ongoing discussions are taking place

with the Northern Ireland Executive about the resettlement scheme for Afghans?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): We know that Northern Ireland has been very generous in resettlement. I have not been party to any of these discussions but I am sure they are ongoing, because Northern Ireland will of course want to play its part.

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, a five year-old boy whose family had fled the Taliban, Mohammed Munib Majeedi, fell to his death from a hotel in Sheffield last year. The Metropolitan hotel in Sheffield had been condemned only a few months earlier by the Home Office as “unsafe and unsuitable” for refugees to stay. Why, therefore, did the Home Office allow this family to stay in such a hotel?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, the noble Lord highlights a terrible event in Sheffield. We need to ensure, first, that the quality of accommodation is of a standard and we avoid such terrible incidents, and, secondly, that we ensure that we get people into permanent accommodation.

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean (Labour): My Lords, do the Government really not know how many interpreters we had in Afghanistan? That seems extraordinary. They must have been paid by the British Government or others on their behalf. Surely the Minister can find out, if she is unable to tell us today, how many we had.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford): I was not saying that the Government do not know; I said that I did not have the figures at my fingertips, and of course I will find out for the noble Baroness.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-10-28/debates/696B41C6-322D-49B2-8751-F6E66A83C2F8/AfghanCitizensResettlementScheme>

Information about the Afghan Citizens’ Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Undocumented Migrants: Suicide

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): To ask Her Majesty’s Government, further to the letter dated 16 July from 46 charities concerned about the incidence of suicides among young asylum seekers, (1) what assessment they have made of such suicides, and (2) what steps they will take to address their underlying causes.

Reply from Lord Kamall: Each and every suicide is a tragedy, with a devastating impact on families and communities. The Department for Health and Social Care, the Home Office, the Department for Education and Office for Health Improvement and Disparities are working with the Da’Aro Youth Project to better understand and address the concerns raised in the letter dated 16 July.

The National Suicide Prevention Strategy *Preventing suicide in England: A cross-government outcomes strategy to save lives*, highlights groups which require tailored approaches to address their mental health needs, including asylum seekers. Every local authority has a multi-agency suicide prevention plan in place, tailored to the needs of local communities and work with local partners to implement these plans based on the National Strategy and local data. A copy of the Strategy is attached.

The Government will also continue to use our safeguarding networks to identify the most vulnerable users of the asylum system and engage with the appropriate statutory agencies to provide the support they need.

[Preventing Suicide](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-12/hl2992>

Migrants: Finance

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL2973] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to lift the No Recourse to Public Funds rule for one year to support migrants who were put in accommodation under the Everyone In scheme and are no longer eligible.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office has no plans to lift the No Recourse to Public Funds condition for one year to support migrants who were put in accommodation under the Everyone in Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-11/hl2973>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Helen Hayes (Labour) [598] **Community Sponsorship** – That this House pays tribute to the hard work of over 100 community sponsorship groups who have welcomed more than 500 refugees to the UK; notes that community sponsorship has played an integral role in resettling Syrian refugees since 2016; further notes that research has found that community sponsorship creates a warmer welcome for refugees and contributes to more inclusive communities than other routes; recognises that communities across the country stand ready to support the resettlement of Afghan refugees and welcomes the Government's commitment to extend the Community Sponsorship scheme to include Afghan refugees; notes extensive delays in the processing of community sponsorship applications; and calls on the Government to provide the funding and resources to speed up the administration of that scheme.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/59083>

Press Releases

Extra funding to help low income countries as refugees join NHS

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-funding-to-help-low-income-countries-as-refugees-join-nhs>

UK Government helps LGBT Afghans start new life in Britain

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-government-helps-lgbt-afghans-start-new-life-in-britain>

Victims of human trafficking being 'punished and stigmatized'

<https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1104242>

New Publications

Letter from Baroness Williams of Trafford to Lord Kerr of Kinlochard regarding Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) leave entitlements, DWP deployment in temporary accommodation, Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), Afghans already in the UK

http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2021-0791/Refugees_Family_Reunion_PMB.pdf

