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Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children: Healthcare

Stephen Kerr (Conservative) [S6W-04442] To ask the Scottish Government what funding it provides to the NHS to ensure there is provision through GP and dental practices for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children coming to Scotland.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking children are able to access GP and NHS dental services on the same basis as domiciled residents.

GP practices receive a share of overall general practice funding from the Scottish Government based upon their estimated workload. This would reflect any unaccompanied asylum-seeking children registering with a GP practice.

Dentists are paid a range of fees and other payments by the Scottish Government

for providing care and treatment to NHS patients.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-04442>

UK Parliament Debate

Vulnerable Asylum Seeker Services: Stockton

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-12-09/debates/B403B242-DD8E-490E-9DBE-0044044FD5A2/VulnerableAsylumSeekerServicesStockton>

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Asylum Seekers: Right to Work Policy

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Tom Pursglove): [HCWS452]

Following the October 2018 publication of the Lift the Ban coalition's report into asylum seeker right to work policy, which concluded that amending the policy could generate £42 million per year for the Government, the former Home Secretary, my right hon. Friend the Member for Bromsgrove (Sajid Javid), committed to a review. Today I would like to announce the findings of that review.

For clarity, current asylum seeker right to work policy allows asylum seekers to apply for permission to work if a decision on their asylum claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, where the delay is no fault of their own. If granted permission to work, asylum seekers may then apply for jobs on the shortage occupation list.

Lift the Ban's report recommended relaxing policy to allow asylum seekers to work after six months, with no restrictions on access to the labour market such as limiting eligible jobs to the shortage occupation list. In July 2020, a follow-up to their 2018 report was published with the same policy recommendation but with updated estimated benefits to the Government of £98 million per year. A further update in summer 2021 revised this further upwards to £180.8 million per year.

The Home Office has carried out a comprehensive review of the Lift the Ban report; however, our evidence indicates the assumptions underpinning the recommendations are highly optimistic. Having considered a wide range of available evidence the Home Office believes that a more realistic set of assumptions would present a more nuanced picture. In particular, the Home Office believes that a more realistic set of assumptions would consider the following:

demographic characteristics (such as family groupings and likelihood of care responsibilities impacting access to the labour market)

how employment rates for migrant groups tend to increase gradually over time

the propensity for part-time employment

the likelihood that any employment is more likely to be close to the minimum or living wage rather than the UK median wage.

In addition, a significant proportion of the fiscal benefits calculated by Lift the Ban are predicated on an assumption that once asylum seekers are granted access to the workforce they will no longer require financial support. The Home Office believes that given the likelihood for part-time and insecure employment this benefit is unlikely to fully materialise. This is because it expects that the administrative cost associated with moving asylum seekers on and off support as they cycle through periods of employment and support will be substantial.

The Home Office has therefore concluded that the fiscal benefits arising from a relaxation of the right to work policy are likely to be significantly lower than the figures claimed by Lift the Ban. In light of wider priorities to fix the broken asylum system, reduce pull factors to

the UK, and ensure our policies do not encourage people to undercut the resident labour force, we are retaining our asylum seeker right to work policy with no further changes.

It is key this policy continues to protect our immigration system from those lodging unfounded asylum claims in an attempt to avoid work visa rules, particularly at a time when dangerous journeys made by small boat are increasing.

Ultimately we must ensure asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay. Our resources are therefore better deployed to pursuing an ongoing programme of transformation and system improvement initiatives that will speed up decision making, reducing the time individuals spend in the system awaiting an interview or decision.

We recognise there are extraordinary circumstances affecting certain parts of the labour market at present. In response to these, we are offering time-limited visas to 4,700 HGV drivers in the food supply chain, 5,500 poultry workers, and 800 butchers to ease supply chain pressures this year. We will look at how the sectors concerned make use of these routes which were created in response to their requests.

The Government continue to support industries in solving such issues in the long term through making roles more attractive to UK workers, with better pay and working conditions.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-12-08/debates/21120876000007/AsylumSeekersRightToWorkPolicy>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Lift-The-Ban-Common-Sense.pdf>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Channel Migrants

The following three questions all received the same answer

Nationality and Borders Bill

Neil Coyle (Labour) [85286] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultation her Department has undertaken with the RNLI on the Nationality and Borders Bill and the duty to rescue persons in distress at sea.

Neil Coyle (Labour) [85287] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has consulted the RNLI on (a) Clause 40 of the Nationality and Borders Bill and (b) Government amendment 63 regarding exemption from potential prosecutions.

Neil Coyle (Labour) [85288] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the financial impact on the RNLI of proposed Government amendments to the Nationality and Borders Bill.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: We do not anticipate that the amendment laid by the Government to the Nationality and Borders Bill in respect of assisting unlawful immigration or an asylum seeker (clause 40) will have any financial impact on the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI). Government Amendment 63 has been made to allow RNLI to continue as now and it doesn't require any changes of practice from them.

Home Office officials have discussed clause 40, Government Amendment 63 and the duty to rescue persons in distress at sea with the RNLI.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85286>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85287>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85288>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Mobile Phones

Sarah Champion (Labour) [85276] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 17 November 2020 to Question 114198, under what statutory powers the mobile telephones of people arriving by boat are seized and held for three to six months.

Undocumented Migrants: Mobile Phones

Sarah Champion (Labour) [85277] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of mobile telephones that have been confiscated from people arriving to the UK by boat since November 2020 have been returned to their owners.

Undocumented Migrants: Confiscation Orders

Sarah Champion (Labour) [85278] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is her Department's policy to confiscate (a) wedding rings and (b) other items belonging to migrants arriving in the UK by small boat.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: 85276: The statutory powers used to seize mobile phones are s.19 of PACE as applied by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (Application to immigration officers and designated customs officers in England and Wales) Order 2013 (the PACE Order) and s.48 Immigration Act 2016.

85277: – Since November 2020, Immigration Enforcement have returned to the owners the majority of mobile telephone devices which have been seized by people arriving illegally via small boat to the UK.

85278: It is not our policy to take wedding rings from people. Personal items may be taken for safekeeping during the initial screening of migrants, but these are restored to the owner at the earliest opportunity. Items that may provide evidence of a criminal offence such as people smuggling may can be retained for a longer period if they form part of an active investigation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85276>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85277>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85278>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-11-11/114198>

Section 19 of the Order referred to above can be read at

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2013/1542/article/19/made>

Section 48 of the Act referred to above can be read at

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/19/section/48>

Refugees: Social Security Benefits

Feryal Clark (Labour) [84498] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent steps her Department has taken to support welfare provision for refugees who have arrived in the UK via channel crossings on small boats.

Reply from Kevin Foster: If the individuals claim asylum and would otherwise be destitute they can apply to the Home Office for accommodation and other support to meet their essential living needs, pending consideration of their immigration status, in particular whether their asylum claim falls to be treated as inadmissible.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84498>

Human Trafficking: English Channel

Feryal Clark (Labour) [84497] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 22 November 2021 to Question 76797 on Human Trafficking:

English Channel, what recent assessment she has made of the contribution of safe routes for people seeking asylum in tackling crossings facilitated by criminal gangs.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The UK has a long history of supporting those in need of protection. Our resettlement schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives in the UK.

So far this year, we have resettled over 9,700 people at risk through the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy, UK Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and Mandate Resettlement Schemes in addition to more than 25,000 people since 2015.

