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Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Immigration Rules: Statement of Changes

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Kevin Foster): [HCWS552] My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary (Priti Patel) is today laying before the House a statement of changes in immigration rules.

The Migration Advisory Committee are undertaking a review into the impact of the ending of free movement on the social care sector. While the MAC are not publishing their full report until the end of April 2022, they felt they had sufficient evidence with which to make a recommendation in their annual report to add care workers to the Health and Care visa and the shortage occupation list. Their recommendation was made in the context of increased demand for adult social services, increasing vacancies and issues with staff retention. They have re-asserted their position of the underlying cause of recruitment and

retention problems being mainly due to pay, terms and conditions, and lack of progression in the sector. This is now coupled with pay in other competing sectors—such as catering, retail and cleaning—catching up to the adult social care sector, due to the rise in the national living wage.

In light of the clear evidence which the MAC have presented and the important role the sector is playing in face of the exceptional situation during the pandemic, the Government announced on 24 December that we were agreeing to their recommendation. As recommended by the MAC, the salary threshold will be in line with the rest of the shortage occupation list—with a reduced minimum salary threshold of £20,480 in place—compared with a general threshold of £25,600 for non-shortage occupations—and applicants will need to meet all of the other requirements, such as having a job offer from an approved Home Office sponsor and meeting English language requirements.

Taken together with the wider package of support measures for the adult social care workforce announced since September—including the £462.5 million to help local authorities and care providers retain and recruit staff over winter, on top of the £500 million for workforce training, qualifications and wellbeing announced as part of the health and social care levy, they will help us ensure sustainability and success for our long-term vision for this sector.

As the MAC do not believe immigration can solve all, or even most, of the problems associated with social care recruitment, but can help to alleviate difficulties in the short term, we are therefore creating an initial 12-month application window whereby workers can apply for visas in this occupation. During this time, successful applicants will have all the same rights, benefits and obligations as other health and care visa holders—including the right to bring dependents and to settle permanently in the UK. This decision will be reviewed by Government later this year to determine the success of this change in relation to wider changes in the sector to attract and retain staff, the position with regard to the impact of the pandemic and whether it remains appropriate for this occupation to remain on the shortage occupation list.

This does not signal a departure from the RQF 3 threshold and the points-based system more broadly, which the MAC agree strike the right balance between access to international talent and resident labour. Employers must continue to invest in training, opportunities and wages for the resident workforce to ensure the UK's hard-working care workers get the type of rewarding packages they deserve and which are common in other sectors.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-01-24/debates/22012413000008/ImmigrationRulesStatementOfChanges>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Channel Migrants

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107455] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what military accommodation has been (a) assessed and (b) chosen to house migrants who arrive in the UK following illegal Channel crossings.

Reply from James Heapey: Defence has previously provided Napier Barracks in Kent and Penally Camp in Pembrokeshire to the Home Office to provide additional capacity to house cross-channel migrants. Penally Camp was handed back to Defence in March 2021 however Napier Barracks is still in use by the Home Office. In addition, in December 2021 Defence made the former Defence Fire Training and Development Centre in Manston available to the Home Office to provide additional processing capacity in the South East of England. As part of reviewing the operational plans for the Channel, Defence is working closely with the Home Office

to review the effectiveness of current arrangements, including processing and initial accommodation capacity. As part of this work, there may be a requirement for the use of additional military accommodation although no final decision has been taken.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107455>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107453] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what tactics will the Royal Navy plans to use to deter migrants from crossing the Channel illegally.

Reply from James Heapey: Defence's contribution will focus on efficient command and coordination of cross-Government assets to improve surveillance, detection and interception capabilities. Operation ISOTROPE aims to prevent all uncontrolled arrival of migrants, with all migrant vessels intercepted before, or as, they land, on UK shores.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107453>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107454] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many and what types of vessels which will be brought under Royal Navy command when it takes primacy for tackling illegal Channel crossings.

Reply from James Heapey: Detailed planning for Operation ISOTROPE is underway and further detail will be announced in due course. The capabilities that Defence makes available for this task are likely to include the same classes of naval vessels and airborne intelligence and surveillance assets that have previously supported the Home Office with countering small boat migration in the Channel.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107454>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107456] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Navy will have (a) command and (b) control powers over the (i) Border Force and (ii) UK coastguard vessels in its role of preventing illegal Channel crossings.

Reply from James Heapey: Operation ISOTROPE will see Defence have operational control of all cross-Government assets in the Channel involved in counter-migration operations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107456>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107457] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, [whether] the Navy have interception or interdiction powers for taking primacy over illegal Channel crossings.

John Healey (Labour) [107458] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether the Navy will be given additional powers in order to assist in their role of primacy in preventing illegal Channel crossings.

Reply from James Heapey: The Royal Navy's role will focus on efficient command and coordination of cross-Government assets to improve surveillance, detection and interception capabilities. No new legal powers for the Navy are envisaged at this time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107457>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107458>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [107457] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Navy

ships will be used to transport migrants from the English channel to (a) the UK, (b) France or (c) an offshore process centre.