Windrush Compensation Scheme data: October 2021

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1029021/Windrush Compensation Scheme Data September 2021 - Published.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1029021/Windrush_Compensation_Scheme_Data_September_2021_-_Published.ods)

News

There's no justification for age-testing migrant children

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/29/theres-no-justification-for-age-testing-migrant-children>

Priti Patel says she wants to force migrant boats back to France 'to save lives'

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/priti-patel-channel-push-backs-lives-b1946261.html>

People crossing Channel because they want to stay in UK hotels, Priti Patel claims

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/priti-patel-asylum-seekers-channel-hotels-uk-b1946223.html>

The UK is still ignoring the reality of the situation in Calais – Lord Dubs

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/calais-migrants-uk-refugees-france-b1944975.html>

Britain told it should pay €8m bill for Calais migrant checks

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2021/10/29/britain-should-pay-8m-bill-calais-migrant-checks/>

Three migrants missing, feared dead, after attempted Channel crossing

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/26/border-force-urgently-responding-migrant-related-incident-essex/>

Migrant dies after falling from dinghy during crossing to UK

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-death-channel-crossing-uk-b1946443.html>

Home Office refuses to reveal details of Afghans' resettlement

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/24/home-office-refuses-to-reveal-details-of-afghans-resettlement>

'Utterly shameful': MPs criticise 'very slow' Afghan resettlement as 11,000 refugees remain in hotels

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghanistan-resettlement-refugees-mps-victoria-atkins-uk-b1945021.html>

Afghan family flee violence for new life in Scotland

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-highlands-islands-59049781>

First group of LGBT+ Afghans fleeing Taliban arrive in the UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/30/first-group-of-lgbt-afghans-fleeing-taliban-arrive-in-the-uk>

'I feel free' - LGBT Afghan refugees arrive in UK

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-59102411>

Afghan refugees welcomed to Liverpool with meal

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-merseyside-59109606>

Far-right groups in UK target hotels housing Afghan refugees

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/25/far-right-groups-in-uk-target-hotels-housing-afghan-refugees>

Asylum-seekers staying in hotel pending age assessment was 'unlawful', says judge

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-hotel-brent-unlawful-b1944895.html>

Home Office staff try to downplay 'prison cell' hostel housing asylum seekers

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-prison-hostel-asylum-seekers-email-b1947673.html>

Asylum seekers in UK housed in converted hostel with prison cells

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/oct/29/asylum-seekers-in-uk-housed-in-converted-hostel-with-prison-cells>

TOP

Community Relations

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Patrick Grady (SNP) [573] Scottish Interfaith Week 2021 and COP26 vigil – That this House welcomes the range of events and activities planned to mark Scottish Interfaith Week 2021, which takes place between 31 October and 7 November 2021; notes the decision to dedicate the week, under the theme of Together for Our Planet, during the COP26 Conference being held in Glasgow, as a significant moment for people of all faiths and none in Scotland to come together to take action to protect the planet; further notes that a key event in the week's activities will be the COP26 vigil in the city's George Square, organised by Interfaith Glasgow and Interfaith Scotland with the support of the Scottish Religious Leaders Forum; notes that the vigil aims to bring together people of all backgrounds in Glasgow, and via a livestream from around the world, in a powerful, symbolic act of unity and solidarity for the planet, and that the event will be attended by religious leaders and faith community members determined to demonstrate their common commitment to climate justice; and wishes the organisers and all who take part in the vigil and the week's activities every success.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/59057>

News

It's been a turbulent year for race in Britain. So what next?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/30/race-in-britain-black-history-month-equality>

'You have to prove your faith when you're dating as a black Muslim'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-59010749>

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Equality

UK Parliament Debate

Ethnicity Pay Gap Reporting

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-10-25/debates/4E23471D-912E-4C45-8317-563878302221/EthnicityPayGapReporting>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Equal Pay and Recruitment: Ethnic Groups

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [63754] To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2021 to Question HL1739, on Equal Pay and Recruitment: Ethnic Groups, for what reason the Government's response to the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities has not yet been published; and when the Government plans to lay its proposals for ethnicity pay gap reporting before Parliament; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Paul Scully: Following publication of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report, my Rt hon Friend the Prime Minister issued a statement making clear that the government will consider the Commission's recommendations in detail. In recognition of the extensive scope of recommendations, the Prime Minister established an Inter Ministerial Group which is reviewing the Commission's recommendations, including on ethnicity pay reporting, and assessing the next steps for future government policy.