The Hong Kong British National (Overseas) route has also provided a route to British Citizenship for over 76,000 people since it opened on 31 January. When the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme opens, it will see up to 20,000 people at risk resettled to the UK, with 5,000 arriving in the first year.

Those seeking asylum should claim in the first safe country –this is the fastest route to safety. There is no need to make the dangerous journey across the English Channel from European nations which are safe and democratic, with fully functioning asylum systems.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84497>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-17/76797>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

The following two questions both received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [88822] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2021 to Question 81016 on Refugees: Afghanistan, what criteria her Department will use to identify eligible people to be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK.

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [88823] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the proposed number of 20,000 people for the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme will include those already evacuated to the UK.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The first to be resettled through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will be some of those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk.

We are working across Government and with partners such as UNHCR to design and open the ACRS amidst a complex and changing picture. We are committed to working in step with the international community to get this right, and we will set out more details soon.

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/2021-12-07/88822>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-07/88823>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/81016>

Information about the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [88730] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Afghan nationals who were evacuated under Operation Pitting will form part of the 5,000 target set for the first year of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme.

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [88731] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places remain on the first round of the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme as of 7 December 2021.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We are working across Government and with partners such as UNHCR to design and open the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme amidst a complex and changing picture.

The first to be resettled through this scheme will be some of those who arrived in the UK under the evacuation programme, which included individuals who were considered to be at particular risk.

We are committed to working in step with the international community to get this right, and we will set out more details soon.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-07/88730>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-07/88731>

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

Gill Furniss (Labour) [86154] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what discussions she has had with her international counterparts on the settlement of refugee children from Afghanistan with no familial links to other countries.

James Cleverly: The Government has committed to welcome up to 20,000 people through the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme (ACRS) over the coming years. The ACRS will provide those put at risk by recent events in Afghanistan with a route to safety. Unaccompanied children may be offered resettlement where they have been identified as eligible for the ACRS and it is determined that resettlement to the UK is in their best interests. This assessment will be made with expert partners. Where a child is unaccompanied, it may be in their best interest to remain in the region, where they are more likely to be reunited with family.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86154>

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

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [85340] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Afghans who arrived under Operation Pitting and given six months Leave To Remain will have their status converted to Indefinite Leave to Remain in an appropriate immigration category by the end of their six month period.

Reply from Kevin Foster: 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.

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/2021-12-01/85340>

Afghanistan: Refugees

John Healey (Labour) [83241] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many individual Afghan Locally Employed Staff were relocated to the UK under the Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy in each month since April 2021.

Reply from James Heapey: The Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP) has been one of the most generous in the world, under which circa 1,300 Locally Employed Staff (LES) have been relocated to the UK since April 2021, with a large proportion being evacuated on over 100 RAF flights as part of Operation PITTING.

We owe a debt of gratitude to all Afghan nationals who risked their lives working alongside UK forces. For this reason, the ARAP scheme is not time-limited and will endure, facilitating the relocation of eligible Afghans and their families, from third countries if possible.

ARAP eligible principles, including some designated as Category 4, relocated by month are in the table below. This does not include families or dependants:

April	0
May	1
June	24
July	188
August (inc Op PITTING)	981
September	11
October	30
November	70
Total	1,305

The overall total of Afghans (including families and dependants) who have been relocated to the UK since April 2021 is:

Prior to Op PITTING	1,978
During Op PITTING	Approximately 5,000
Since Op PITTING	514

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83241>

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

Kirsty Blackman (SNP) [83388] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many applications to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy have been received as of 29 November 2021; and of those, how many have not received an acknowledgment response.

Reply from James Heapey: The Ministry of Defence has received over 90,000 applications to the ARAP Scheme and continues to receive new applications daily. It is not possible to confirm the number of applicants who have received an

acknowledgement response; however, I can advise that upon submitting an ARAP application the applicant will receive a notification that the form has been submitted. Contact will then be made directly to the applicant in order to source further information to determine an eligibility decision.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83388>

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

Caroline Lucas (Green) [71309] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when the resettlement status of Afghan people who have been housed by local authorities will be communicated to local authorities for the purpose of allowing local authorities to receive the funding the Government has committed but not yet paid for people resettled via the (a) Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and (b) Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Home Office is contacting those here in the UK in order to assist them to obtain Indefinite Leave to Remain status.

A funding instruction for local authorities in the support of the United Kingdom's Afghan Locally Engaged Staff Ex Gratia & ARAP Schemes was published on 24 July 2021. This is for those Afghan nationals who arrived in the UK under those schemes between 22 June 2021 and 31 August 2021. This instruction is available on gov.uk at the following link: [Afghan relocation and assistance: funding instruction](#)

Funding instructions for local authorities providing hotel wraparound support were circulated to the relevant authorities on 12 November 2021; while the ACRS and ARAP funding instruction for all those resettled with local authorities from 1 September 2021 were shared with local authorities on 22 November.

Work is underway to revise and re-issue a combined funding instruction for the ACRS and ARAP schemes for all those resettled with local authorities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-08/71309>

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>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Sarah Olney (Liberal Democrat) [84433] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when Afghan refugee arrivals will be assigned to councils for permanent settlement.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The success in evacuating 15,000 people under Op Pitting means that we are facing an unprecedented housing challenge. We are working closely with local authorities to bring forward enough offers of housing to provide every family with a home as soon as possible.

We are also looking at ways to make more suitable homes available in the private rented sector, and to provide alternatives to hotels for those families who may have to remain in bridging accommodation for long periods: for example, by making available a number of Service Family Accommodation (SFA) units on the MoD estate.

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. Over 4,000 individuals have either moved into a settled home, or are being matched.

Data on relocation will be published as part of our quarterly release which can be found at this link: [Asylum and resettlement datasets](#).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84433>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Catherine West (Labour) [85332] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average length of time is evacuated Afghan families are staying in bridging hotels before being moved to suitable housing.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We are working at pace with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation for Afghan families who were evacuated to the UK. Data on relocation will be published as part of our quarterly release which can be found at this link: Asylum and resettlement datasets - [GOV.UK](#)

Over 4,000 individuals have either moved into a settled home or are in the process of being moved or matched to a suitable home.

Over 300 Local Authorities have pledged housing. The length of time that a family will remain in bridging hotels is dependent on a number of factors including the offer of appropriate housing from Local Authorities. We are working at pace to encourage more offers, including matching employment offers with homes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85332>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Catherine West (Labour) [85333] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of Afghan nationals who have been evacuated to the UK under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (a) are in bridging hotels and (b) have moved into suitable permanent housing.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Between 15th and 29th August, the UK evacuated over 15,000 people from Afghanistan. Under 'Operation Warm Welcome', we are taking a cross-government approach to support Afghans to rebuild their lives, find work, pursue education and integrate with their local communities.

Over 4,000 individuals have either moved into a settled home or are in the process of being moved or matched to a suitable home.

Data on relocation will be published as part of our quarterly release which can be found at this link: [Asylum and resettlement datasets](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85333>

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

Catherine West (Labour) [85331] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure Afghan nationals resettled under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy are housed as close as possible to family or friends already living in the UK.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: We are working at pace across government and with local authorities to source appropriate accommodation for Afghan families who were evacuated to the UK. The emergency circumstances of Operation Pitting meant that we were not able to secure long term accommodation for people as we would have liked before they flew to the UK.

Once properties are identified and referred to the Home Office, a matching exercise is undertaken which allows us to offer the property to a suitable family. Where

possible, we will match families from local bridging hotels allowing them to remain in the area where they may have started to form connections and settle.