The Government will respond to the Commission's report in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-26/63754>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-05/hl1739>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-report-of-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities/foreword-introduction-and-full-recommendations>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-statement-on-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities-31-march-2021>

Infant Mortality: Ethnic Groups

Catherine West (Labour) [58467] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will establish an inquiry on the stillbirth and neonatal deaths of black and Asian babies.

Reply from Maria Caulfield: The Department has no plans to establish an inquiry on the stillbirth and neonatal deaths of black and Asian babies. However, a confidential enquiry into perinatal deaths of black and black British babies is currently being undertaken by MBRRACE-UK's Maternal, Newborn and Infant Clinical Outcome Review Programme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-18/58467>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Scholarships: Ethnic Groups

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL3042] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide funding for scholarships for those wanting to study subjects in which black students are under-represented.

Reply from Baroness Barran: Ensuring equality of opportunity for talented young people across the country is one of this government's highest priorities.

The previous government brought forward sweeping reforms of higher education (HE) through the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) to tackle equality of opportunity. This includes the Transparency Duty, which will for the first time require all universities to publish applications, offers and acceptance rates broken down by gender, ethnicity and socio-economic background.

On 11 March 2021 the Office for Students (OfS) published the access and participation data dashboard, which is used to identify gaps in access, continuation, attainment, and progression at English providers delivering undergraduate provision by different student characteristics, available at:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

All HE providers wanting to charge higher level fees must have an Access and Participation Plan agreed by the OfS, in which they set out the measures they intend to take to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds and under-represented groups to access and succeed in higher education.

In the 2021-22 academic year, providers have committed over £202 million to access activity. Through access and participation plans, providers are delivering a range of interventions aimed at improving access, progression and continuation rates for under-represented groups, including additional financial support through bursaries and scholarships. For example, Durham University this year launched their 'Durham Inspired' scholarship programme for Black students:

<https://www.durham.ac.uk/study/scholarships/undergraduate-scholarships-2022-entry/durham-inspired-scholarships-for-black-uk-students/>

In 2019 the government announced £13.5 million of funding for up to 2,500 new places for AI and data science conversion courses, including up to 1,000 government-funded scholarships. These scholarships are prioritised for Black, Female and Disabled students and are based across 28 Universities across England. In the first year alone over 1,300 students have enrolled, with a total of 210 scholarships awarded to date. Of the scholarships awarded, 40% have been awarded to Black students.

We recognise there is still more to be done, including ensuring that students are accessing high quality courses which have real labour market demand and lead them into skilled employment. In our latest strategic guidance to the OfS we asked them to urge providers to do more to ensure that all students, particularly those from the most disadvantaged backgrounds, are recruited on to courses that will deliver good outcomes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-12/hl3042>

News

Blue plaque for Britain's first black train driver unveiled at King's Cross

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/oct/25/blue-plaque-for-britains-first-black-train-driver-unveiled-at-kings-cross>

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answer

Cuthbert Taylor

Gerald Jones (Labour): This weekend, we will be unveiling a plaque to commemorate Cuthbert Taylor, a boxer from Merthyr Tydfil, who was a victim of the British Boxing Board of Control's colour bar rule, which prevented boxers from competing for professional titles because of the colour of their skin. This blatantly racist, discriminatory and shameful policy prevented many people from achieving their potential and, unbelievably, the British Boxing Board of Control has yet to apologise. Will the Leader of the House encourage the British Boxing Board of Control to apologise and finally expunge this racist stain from British boxing, and will he find Government time to debate this historical wrong?

Reply from Jacob Rees-Mogg: I find myself in complete agreement with the hon. Gentleman. It is not something that I was aware of. I was not aware of Cuthbert Taylor, but that he should have been banned for his colour at any point in our history is simply monstrous, and any organisation that was involved with that ought to try to right a wrong.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-28/debates/8A8584E6-3307-4F0A-8229-E2C8D4C568D4/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-17F3DCBA-8321-4D22-AF5D-951BA859D00F>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Social Media

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL3415] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to force social media platforms to stop amplifying hateful content via their algorithms.

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Under the new Online Safety Bill, companies will need to mitigate the risks of harm associated with their algorithms, for example by preventing them from recommending particular types of content, or by giving users additional control over the content with which they interact.

Major platforms will have to publish annual transparency reports, setting out what they are doing to tackle online harms, including information about algorithms.

Ofcom will have further powers available to help it assess whether companies are fulfilling their duties, including in relation to algorithms. This will include powers to require information from companies, to require an expert report on a platform, and to access premises, data and equipment.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-25/hl3415>

New Publications

Black History Month: racism in football

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/black-history-month-racism-in-football/>

News

Civil servants told not to use 'black mark' over alleged slavery links

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/30/civil-servants-told-not-use-black-mark-alleged-slavery-links/>

Man convicted of terrorism offences

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-59069363>

White supremacist who wrote online about torching Fife mosque faces jail

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/white-supremacist-who-wrote-online-about-torching-fife-mosque-faces-jail-vzlhdmv5f>

My Black friends fear calling the police. That's why I'm taking on racism in the force

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/25/black-friends-fear-calling-police-racism>

Even in our history month, black people are the repeated victims of cancel culture

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/oct/29/even-in-our-history-month-black-people-are-the-repeated-victims-of-cancel-culture>

Racists brandishing swastikas hijack Zoom service at synagogue featured in BBC drama

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/10/25/racists-bearing-swastikas-hijack-zoom-service-synagogue-featured/>

Azeem Rafiq demands Yorkshire board resign after response to racism allegations

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/cricket/azeem-rafiq-yorkshire-racism-allegations-b1947183.html>

Yorkshire taking no disciplinary action over Azeem Rafiq's racism allegations

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/cricket/azeem-rafiq-yorkshire-england-twitter-india-b1947073.html>

Azeem Rafiq hits out after Yorkshire take no action against staff over report

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/oct/28/yorkshire-says-no-staff-at-club-will-face-action-over-azeem-rafiq>

Azeem Rafiq fumes as Yorkshire announce no action to be taken over racism allegations

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2021/10/28/azeem-rafiq-fumes-yorkshire-announce-no-action-taken-racism/>

Azeem Rafiq slams 'embarrassing' Yorkshire's refusal to punish anyone after racism report

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/azeem-rafiq-slams-embarrassing-yorkshires-refusal-to-punish-anyone-after-racism-report-n98wdn26j>

I was just a black person on a night out - that racist attack changed my life

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/womens-sport/2021/10/26/just-black-person-night-racist-attack-changed-life/>

TOP

Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Press Release

First Minister's message for Black History Month

<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFM/status/1452940898879344642>

New Publication

First Minister's speech before the start of COP26

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/first-ministers-speech-before-start-cop26-1/>

TOP

Other UK Parliament and Government

Debate

Black History Month

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-28/debates/61A042E0-30F4-4A67-9F94-7BAC047ADC56/BlackHistoryMonth>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Schools: Festivals and Special Occasions

Catherine West (Labour) [57217] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what his policy is on (a) non-Christian festivals such as Eid and Diwali being recognised more in state schools and (b) allowing non-Christian students to get a legal holiday for their religious festivals.

Reply from Robin Walker: Schools play an important role in preparing pupils for life in modern Britain. This involves supporting pupils to understand the society in which they grow up and teaching about respect for other people and for difference. All schools are required to actively promote fundamental British values, including mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs.

The government does not specify how schools should teach religious education or the topics that religious education must cover. State funded schools either follow a locally agreed syllabus for religious education or design and deliver their own curriculum. This leaves them free to recognise or teach about non-Christian festivals if they choose to.

The Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, as amended, sets out that schools should treat a pupil's absence as authorised if it is on a day exclusively set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parent belongs.

The department does not define which specific days schools should authorise for religious observance, though generally, it may be a day when the pupil's parents would be expected by the religious body to which they belong to stay away from their workplace in order to mark the occasion. We advise schools to seek advice from the relevant religious body if they are in doubt.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-15/57217>

Prime Minister: Black History Month

Ruth Jones (Labour) [60514] To ask the Prime Minister, how he marked Black History Month 2021.

Reply from Boris Johnson: I am proud to lead a country celebrated for its dynamism and diversity, where every day black Britons are making history. To mark Black History Month I shared a video message celebrating this and hosted a reception on 25th October at Downing Street. This reception celebrated the contribution of black entrepreneurs, businesses, and professionals to the UK. I met young people, entrepreneurs, and business leaders, including members of the 10,000 Black Interns programme. I have been pleased to see events and activity taking across government to mark this important event.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-21/60514>

Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport: Black History Month

Ruth Jones (Labour) [60512] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, how her Department has marked Black History Month 2021.

Reply from Julia Lopez: DCMS marked Black History Month 2021 by hosting a variety of events for staff with the cross Civil Service Race Forum and key representatives from DCMS' sectors and ALBs which were advertised via the DCMS intranet.

Black History Month was also marked with a range of internal communications articles from the DCMS BAME network.

Online, we shone a spotlight on people in our sectors, including those working in Formula 1, Tech and Civil Society.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-21/60512>

Department for Work and Pensions: Black History Month

Ruth Jones (Labour) [60515] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how her Department marked Black History Month 2021.

Reply from Guy Opperman: The Department recognises the importance of Black History Month in recognising the contributions that Black people have made to society, and the platform that this also provides in encouraging colleagues to share details of their personal lived experiences and Departmental Race priorities.

This year the Department has worked in collaboration with the DWP National Race Network to run in excess of 40 virtual staff events. These events have been open to everyone and have been supported by the Department's Permanent Secretary and Executive Team who have each facilitated a discussion on what Black History Month means to them and the Race actions they are progressing. All of the events have been recorded to ensure staff who may not have been able to participate can listen to the replay at a time more convenient time.

In addition to the large number of national Network events that have been scheduled, many of our business areas have also run localised activity. Examples of activities include: personal story telling; sponsorship and mentoring promotion; and communications to celebrate and raise awareness of inspirational Black people.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-21/60515>

New Publication

Centre for the Protection of National Infrastructure: Guidance for Religious Establishments

<https://www.cpni.gov.uk/resources/smc-religious-establishments>

Priti Patel: Home Office 'was uncomfortable' for me as a BAME person

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/oct/27/priti-patel-home-office-was-not-a-comfortable-place-for-me-as-bame>

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Health Information: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

NHS

Coronavirus helpline

People living in Scotland who don't have any symptoms but are looking for general information can call the coronavirus helpline. If you're a non-English speaker you can still use this service. Phone 0800 028 2816, tell the call handler that you need an interpreter, give the name of your preferred language and you will be connected to a Language Line interpreter. You will not have to pay for this.

NHS Inform (Scotland)

Latest guidance about COVID-19 from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government, including social distancing and stay at home advice.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

Get a record of your coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccination status

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/covid-19-vaccine/after-your-vaccine/get-a-record-of-your-coronavirus-covid-19-vaccination-status>

Protect-Scot contact tracing app

<https://protect.scot/how-it-works>

Healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers>

NHS Near Me (Scotland)

Near Me is a video consulting service that enables people to have health and social care appointments from home or wherever is convenient. All you need is a device for making video calls like a smartphone and an internet connection. Near Me is a secure form of video consulting approved for use by the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland.

<https://www.nearme.scot/>

NHS (England and Wales)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Places of Worship: Face Coverings

Rachael Hamilton (Conservative) [S6W-03564] To ask the Scottish Government when it will revise the guidance on face coverings in places of worship.