We know there are many Afghans who are ready and willing to work and to start their integration into UK society. Those who qualify for refugee status have access to mainstream benefits and services to enable their integration and immediate and unrestricted access to the labour market.

This includes the ability to seek out employment opportunities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85331>

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 Commons Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

Youth Mobility Scheme: EU Countries

Rupa Huq (Labour) [86142] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of including the EU within the Youth Mobility Scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: We remain open to negotiating Youth Mobility Scheme (YMS) arrangements with other countries and territories including the EU or nations within it. However, each YMS is subject to a bilateral, reciprocal agreement which also provides benefit to UK nationals with the detail negotiated and agreed between the relevant parties. We will not add nations unilaterally to the scheme.

We are unable to disclose the status of negotiations on YMS arrangements as they occur.

Further details of additional YMS agreements will be announced once they are concluded.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86142>

Migrants: Finance

Tulip Siddiq (Labour) [86143] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress she has made on reviewing the No Recourse to Public Funds condition in response to the recommendations in the report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, published in November 2020, assessing her Department's hostile environment policy.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: I would firstly like to address the use of the term 'hostile environment' in the honourable Member's question. This language does not reflect Government policy or our values.

The UK's measures on access to work, benefits and services have been introduced by successive governments over many years, and these are consistent with legislative frameworks operated by most other comparable countries. The principle of No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) forms part of that framework and was established as far back as 1971 and is a condition that is applied to those staying here with a temporary immigration status.

Our review of the NRPF measure forms part of the Home Office's full evaluation of its compliant environment policies and measures, both individually and cumulatively. This was set out in "Response to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review: a comprehensive improvement plan", published in 2020. As part of our ongoing review, we also systematically revisit our Equality Impact Assessments, including relating to NRPF, to ensure that policies remain in accordance with our

Public Sector Equality Duties. The Home Office has also set up a national NRPF stakeholder forum to gather information on actual and potential impacts of its NRPF policy. The group meets on a quarterly basis and comprises representatives from central government, local government authorities across the four UK nations, the NRPF Network, and other third sector organisations with a specific interest in the subject. Where appropriate, the trends, emerging issues, and evidence gathered from this forum will be used to inform policy development in this area.

We continue to seek alternative means to secure more NRPF-related data in order to understand who might be impacted by the policy as well as looking at improving the quality and availability of data on protected characteristics.

On 31 August we provided the Home Affairs Select Committee (HASC) with an update on the progress of the review of the compliant environment. A copy of the letter can be found at:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/7162/documents/75657/default/>
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86143>

The Equality and Human Rights Commission report referred to above can be read at <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/public-sector-equality-duty-assessment-of-hostile-environment-policies.pdf>

The Government response to the Lessons Learned Review, referred to above, can be read at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/922973/CCS001_CCS0820050750-001_Resp_to_Windrush_Lessons_CP_293_Accessible.pdf

Immigration: Costs

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [84306] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to minimise the financial challenges facing people who awaiting the results of an Indefinite Leave to Remain application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office's service standard for the processing of ILR applications is six months. Where there is a specific reason cases cannot be decided within the service standard, we will contact the individual concerned.

Performance against service standards for ILR applications are included in the Migration Transparency data which is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-transparency-data#uk-visas-and-immigration>

Where an applicant is in the UK and, at the time of making an application, has leave to enter or remain; section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971 extends the conditions of their visa, including their right to work if they have it, until the application is decided (or withdrawn).

The Home Office also allows for individuals with leave under particular provisions to submit a "change of conditions" application, if the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition has been applied to their leave, and there is a subsequent change in their financial circumstances.

When an individual makes an application following the expiry of their leave to enter or remain they would not benefit from the provisions in Section 3C, this is in keeping with ensuring individuals do not overstay their visa.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84306>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: Disadvantaged

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [84308] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussion she has had with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions on mitigating financial hardship for people in the immigration and asylum application process.

Immigration: Employment

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [84308] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that people prevented from taking up employment as a result of awaiting a ruling on an immigration or asylum application are not pushed into poverty.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Asylum seekers and others who do not have leave to remain in the UK on a condition that gives them access to public funds are not eligible to benefits provided by the Department of Work and Pensions.

If an asylum seeker would otherwise be destitute the Home Office provides support under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, pending consideration of their asylum claim and any appeal. This support usually consists of free accommodation and a weekly financial allowance to cover other essential living needs.

Section 95 of support is not available to other groups of people applying for leave to remain in the UK.

Our policy allows asylum seekers to work if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own. Those permitted to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List (SOL), which is based on expert advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84307>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84308>

Immigration

Virendra Sharma (Labour) [80935] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of allowing people in the process of regularising their immigration status to be able to (a) register for a National Insurance number, (b) apply for a UK-issued driving licence and (c) apply for a unique taxpayer reference number if self-employed.

Reply from Kevin Foster: In common with other comparable countries, the UK has in place a framework of laws, policies and administrative arrangements to ensure access to work, benefits and services is only permitted for those who are lawfully present in the UK who have the right to access them. This includes restrictions on the ability to obtain a UK driving licence for those without lawful status. The aim of these policies is to deter and prevent immigration offences, including clandestine entry and overstaying.

DWP is responsible for the Adult National Insurance number (NINO) allocation process, which allocates NINOs predominantly for work purposes. Consistent with immigration policy, proof of a right to work in the UK is a condition in the allocation of a work-related NINO.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/80935>

Qualifications: Hong Kong

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat) [83260] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what (a) system and (b) support his Department has in place to recognise Hong Kong based qualifications.

Reply from Michelle Donelan: On 31 January 2021, the government introduced a new immigration route for British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders in Hong Kong, providing the opportunity for them and their eligible family members to live, work and study in the UK.

Departments across government are working closely together to ensure that the necessary support and guidance is provided for BN(O) status holders who take advantage of the new visa route.

The UK European Network Information Centre (ENIC) provides expert advice on behalf of the government on the comparability of international qualifications, including those from Hong Kong to UK qualifications. UK higher education institutions and other educational institutions use the ENIC database to assess the qualifications of applicants for their courses.

Full details on a range of matters, including education and training, for those arriving from Hong Kong on the BN(O) visa is set out in the government's welcome pack for arrivals from Hong Kong on the BN(O) visa:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/welcome-a-guide-for-hong-kong-british-national-overseas-visa-holders-in-the-uk>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83260>

Windrush Compensation Scheme: Jamaica

Ruth Jones (Labour) [83479] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, whether the Government has discussed the Windrush Compensation Scheme with Prime Minister Holness of Jamaica.

Reply from Wendy Morton: This Government is resolute in our determination to see that members of the Windrush generation receive in full the compensation that they are entitled to.

The Caribbean Heads of Mission Quarterly meeting, which is attended by the High Commissioner for Jamaica, H.E. Seth G. Ramocan, and chaired by the relevant Minister from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office, receive updates on the Windrush Compensation Scheme and wider Windrush issues. Windrush Compensation Scheme statistics are also shared with Caribbean officials on a monthly basis to ensure they have the latest information on the Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83479>

Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: Falkland Islands

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [86063] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential merits of sending migrants that have entered the UK illegally to the Falklands for processing of their asylum claims.

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [86064] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the potential effect of sending illegal migrants from the UK to the Falkland Islands on the local population of that island.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: We have been clear we are committed to working closely with international partners as we work to fix our broken asylum system. The Government will not give a running commentary on the progress of talks or who we are in talks with.