Reply from John Swinney: The Scottish Government is required by law to

regularly review all protective measures that are currently in place, such as the mandatory requirement for the wearing of face coverings in most indoor settings, including places of worship. This measure will continue to be monitored and reviewed in relation to evidence on the four harms : the direct impact of COVID-19, other health impacts, societal impacts, and economic impacts.

After a recent review, during which there was careful consideration of all of the current evidence as well as the options available, Ministers determined that the regulations on face coverings remain proportionate and should not change for the present.

At this stage of the pandemic many of the more intrusive restrictions have been lifted, but the virus and the harms that it causes have not gone away. We still continue to see hospital admissions and deaths as a result of COVID and the impacts of long COVID can be significant. That is why it remains important to maximise the use of the remaining measures such as face coverings. While the vaccination has significantly weakened the link between new cases and serious health harms, it has not been completely broken. It is therefore important that places of worship, along with many other indoor settings, continue their good practice to reduce the spread of the virus.

We are grateful to faith and belief communities for their important role in protecting their congregations and enabling everyone, particularly those at higher risk, to access worship safely.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-03564>

Scottish Government Press Release

Scotland's Covid Certificates Accepted by the EU

<https://www.gov.scot/news/scotlands-covid-certificates-accepted-by-the-eu/>

Scottish Government Publications

Coronavirus (COVID-19): daily data for Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): trends in daily data

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-trends-in-daily-data/>

Professor Jason Leitch: Covid-19 update for faith and belief groups

https://www.scojec.org/news/2021/21x_covid-19/covid-19.html

UK Government Press Releases

Over seven million people in the UK receive COVID-19 booster jabs

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/over-seven-million-people-in-the-uk-receive-covid-19-booster-jabs>

UK Government Publications

The R value and growth rate

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-value-and-growth-rate>

Charity Commission COVID-19 Survey 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-commission-covid-19-survey-2021/covid-19-survey-2021>

News

Professor Jason Leitch - why face coverings are still necessary in church

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/professor-jason-leitch-why-face-coverings-are-still-necessary-in-church>

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New Publication

Scottish Charities 2021

https://www.oscr.org.uk/media/4280/599187_sct0421394204-001_oscr_sector-overview-report_final.pdf

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Other News

Church of Scotland Black History Month feature - Frederick Douglass in Scotland

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/articles/black-history-month-feature-frederick-douglass-in-scotland>

Muslim students call for interest-free alternatives to student loans

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslim-student-interest-free-student-loans-b1944763.html>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

UK Parliament

Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2995>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2918>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) (No. 2) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3003>

Asylum Seekers (Return to Safe Countries) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2961>

Barnett Formula (Replacement) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2982>

Housing Standards (Refugees and Asylum Seekers) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3002>

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2953>

Human Trafficking (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2963>

Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2986>

Immigration (Health and Social Care Staff) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3005>

Modern Slavery (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2892>

**** Nationality and Borders Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

Proposed amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0141/amend/natbord_rm_pbc_1101.pdf

Public Bill Committee

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-26/debates/fa4cf2ea-9af7-4ac5-8a9d-828f060d58d8/NationalityAndBordersBill\(NinthSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-26/debates/fa4cf2ea-9af7-4ac5-8a9d-828f060d58d8/NationalityAndBordersBill(NinthSitting))

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-26/debates/328ec7c7-97a8-4b51-b611-23fa943d325c/NationalityAndBordersBill\(TenthSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-26/debates/328ec7c7-97a8-4b51-b611-23fa943d325c/NationalityAndBordersBill(TenthSitting))

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-28/debates/0a424bb1-a73c-4e0e-875b-6778019c444d/NationalityAndBordersBill\(EleventhSitting\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-10-28/debates/0a424bb1-a73c-4e0e-875b-6778019c444d/NationalityAndBordersBill(EleventhSitting))

**** Online Safety Bill (Draft)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

Evidence session, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Sub-Committee on Online Harms and Disinformation

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2898/html/>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2883>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

An inspection of the immigration system as it relates to the higher education sector
(closing date 15 November 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/call-for-evidence-an-inspection-of-the-immigration-system-as-it-relates-to-the-higher-education-sector>

Windrush Lessons Learned Review progress update (closing date 21 November 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-lessons-learned-review-information/windrush-lessons-learned-review-progress-update-call-for-evidence>

The future of recorded crime and police activity statistics (closing date 10 December 2021)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-future-recorded-crime-police-activity-statistics/>

Proposed Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill

(closing date 22 December 2021)

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/proposals-for-bills/proposed-assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

Fearless Scotland – National Youth Survey (closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/fearless-Scotland>

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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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Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

Scotland's Winter Festivals 2021/2022 Small Grants Fund

closing date for St Andrew's Day events: 19 November 2021

closing date for Burns Night events: 17 January 2022

Scottish Government / BEMIS grants of up to £2,000 are available to constituted, charitable and non-profit organisations or community groups to host an event for St Andrew's Day and/or Burns Night. Scotland's Winter Festivals aim to mobilise the people of Scotland and those with an affinity to Scotland to join in the St Andrew's Day, and Burns Night celebrations. Our diverse ethnic and cultural minority communities are key elements of Scotland's past, present and future so BEMIS want to ensure that your story, history, and narrative plays a full part in Scotland's Winter Festivals. For information and to apply, see

<https://bemis.org.uk/swf/>

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**** this week!**

Scottish Interfaith Week 2021

All week to 7 November 2021 (Scotland-wide)

Scottish Interfaith Week will coincide with COP26 (United Nations Climate Change Conference 2021), and the theme for 2021 is Together for Our Planet. Event submissions are now open and can be registered on the [Scottish Interfaith Week website](#). Sign up to the [Scottish Interfaith Week newsletter](#) to receive updates.

**** this week!**

New Scots Leadership Programme

Module 1: November 2021 (dates tbc) (online and face-to-face)

12 day leadership programme from the Scottish Refugee Council and Scottish Enterprise Academy to equip refugees living in the Glasgow area with practical skills to help them understand themselves better; lead, motivate and inspire others, and consider how they can take a more strategic approach to lead in their community, whether this is their community of refugees or the geographical communities that they find themselves in. For information see <https://your.socialenterprise.academy/course/view.php?id=710>

**** this week!**

Embracing Hybrid Working

3 November 2021 (online, 10.00–11.00)

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator webinar for Trustees Week to talk about the new ways of working many of us are embracing following the pandemic. What have we learned? What does hybrid working mean for trustees, employees and organisations? What are the new possibilities, and what are the risks? For information see <https://tinyurl.com/8h7r8yzj>

**** this week!**

Scotland's Census 2022 – Minority Ethnic

3 November 2021 (online, 11.00–11.30)

Scotland's next census will be held in March 2022. This Scottish Government webinar will give you information on how the census will be delivered, and how you can help get messages to and support Minority Ethnic communities to take part and be counted. For information see <http://register.scotstat.org/s/213f49>

**** this week!**

Collective Responsibility

3 November 2021 (online, 1.00–2.30)

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator webinar for Trustees Week to discuss real life scenarios highlighting challenges faced by charity trustees, and key learning for the sector. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/crwtsw>

Scotland's Human Rights Report Card: Race and Human Rights

8 November 2021 (online, 3.30–5.00)

Scottish Human Rights Commission workshop on Scotland's performance around race and human rights, to inform submissions to the UN Universal Periodic Review. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/56yfmyzm>

New Scots Storytellers media training: Working with journalists

10 November 2021 (online, 12.00–2.00)

Scottish Refugee Council workshop for refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland who are

interested in speaking to the media – perhaps about the work of their community group or experience of living in Scotland. These workshops are an opportunity to practice skills, ask questions, meet new people, prepare for media interviews and find your story. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/pyebjp7w>

On and off screen diversity: Why does it matter?