Changes in the Nationality and Borders Bill support our future intention to process asylum claims overseas. This, alongside the suite of measures within the Bill, seeks to disincentivise people from making dangerous journeys across Europe to the UK and encourage people to claim asylum in the first safe country they reach. That is the fastest route to safety.

We will, of course, ensure that all removals are compliant with our international obligations. Every single person who is eligible for removal under this policy will be able to make representations where they are concerned the country in question would not be safe for them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86063>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86064>

National Refugee Integration Forum

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [83496] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of re-establishing the National Refugee Integration Forum for coordinating support for refugees at the national, regional and local level.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The National Refugee Integration Forum was wound up in October 2006, as it formed part of a wider programme of changes to stakeholder engagement at that time.

However, as part of our commitment under the New Plan for Immigration, we are committed to offering an enhanced integration package for refugees. This will be for those arriving through safe and legal routes to help them integrate into UK society and become self-sufficient more quickly.

We have been in consultation with key stakeholders to design this package. It will build on previous Government schemes and evidence of good practice from the UK and abroad. We will provide a package of tailored support to help refugees rebuild their lives in the UK more quickly. This will include working with local authorities and charities to help refugees into work, and to learn English.

Collaboration with civil society, businesses and local authorities will continue to be key to achieving our goals on refugee integration, and we will ensure our approach is informed by the experiences of refugees.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83496>

Refugees: Housing

Philip Davies (Conservative) [86074] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 December 2021 to Question 83279 on Refugees: Housing, what consultation her Department carried out with each local authority prior to taking the decision to place asylum seekers in each local authority area.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Where we procure properties for asylum seekers, there is an engagement and consultation process to follow with stakeholders dependant on whether this is initial or dispersal accommodation.

For initial accommodation, including contingency initial accommodation, the Home Office will write to the Local Authority and the MP for the area to inform them of plans to use a site and arrange a meeting to discuss further. This is normally done in advance of a property being used, but where an urgent need for accommodation occurs, this may take place retrospectively.

For dispersal accommodation, which will be sourced in areas which have previously agreed to be part of this scheme, the Home Office's providers will normally notify the Local Authority and begin a consultation process around the proposed use of a site. However please note, providers are not contractually bound to do this.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86074>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83279>

Refugees: Housing

Catherine West (Labour) [86152] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure that all women and children refugees are placed in appropriate accommodation; and whether female refugees are offered female-only accommodation.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office provides accommodation and other support to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute.

Women with children who are in receipt of support are not required to share sleeping quarters with unrelated individuals of the opposite sex, but may depending on the circumstances be placed in accommodation facilities used to house such individuals.

Women and children who are granted refugee status in UK become eligible for mainstream welfare services, including housing assistance from the relevant local authority.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86152>

Children: Refugees

Gill Furniss (Labour) [88813] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the impact of No Recourse to Public Funds on children's ability to access (a) the internet and (b) a computer to complete school work.

Reply from Robin Walker: The department is investing over £520 million to support access to remote education and online social care through the Get Help with Technology programme. This programme has already provided over 1.35 million devices to enable disadvantaged children and young people to access education stay in touch with their school and peers and improve their digital skills. On 22 October, the department announced a further rollout of an additional 500,000 devices. Schools and colleges decide how to best use the devices to make sure all pupils, no matter their background, can access education.

In addition, the programme also provided support for over 110,000 families to get online through uplifts in mobile data and 4G wireless routers. This included partnering with the UK's leading mobile operators to provide free data to help over 33,000 disadvantaged children get online and delivering over 77,000 4G wireless routers for pupils without connection at home. The department has announced new funding to support schools and colleges in providing internet access for disadvantaged pupils whose face-to-face education is disrupted during the autumn term and enabled ordering of 4G routers for schools and colleges.

The department supports the role of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport in leading digital inclusion across government and welcomes the efforts of organisations such as the Digital Poverty Alliance in improving understanding of digital inclusion impacts, co-ordinating the wide range of existing local and national initiatives and highlighting gaps in support.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-07/88813>

Asylum: Interpreters and Translation Services

Catherine West (Labour) [86151] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if all refugees who seek asylum in England have access to (a) interpreters and (b) translators.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office aims to provide interpreter and translation services for refugees and asylum seekers at public expense whenever and wherever necessary. Interpreters/translators engaged are required to operate to a high standard on a range of protection-based and human rights topics including (though not limited to) religious conversion, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), sexuality and gender-based claims, all types and forms of persecution, medical (physical and mental health) and political activity.

The Home Office has a proud, consistent, and sustained history of supplying interpreters and translators on demand to meet customer needs. Operational delivery over the last five years has been consistently above weekly service level agreements.

The Home Office Interpreter Language Services Unit (ILSU) holds overall responsibility for the delivery of interpreting and translation services on behalf of

the Home Office. ILSU recruits and maintains a database of, to date, 1,759 independent freelance interpreters as well as having oversight of commercially procured language services to supplement the overall services. ILSU arranges appointments, manages invoices and payments and has a quality assurance role to ensure reliability and the consistently high level of interpretation and translation. ILSU also works with other commercial providers and public sector bodies which provide interpreters and linguists (as well as the [National Register of Public Service Interpreters](#)) to ensure the best sector-wide standards are applied.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-02/86151>

Asylum: Mental Health

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [87582] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential effect of offshore asylum processing on the mental health of people claiming asylum.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Nationality and Borders Bill, which is part of our New Plan for Immigration, seeks to build a fair, but firm asylum and illegal migration system.

On 16 September, we published an Equality Impact Assessment for the policies being taken forward through the Bill, which includes assessment of those who may have mental health needs. This can be found here: [The Nationality and Borders Bill: equality impact assessment](#).

The Home Office will continue to ensure the welfare and dignity of all claimants forms a central platform of our decision-making processes.

Any vulnerabilities will be taken into consideration and every single person who is eligible for removal under this policy will be able to make representations where they are concerned the country in question would not be safe for them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-06/87582>

Refugees: Children

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [87879] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether child refugees who are accommodated in hotels have access to education and the facilities to play in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) who are temporarily accommodated in UASC hotels, whilst awaiting a permanent placement with a local authority under the National Transfer Scheme, have access to play materials in communal spaces, in addition to the opportunity to engage with activities on and off site.

Education provision is the responsibility of the local authorities and is provided once they have received the UASC into their care.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-06/87879>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Immigration

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4293] To ask Her Majesty's Government what consultations, if any, they are having with religious groups about potential legislation on immigration.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government's New Plan for Immigration is delivering the most comprehensive reform of the asylum system in decades. An essential element of the Plan is the Nationality and Borders Bill.

A public consultation on the Plan was held earlier this year, with a wide variety of

stakeholders from different sections of our society taking part. The Government published its response to the consultation in July, and this can be found on the GOV.UK website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>

The Government regularly engages with individuals and groups with an interest in migration, including religious groups, as we take forward the Bill and deliver the New Plan for Immigration.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-22/hl4293>

Free School Meals: Migrants

Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Labour) [HL4430] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Benyon on 17 November (HL Deb, col 282), what plans they have to make arrangements for the long-term provision of free school meals to children in families with no recourse to public funds; and when they intend to publish any such plans.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The department has temporarily extended free school meal eligibility to include some children of groups who have no recourse to public funds in light of the current unique circumstances many families face at this time.

We are currently working with departments across government to evaluate access to free school meals for families with no recourse to public funds.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-25/hl4430>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-11-17/debates/663509C2-9798-4A39-8F35-0E4D88C1F128/NationalFoodStrategyReport#contribution-BEB9005A-4DE1-4290-9B75-47C4A8BB4551>

Free School Meals: Migrants

Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Labour) [HL4604] To ask Her Majesty's Government what review they are undertaking, if any, into the long-term provision of free school meals to children in families with no recourse to public funds; and when the outcome of any such review will be announced.

Reply from Baroness Barran: We are working with departments across government to evaluate access to free school meals for families with no recourse to public funds. In the meantime, the extension of eligibility will continue with the current income threshold until a decision on long-term eligibility is made.

Once the review is complete, we will update our guidance accordingly. Our current guidance regarding the extension can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/hl4604>

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL4412] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to withdraw the responsibility for the Windrush Compensation Scheme from the Home Office and give the responsibility to an independent body.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Moving the operation of the Scheme from the Home Office would risk significantly delaying payments to people.

Since the changes we made to the Scheme in December, the amount of compensation paid has risen from less than £3 million to over £31.6 million, with a further £5.6 million having been offered, and there is no cap on the amount of compensation we will pay out.

The compensation scheme continues to be subject to robust internal scrutiny and

regular scrutiny from external stakeholders.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4412>

Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>

Refugees

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4292] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment, if any, they have made of how the number of people applying for refugee status in the UK compares to the figures for (1) Greece, (2) Italy, (3) Spain, and (4) France.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes information on asylum in the [Immigration statistics quarterly release](#). Section 2.2 of the '[How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?](#)' chapter includes international comparisons on the number of people applying for asylum in the UK and in the EU+ (as published by [Eurostat](#)).

There were 37,235 people (applicants and their dependants) who applied for asylum in the UK in the year ending June 2021 (the latest comparable statistics available). This is less than France (87,180) and Spain (67,425), but higher than Italy (24,885) and Greece (24,275). When looking at the EU+ and UK together, the UK received the 4th largest number of applicants, or 8% of the total asylum applicants across the EU+ and UK combined over that period (France and Spain received the second and third largest).

Asylum applications in the UK and the EU have declined in the latest year, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the fall in applications seen by the EU+ (the EU, EEA and Switzerland) (-21%) was steeper than the decline in applications to the UK (-9%).

The number of applications to the UK has remained fairly stable in the last 5 years in comparison with the EU, where application numbers have fluctuated more.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-22/hl4292>

Refugees: Children

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL4314] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reinstate the scheme protecting unaccompanied refugee children to provide a safe route for unaccompanied migrant children.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government remains committed to the principle of family reunion and supporting vulnerable children.

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Europe with family members in the UK are able to apply under existing routes to join eligible sponsors, such as those with refugee leave or humanitarian protection or with British or settled status. The Immigration Rules already make provision for a child to be reunited with a parent in the UK either under the Refugee Family Reunion Rules or via Appendix FM - depending on the immigration status of the parent.

In addition, paragraphs 319X and 297 of the Rules are extremely flexible provisions that already allow for children to apply to join a wide range of adult family members who are not their parents, if the relevant requirements are met. Under these Rules, we do not restrict the range of those family members. The requirements are there are serious and compelling family or other considerations which make exclusion of the child undesirable, suitable arrangements have been made for the child's care and those relatives can adequately maintain and accommodate the child without recourse to public funds.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-22/hl4314>

Asylum

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL4366] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office on 16 April (175879), whether they now intend to publish the internal review looking into the assessment of asylum claims on the grounds of (1) religion, and (2) sexuality.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK has a proud record of providing protection to individuals fleeing persecution based on their religious beliefs, sexual orientation and gender identity and are committed to delivering an asylum system that is responsive to all forms of persecution.

The review into the way asylum claims on the basis of religious and LGBT+ grounds are assessed has been completed. The Home Office do not have any plans to publish the findings of this internal review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4366>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-25/175879>

Asylum: Children

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL4363] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children are currently waiting for a decision on their asylum application and have waited for over six months.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release, which can be found on go.uk. Data on the number of people awaiting a decision on an asylum application are published in table ASY_D03 of the 'asylum and resettlement detailed datasets', which can be found attached. Age breakdowns are not available in the published data.

[Annex – Asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4363>

Asylum: Children

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL4365] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether issuing priority removal notices and evidence notices to those under the age of 18 at the time of their arrival in the UK is compliant with (1) the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, (2) the Children Act 1989, and (3) the Children Act 2004.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: As part of our obligations under the public sector equality duty, an equality impact assessment has been completed in respect of the measures in the Nationality and Borders Bill concerning priority removal notices and evidence notices, this includes a consideration of possible impacts on children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4365>

Press Release

An inspection of migrants arriving via small boats at Tug Haven

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/an-inspection-of-migrants-arriving-via-small-boats-at-tug-haven>

New Publication

EU Settlement Scheme – Home Office looked-after children and care leavers survey, November 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-home-office-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers-survey-2020/eu-settlement-scheme-home-office-looked-after-children-and-care-leavers-survey-november-2021>

News

The Anti-Refugee Bill – what comes next?

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/the-anti-refugee-bill-what-comes-next/>

The Hong Kong visa scheme is an immigration policy done right

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/07/hong-kong-visa-scheme-immigration-policy-done-right/>

MPs reject bid to stop ‘pushback’ of migrant boats from endangering lives

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/migrant-boats-mps-vote-channel-b1971622.html>

Priti Patel’s claims Channel pushbacks have a ‘legal basis’ questioned by peers

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/channel-push-backs-patel-legal-basis-b1971974.html>

Channel crossings can’t be stopped in the water

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/channel-crossings-cant-be-stopped-in-the-water-qzm32hf7g>

UK inaction makes Afghan refugees brave the Channel

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/uk-inaction-makes-afghan-refugees-brave-the-channel-8g0vbwqwc>

Safe passage for refugees and public support are not mutually exclusive

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/safe-passage-for-refugees-and-public-support-are-not-mutually-exclusive-nvw6fvhhv>

People crossing the Channel as a last resort deserve empathy not anger

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/migrant-channel-refugees-priti-patel-b1973754.html>

Jail for migrant who became cross-Channel people smuggler

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/jail-for-migrant-who-became-cross-channel-people-smuggler-3pk7vj3rd>

‘They’ll fight for you’: how Scotland’s guardians change young refugees’ lives

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/dec/06/they-will-fight-for-you-how-scotlands-guardians-change-young-refugees-lives>

Priti Patel to leave migrants ‘in limbo’ by scrapping six-month deadline for asylum decisions

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/12/07/priti-patel-leave-migrants-limbo-scrapping-six-month-deadline/>

Asylum seekers will still not be allowed to work, Home Office review concludes
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-will-still-not-be-allowed-to-work-home-office-review-concludes-b1972000.html>

Home Office urged to stop housing asylum seekers in barracks
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/dec/09/home-office-urged-to-stop-housing-asylum-seekers-in-barracks>

UK warned not to replicate Australia's immigration detention centres
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/dec/05/uk-warned-not-to-replicate-australias-immigration-detention-centres>

People face being wrongly deported to dangerous countries under government's court plan, MPs warn
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/dominic-raab-asylum-immigration-judicial-review-b1970839.html>

Refugees are not 'deserving' or 'undeserving', whatever this government wants you to think
<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/asylum-seekers-channel-nationality-borders-bill-b1971316.html>

The former child refugee helping Afghan asylum seekers
<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/newsbeat-59555269>

Refugee Council helps Afghan family to begin a new life in Britain
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/refugee-council-helps-afghan-family-to-begin-a-new-life-in-britain-zgr62mw56>