11 November 2021 (online, 1.30–3.30)

Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity event to explore diversity in the media and creative industry, why diversity matters, and what can we do about it. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/52jw2vbb>

3 Mottos For Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

17 November 2021 (online, 13.00–16.30)

Interfaith Scotland course considering diversity in its widest sense, looking at three models which provide insight on our experience of difference: the role of the dominant identity in shaping organisations; why some people overlook the disadvantages that others experience; and how to respond to misunderstandings or offence. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/b762err8> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Working with Interpreters

23 and 24 November 2021 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

15 and 16 March 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

27 and 28 September 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

24 and 25 November 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

Scottish Refugee Council 2-day courses to enable participants to understand the legal context and qualifications governing interpreters in the EU, UK and Scotland, know the different types of interpreting, identify the differences between an interpreter and a bilingual support worker, and who to use when, and recognise when it is inappropriate to use a family member, a friend or a community member to interpret. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/puykxxnu>

New Scots Storytellers media training: Representing your organisation/community

24 November 2021 (online, 12.00–2.00)

Scottish Refugee Council workshop for refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland who are interested in speaking to the media – perhaps about the work of their community group or experience of living in Scotland. These workshops are an opportunity to practice skills, ask questions, meet new people, prepare for media interviews and find your story. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/pyebjp7w>

New Scots Storytellers media training: Mock interviews

8 December 2021 (online, 12.00–2.00)

Scottish Refugee Council workshop for refugees and asylum seekers in Scotland who are interested in speaking to the media – perhaps about the work of their community group or experience of living in Scotland. These workshops are an opportunity to practice skills, ask questions, meet new people, prepare for media interviews and find your story. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/pyebjp7w>

Refugees: Asylum and Resettlement

9 and 10 December 2021 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

3 and 4 February 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

29 and 30 March 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

16 and 17 June 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

6 and 7 September 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

27 and 28 October 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

Scottish Refugee Council 2-day course drawing on the experiences of people seeking asylum and people who have been resettled in the UK, to examine why people might need to flee their own country, how they seek asylum in the UK, and what opportunities exist for rebuilding their lives here in the UK. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/jd2tey6w>

Working With People From Diverse Religion & Belief Identities

14 December 2021 (online, 13.00–16.30)

Interfaith Scotland course on improving confidence in discussing and responding to the religion and belief of those we work with. The event will explore the core beliefs and cultural practices of the main faiths, and individual needs that may arise from a person's faith or belief identity. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/83rwadrb> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

12 January 2022 (online, 10.30–12.30)

2 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH training on fundamental issues of housing, homelessness and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals, and look at how service users might prepare themselves to avoid the threats of Brexit. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

19 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

9 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH course 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 <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

No Recourse to Public Funds

26 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH workshop to help frontline workers identify a tenant's current status, clarify what this means in terms of access to public funds and plan effective support where difficulties arise. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

Supporting Refugee Integration

15 and 16 February 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

28 and 29 April 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

11 and 12 October 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

15 and 16 December 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30 both days)

Scottish Refugee Council 2-day course to enable participants to understand the principles of a refugee-led integration framework, understand how dependency is created and how to build on people's resilience, and feel confident to facilitate refugee-led integration effectively. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/ukvn5rs5>

Working with Unaccompanied Refugee Children

21 and 22 April 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

10 and 11 November 2022 (online, 11.30–3.30 both days)

Scottish Refugee Council 2-day course to enable participants to recognise the legal difference between children seeking asylum, children who have been trafficked, refugees and migrants, appreciate the journeys that children have made to be in the UK including being trafficked, understand the Age Assessment process, identify the rights and entitlements of separated children, and become familiar with the statutory responsibilities

Useful Links

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Refugee Survival Trust <https://www.rst.org.uk/>

Freedom from Torture <https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/>

Interfaith Scotland <https://interfaithscotland.org/>

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

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

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

ACAS <http://www.acas.org.uk/>

SCVO <https://scvo.org.uk/>

Volunteer Scotland <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

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

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

Disclosure Scotland <https://www.mygov.scot/disclosure-types>

Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/disclosure-services/>

BBC News <https://www.bbc.com/news>

SCoJeC
Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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) <https://www.scojec.org/>

BEMIS

Empowering Scotland's Ethnic and
Cultural Minority Communities

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/>



gov.scot

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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