Isolated Afghan couple regret being sent to Scotland
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/isolated-afghan-couple-regret-being-sent-to-scotland-dnvlcxkkd>

A 975-day nightmare: how the Home Office forced a British citizen into destitution abroad
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/dec/02/home-office-forced-british-citizen-into-destitution-abroad-windrush-compensation-scheme>

TOP

Community Relations

Scottish Parliament Motion

Foysoil Choudhury (Labour) [SM6-02468] Edinburgh Diwali – That the Parliament acknowledges the work done by Edinburgh Diwali; notes that Edinburgh Diwali is a registered charity that has been organising the first public Diwali in Edinburgh since 2015; further notes that the Edinburgh Diwali Committee has representations from different faiths from across different regions of India who are settled in Edinburgh and has been headed by Rajnish Singh, one of the founder members of the organisation, since 2020; considers that Diwali is the most popular Indian festival that celebrates victory of good over evil and light over darkness; further acknowledges that Edinburgh Diwali has become one of the key community led festivals in the city over the years, with cross community support, and understands that the event has historically been free and open to all, which enables all

who are interested to enjoy the parade, music, dance and fireworks in the city centre.
<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-02468>

TOP

Equality

Scottish Parliament Debate

Human Rights Day 2021

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13461>

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Ethnic Minority Communities (North East Scotland)

Maggie Chapman (Green): To ask the Scottish Government whether it will provide an update on the actions under way to tackle the reported inequalities experienced by ethnic minority communities in the north-east. (S6O-00518)

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Shona Robison): We are determined to play our part in eradicating structural and systemic racism across Scotland, informed by the views and lived experiences of minority ethnic people. Through our immediate priorities plan for race equality, we aim to ensure an equal and anti-racist recovery from Covid-19. That is backed by our £21 million equality and human rights fund, which has enabled Grampian Regional Equality Council to carry out valuable work in gathering lived experiences alongside quantitative data, providing the evidence that is needed for the development of strong and effective anti-racist policies to improve outcomes for minority ethnic people in the north-east.

Maggie Chapman: GREC has recently highlighted significant racial inequalities in the region across housing, health, education, employment, justice and more. For example, ethnic minorities have suffered worse job losses during Covid; Africans have the highest percentage of degree-educated people but the highest unemployment rates; hate crime is up 14.5 per cent in Aberdeen and 23 per cent in Aberdeenshire; and asylum-seeker men who were recently accommodated in an Aberdeen hotel will have minimal support, provided by a private company, with only £8 a week to live on in the initial stage of their application process. ... Will the cabinet secretary outline what more we can do to ensure that those vulnerable people are not further marginalised?

Reply from Shona Robison: Maggie Chapman has raised the important issue of asylum seekers and refugees. I am happy to write to her with more information about the work that we are doing in relation to people who have no recourse to public funds and preventing destitution.

Maggie Chapman also mentioned hate crime and, again, I am happy to write to her with more details. The rise in hate crime is concerning and we should all take that very seriously.

Finally, on support during the pandemic, we supported the development of the ethnic minority national resilience network to help individuals, families and organisations during this time, and we provided more than £312,000 to support minority ethnic communities. There was a particular focus on young people and older people who are experiencing isolation. Again, I am happy to write to Maggie Chapman with more detail.

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Infant Mortality: Asians

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [84393] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if he will establish an inquiry into the difference in the average incidence of deaths of Asian and Asian British babies each year.

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84393>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Free School Meals: Ethnic Groups

Lord Lucas (Conservative): [HL4339] To ask Her Majesty's Government which schools in England had more than 40 per cent of pupils who (1) identified as White British, and (2) were in receipt of Free School Meals, in the summer of 2019.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The department publishes annual statistics on the number of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) and identifying as different ethnicities. The figures are based on January school census data and included in the statistical release 'Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics'. We do not routinely publish summer term FSM figures and we do not collect ethnicity as part of the summer census. Therefore, figures derived from the spring census 2019 have been provided. Figures for January 2019 can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2019>

The attached tables show schools which had more than 40% of pupils identifying as white British and schools that had more than 40% of pupils eligible for FSM in January 2019.

[Number of pupils eligible for FSM](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-23/hl4339>

Free School Meals: Ethnic Groups

Lord Lucas (Conservative) [HL4340] To ask Her Majesty's Government which 50 schools had the highest average Progress 8 scores for (1) boys, and (2) girls, in the summer of 2019; and for those schools, what were the percentage of White British (a) boys, and (b) girls, who received Free School Meals; and for each of these groups, what was their average Progress 8 score.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The attached file contains the top 50 schools with the highest average progress 8 scores for boys and girls in the 2019 academic year. Each of these lists is populated with the closest information currently available. Amongst other variables, each list of schools contains the following information: the adjusted progress 8 score, the adjusted progress 8 score for boys and girls, and the adjusted progress 8 score of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils.

Disadvantaged status considers whether the pupil has received free school meals in the last six years or were looked after for one day or more.

[HL4340 table](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-23/hl4340>

Youth Custody: Ethnic Groups

Lord Bradley (Labour) [HL4357] To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how many, and (2) what proportion, of incidents of the use of force in the children's custodial estate were recorded in each of the last 10 years by the child's ethnicity.

Reply from Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: Data on the use of force on children in the youth custodial estate is included in the aggregated annually published "Youth Justice Statistics" report which form part of the Youth justice statistics series.

Table 8.6 in the supplementary tables of the 2019 to 2020 edition, published this January, gives data on Incidents of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI) sorted by ethnicity age and gender for years ending March between 2015 and 2020. The same table in the 2017 to 2018 edition covers the period from 2012 to 2018. The 2020 to 2021 edition is due to be published on 27 January 2022 and will include data for the year ending March 2021.

[Table](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4357>

Prisoners: Ethnic Groups

Baroness Whitaker (Labour) [HL4443] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Wolfson of Tredegar (HL3924) on 24 November, what plans they have, if any, to introduce an ethnic group for those in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities in statistics related to people in prisons.

Reply from Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: There are no current plans to alter the ethnic groups for the regular quarterly published data on the prison population which formed the basis of the answer to HL3924. The broad categories included in the information released are in line with current guidance from the Race Disparity Unit of the Cabinet Office.

Numbers self-designating as 'Irish Traveller or Gypsy' are published as part of a more detailed data set which are released annually as part of the series Offender Management Statistics Quarterly. The most recent release of this data formed part of the January to March 2021 issue, published in July 2021. Figures were included in Table A1.9ii of the Annual Prison Population: 2021 document. This showed that as of 30 June 2021 1,365 prisoners self-designated as Irish Traveller or Gypsy. This number was further broken to show that 1,337 were male and 28 were female.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-25/hl4443>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-10/hl3924>

The statistics referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/offender-management-statistics-quarterly>

and

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1006270/Population_30June2021_Annual.ods

New Publications

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Our impact in Scotland 2020–21

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/about-us-our-impact-in-scotland-2020-2021.pdf>

News

BBC admits it is struggling to keep staff from diverse backgrounds

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bbc-admits-it-is-struggling-to-keep-staff-from-diverse-backgrounds-p60hcmm7t>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Hate Crime

Feryal Clark (Labour) [84500] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on tackling the recent rise in hate crimes, particularly racially motivated crimes.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: All forms of hate crime are completely unacceptable.

This government has made it clear that victims should be supported and that the cowards who commit these hateful attacks should feel the full force of the law.

The biggest driver for the increase in recorded crime is general improvements in police recording, along with increased victim willingness to come forward. The police are also improving how they identify hate crimes. However, we cannot be complacent and we recognise there is still much we can do to continue to drive hate crime down, support victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

To achieve this my Department is working closely with the Home Office to prepare a new Hate Crime Strategy which will address all forms of hate crime, including racial hate crime.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-30/84500>

Religious Hatred: Islam

Ruth Jones (Labour) [83478] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, how much the Government spent on supporting Islamophobia Awareness Week 2021.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: We continue to combat islamophobia in all its forms and throughout the year. Islamophobia Awareness Week is an event lead across departments and partners rather than centrally and the data is not available. However, in combatting Islamophobia, we have funded Tell MAMA for over £4 million between 2017 and 2022 to monitor and combat anti-Muslim hate crimes, as well as providing approximately £5 million to the Places of Worship Security Grant over the last five years, which has been used to protect Mosques and other places of worship.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83478>

Islam: Religious Hatred

Ruth Jones (Labour) [83477] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when he last discussed tackling Islamophobia with the leaders of the devolved Administrations.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: The Government remains committed to tackling Islamophobia and recognises the discrimination and intolerance faced by Muslim communities. Criminal Justice is a fully devolved issue in Scotland and Northern Ireland. In Wales, we maintain a dialogue and the Welsh Government has been consulted on our forthcoming Hate Crime Strategy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83477>

Religious Hatred: Islam

Afzal Khan (Labour) [83460] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group has taken to tackle Islamophobia.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: The Cross-Government Working Group to Tackle Anti-Muslim Hatred has played an important role as the Government's forum for discussing issues of concern around Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred. The group has been instrumental in a number of achievements; regional workshops to empower communities and educate them in how to respond to hate crime, conducting research into the drivers of Islamophobia and running educational events such as those during the pandemic focusing on how Islamophobia spreads on social media.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83460>

Religious Hatred: Islam

Afzal Khan (Labour) [83461] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, when officials in his Department last met with the Anti-Muslim Hatred Working Group.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: Officials have been in regular contact with the chair of the working group throughout the pandemic.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-29/83461>

Antisemitism

Andrew Percy (Conservative) [85237] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of making Holocaust denial a criminal offence.

Reply from Rachel Maclean: There are no plans to make Holocaust denial a criminal offence.

The Government believes that Holocaust denial is both immoral and factually wrong. However, legislation reflects the enormous value this country rightly places upon free speech. It enables people to engage in debate freely, while protecting people from criminal activity including threatening and abusive behaviour or behaviour which is intended to, or is likely to, stir up hatred.

I am clear that antisemitism in any form is inexcusable and this Government has taken a number of steps to help eliminate it over the last five years. In 2016 we became the first country in the world to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism. We've since had organisations such as the Premier League and over three-quarters of councils adopt the definition.

In July 2019 we also appointed Lord John Mann as an independent antisemitism advisor, to provide advice to the Government on the best ways to tackle antisemitism. Finally, we have provided £14m in funding this financial year (2021/22) for protection of Jewish institutions through the Jewish Community Protective Security (JCPS) Grant, administered through the Community Security Trust (CST).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85237>

Educational Institutions: Antisemitism

Andrew Percy (Conservative) [85236] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether his Department plans to take steps against (a) universities and (b) other bodies receiving funding from his Department who (i) refuse to accept the IHRA definition of antisemitism and (ii) take insufficient action to protect Jewish students on campus.

Reply from Michelle Donelan: On 10 November 2021, the Office for Students (OfS) published a list of higher education (HE) providers who have adopted the definition. I am pleased to report good progress in the last year: an increase from around 30 to over 200 providers have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) definition. This includes the vast majority of universities and I continue to urge all providers to adopt this definition.

The government has also asked the OfS to undertake a scoping exercise, to identify providers that are reluctant to adopt the definition and find out why. The department has asked them to consider introducing mandatory reporting of antisemitic incident numbers by providers, with the aim of ensuring a robust evidence base, which the OfS can then use to effectively regulate in this area.

Adoption of the IHRA definition is only a first step towards ridding HE of antisemitism. I want to be very clear that, whilst the government considers that adoption of the definition is crucial, it is not enough on its own. That is why I will continue to work with the sector to ensure it better understands antisemitism and does more to end it.

Universities also have clear responsibilities to ensure that there is no place for antisemitism. All HE providers should discharge their responsibilities fully and have robust policies and procedures in place to address hate crime, including any antisemitic incidents that are reported.

The department and I are keen to hear from Jewish groups about what more can be done to make Jewish students and staff feel safe on campus. As part of this, we intend to set up a round table in the new year, specifically focused on tackling antisemitism in HE.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-01/85236>

The list referred to above can be read at

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/acdd72d9-ee9a-4959-8c11-1116232328ce/providers-who-have-adopted-the-ihra-working-definition-of-antisemitism.pdf>

Probation: Racial Discrimination

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [86611] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to the HM Inspectorate of Probation report of 16 March 2021, Race equality in probation: the experiences of black, Asian and minority ethnic probation service users and staff, what steps he is taking to (a) implement the recommendations of the Lammy Review, (b) improve training for probation staff to better address workplace race issues identified in the report and (c) improve the diversity of the probation workforce.

Reply from Kit Malthouse: A detailed response and action plan for the HMI Probation report was completed in May 2021, and subsequently updated in October 2021. The Action Plan includes steps to improve training for probation staff to better address workplace race issues and is available on-line.

Actions yet to be complete on the Lammy Review relate to recommendations 28 and 29, which focus on developing a more representative workforce and leadership and will need to remain open for some time as they involve long term targets. A detailed update on progress against all the recommendations of the Lammy Review was published in 2018, and again in 2020.

The HMPPS Race Action Programme is improving training to address race issues and will be piloted in probation, prison, and youth custody settings by March 2022 with a fuller rollout planned for later in the year.

A target has been set for the diversity in the HMPPS workforce, covering those in probation, at 14%. Good progress has been made within the Probation service against this target with current statistics showing representation at 16%, though there is a geographical variation to this which must be addressed. To achieve these targets, and attract candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds, efforts include targeted marketing and engagement, and the monitoring of applications from those with protected characteristics to learn where processes can be adapted.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-03/86611>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.justiceinspectores.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2021/03/Race-Equality-in-Probation-thematic-inspection-report-v1.0.pdf>

The Action Plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/989852/Race_Equality_in_Probation_Action_Plan.pdf

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

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

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Prisoners: Racial Discrimination

Lord Bradley (Labour) [HL4358] To ask Her Majesty's Government (1) how many, and (2) what proportion, of prisoners' complaints about (a) racism, or (b) racial discrimination, were upheld in each of the last 10 years by ethnicity.

Reply from Lord Wolfson of Tredegar: All prisons are required to comply with the Prisoner complaints policy framework. This framework sets out requirements and information on providing a fair and effective system for dealing with prisoner complaints, including by ensuring procedural justice and taking a problem-solving approach for both adult prisoners and young people.

Separate to the Complaints procedure, a prisoner can submit a Discrimination Incident Reporting Form (DIRF) if they feel they have been discriminated against any of the protected characteristics, as defined by the Equality Act 2010. The DIRF process has been renewed to be launched in early 2022. As part of the updated process, and following a pilot in 2021, data will be collated regionally and nationally. Until then, to confirm the number of racial complaints made by prisoners and which were upheld, a search of each prison's complaints log would be required. The information requested could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-24/hl4358>

New Publications

Law Commission – Hate crime laws: Final report

<https://s3-eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/lawcom-prod-storage-11jsxou24uy7q/uploads/2021/12/Hate-crime-report-accessible.pdf>

Twitter: The extent and nature of antisemitism on Twitter in the UK

<https://antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/APT-Twitter-Report-2021-Draft-4.pdf>

News

Racism: Black minister 'mistaken for restaurant staff'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-59552160>

New UK report estimates almost half a million explicitly antisemitic tweets per year

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2021/12/10/new-uk-report-estimates-almost-half-a-million-explicitly-antisemitic-tweets-per-year>

Police release new images of men over antisemitic abuse at Hannukah party bus

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/jewish-hannukah-bus-antisemitic-cctv-b1971152.html>

The BBC has questions to answer on anti-Semitism

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/06/bbc-has-questions-answer-anti-semitism/>

BBC apology sought for report suggesting anti-Semitic abuse victims responded with anti-Muslim slurs

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/05/bbc-apology-sought-report-suggesting-anti-semitic-abuse-victims/>

Sportscotland to launch independent investigation of racism in Scottish cricket

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/59575857>

Cricket Scotland welcomes review into racism within Scottish game

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/cricket/scotland-sri-lanka-world-english-england-and-wales-cricket-board-b1971991.html>

Sportscotland starts review after claims of racist culture at Cricket Scotland

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/sportscotland-starts-review-after-claims-of-racist-culture-at-cricket-scotland-dbt88j5rn>

Mansfield issue life ban to jailed fan who shouted racist abuse from stands

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/hate-crime-mansfield-nottinghamshire-police-league-two-racist-b1973807.html>

Experiences of antisemitism brought me closer to the faith of my family

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/experiences-of-antisemitism-brought-me-closer-to-the-faith-of-my-family-alexander-brown-3491120>

Mixed-race family suffered years of racist abuse from neighbours

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-59312289>

Hershel Fink anti-Semitism row: Royal Court theatre backers withdraw

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-59579623>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

New Publications

Scottish Budget 2022-23

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-budget-2022-23/>

Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement 2022-23

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/equality-fairer-scotland-budget-statement-2022-23/>

Budget Statement: 2022-23

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/budget-statement-2022-23/>

Scottish Budget: 2022-23 Infographic

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8r79yd>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answer

Prime Minister's Questions: Hindu Community

Bob Blackman (Conservative): This week thousands of my Hindu constituents and millions worldwide start the celebrations of the birth centenary of His Holiness Mahant Swami Maharaj. His life was given over to people of all castes, races and religions. He was of course the inspiration behind the world-renowned Neasden temple and hundreds of other temples. Will my right hon. Friend join me in that celebration and in giving good wishes to all Hindus across the world? (904649)

Reply from the Prime Minister: I thank my hon. Friend for raising this, and I thank the Hindu community for their amazing contribution to this country.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-12-08/debates/45C3B261-14F7-4DDC-A7D8-EB8A76097CFB/Engagements#contribution-A5762426-B4C9-4698-91A1-967E974FB7BC>

New Publications

Statistics on so called 'honour-based' abuse offences, England and Wales, 2020 to 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021>

Data tables

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1038949/statistic-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021-data-tables.ods

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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>

Book a flu or coronavirus booster vaccination

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

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 and Government Press Releases

Holyrood Committee launch inquiry into rise in number of excess deaths

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/newsandmediacentre/117571.aspx>

One year of COVID-19 vaccinations

<https://www.gov.scot/news/one-year-of-covid-19-vaccinations/>

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/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's speech – 10 December 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-speech-10-december-2021/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's statement – 7 December 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-7-december-2021/>

COVID-19: Omicron in Scotland - Evidence Paper

<https://tinyurl.com/2p99xenz>

Updated: Coronavirus (COVID-19): safe use of places of worship

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-phase-3-guidance-for-the-safe-use-of-places-of-worship/>

UK Government Press Releases

Prime Minister confirms move to Plan B in England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-confirms-move-to-plan-b-in-england>

UK marks one year since deploying world's first COVID-19 vaccine

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-marks-one-year-since-deploying-worlds-first-covid-19-vaccine>

UK's most vulnerable people to receive life-saving COVID-19 treatments in the community

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uks-most-vulnerable-people-to-receive-life-saving-covid-19-treatments-in-the-community>

UK Government Publications

The R value and growth rate

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

PM opening statement at COVID-19 press conference: 8 December 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-opening-statement-at-covid-19-press-conference-8-december-2021>

News

Covid vaccine: Why our black and South Asian friends and family still won't have a jab

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-59523439>

Covid in Scotland: Anti-migrant policies 'make minorities wary of vaccines'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/covid-in-scotland-anti-migrant-policies-make-minorities-wary-of-vaccines-rpkb7pgdx>

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New Publication

BAME: A report on the use of the term and responses to it Terminology Review for the BBC and Creative Industries

<https://bcuassets.blob.core.windows.net/docs/csu2021325-lhc-report-bbchighres231121-1-132828299798280213.pdf>

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Other News

BAME acronym: UK broadcasters commit to avoiding catch-all term

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/entertainment-arts-59559834>

BBC bans 'Bame' as report reveals 'white nervousness' when talking about race

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/07/bbc-bans-bame-report-reveals-white-nervousness-talking-race/>

Banning BAME from the BBC is really only a partial victory

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/12/08/banning-bame-bbc-wont-end-woke-racial-divisions/>

Broadcasters ban 'homogenising' BAME acronym

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/broadcasters-ban-homogenising-bame-acronym-8q9jl2sjh>

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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>

Report Stage, House of Commons

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-12-07/debates/E3398434-EA4E-4717-9BF5-92B8962F82D1/NationalityAndBordersBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-12-08/debates/63B3AE86-2989-449D-97A5-EF78C8DC79CA/NationalityAndBordersBill>

Bill as brought to the House of Lords from the House of Commons

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/44307/documents/1132>

Online Safety Bill (Draft)

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

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

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

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

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>

**** Excess deaths in Scotland since the start of the pandemic** (closing date 7 January 2022)

https://yourviews.parliament.scot/covid19/excess-deaths-covid19-pandemic/consult_view/

Draft Northern Ireland Refugee Integration Strategy (closing date 21 February 2022)

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/draft-refugee-integration-strategy>

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: 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 Burns Night. Scotland's Winter Festivals aim to mobilise the people of Scotland and those with an affinity to Scotland to join in the 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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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

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

Workshop for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Campaigners

8 January 2022 (online, 10.00–4.00)

Friends, Families and Travellers workshop for Gypsy, Roma, Traveller, and nomadic people regardless of ethnicity, culture or background who want to build their skills in activism and campaigning. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y2pccu45>

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>

**** Light the Darkness: UK Holocaust Memorial Day 2022**

27 January 2022 (Glasgow and online, 6.30–8.30)

Households across the UK will be lighting candles and safely putting them in their windows to remember those who were murdered for who they were, and stand against prejudice and hatred today. Join Interfaith Scotland either in person or online for a film screening of the UK-wide commemorative event, candle lighting ceremony, and, for those participating in person, light refreshments. For information about the in-person event see <https://tinyurl.com/3ftrje99> and about the online event see <https://tinyurl.com/mr3whtbf>

Refugees: Asylum and Resettlement

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>

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 Interpreters

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>

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 of the Scottish Guardianship Service. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3fedr5xn>

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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>

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



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



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

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