Reply from James Heappey: Under Operation ISOTROPE, Defence's role is to enhance the UK's ability to respond to all irregular immigration and safety of life at sea incidents in the English Channel. Our planning assumptions are for persons intercepted in the Channel to be escorted to the UK in a safe and controlled manner, for onward processing.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107461>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [108457] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether Navy ships will be deployed in the Channel to tackle illegal migrant crossings.

Reply from James Heappey: There may be a requirement for the deployment of Royal Navy vessels to help to counter illegal migrant crossings, and Defence has a range of capabilities that may be called upon to contribute to this objective. Detailed planning for Operation ISOTROPE is underway and further detail will be announced in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-20/108457>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Healey (Labour) [108458] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he discussed his proposals for the Navy to take primacy for tackling illegal Channel crossings with his French counterpart.

Reply from James Heappey: The Home Secretary and Foreign Secretary remain responsible for engagement and negotiations with the French on our future relationship with regards to stemming irregular migration between Europe and the United Kingdom. The defence relationship with France remains strong, and Ministers engage with their French counterparts regularly on areas of joint interest.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-20/108458>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Refugees

John Healey (Labour) [111486] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many people eligible under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy have been relocated to the UK in each month since August 2021.

Reply from James Heappey: 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) and others who supported the UK mission in Afghanistan 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.

As at 26 January 2022, the number of ARAP eligible principles relocated by month is shown in the table below:

April	0
May	1
June	24
July	188

August (inc Op PITTING)	981
September	19
October	41
November	81
December	60
January	84
Total	1,479

As at 26 January 2022 the overall total of ARAP eligible people (principles 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	1,210

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-25/111486>

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) [105568] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support Afghan nationals applying to the (a) Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy or (b) Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme in sourcing the necessary paperwork.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP)
The ARAP website, on gov.uk, provides extensive guidance on how to submit an application to the scheme and can be viewed at:

[Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy: further information on eligibility criteria, offer details and how to apply](#)

The MOD also provide casework support to eligible ARAP applications, 7 days a week, which varies in accordance with individual applicant's needs.

Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS)

There will not be a formal Home Office owned application process for the ACRS. Instead, eligible people will be prioritised and referred for resettlement to the UK in one of the three ways set out in the Afghan Resettlement and Immigration Policy Statement, which can be viewed at:

[Afghanistan resettlement and immigration policy statement](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105568>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [107585] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with stakeholders on the potential merits of introducing a formal application process to the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) commenced on 6 January 2022 and will provide up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

As set out in the policy statement of 13 September, there will be many more people seeking to come to the UK under the scheme than there are places. It is right that we take a considered approach, working with partners to resettle people to the UK. There will not be a formal Home Office owned application process for the ACRS. Instead, eligible people will be prioritised and referred for resettlement through one of three pathways.

More detail can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107585>

The policy statement referred to above can be read at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement/afghanistan-resettlement-and-immigration-policy-statement-accessible-version>

The following five questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [107679] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons the second stream of the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme will not open until Spring 2022.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [107680] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential risk to life caused by the delays in opening the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [107681] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, how many individuals her Department expects to be resettled in the UK from Afghanistan's neighbouring countries.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [107682] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people her Department estimates will be resettled in the UK directly from Afghanistan under the Afghanistan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [107683] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her timeline is for contacting Afghan nationals on their eligibility for the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) commenced on 6th January. The ACRS will provide up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

This follows the immediate evacuation of over 15,000 people to safety in the largest and fastest emergency evacuation in recent history. We have continued to bring people to the UK, with around 1,500 people helped to enter since the evacuation. Some of the people evacuated under Op Pitting will be eligible for the ACRS.

Details of how the ACRS will operate including the referral pathways for those outside and inside Afghanistan are set in the oral statement of 6 January. Given the complex and changing nature of the circumstances in Afghanistan and the region, it is not possible to give estimates of the numbers of people who will be resettled from outside or inside Afghanistan.

Those people in the UK following the evacuation who will be eligible for the ACRS, are being contacted to assist them in obtaining Indefinite Leave to Remain under the ACRS. People eligible for resettlement under pathways two and three of the ACRS will be contacted at the appropriate time.

We are working closely with UNHCR with the ambition of receiving referrals as part of the second pathway for vulnerable refugees in need of protection in year 1 of the ACRS. UNHCR have said that they will be able to do this from Spring.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107679>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107680>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107681>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107682>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107683>

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

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [105595] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she will review the impact of the closure of English language testing hubs in Afghanistan for spouses of people already granted refugee status in UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: There are no requirements for family members of refugees applying under the family reunion provisions in part 11 of the Immigration Rules to meet the English language requirements.

With respect to the wider family Immigration Rules, the Government believes those seeking to enter and make a permanent home in the UK should be equipped to integrate successfully in UK society, with an appropriate level of English and an understanding of British life.

There are no plans to suspend the requirement for spouses specifically from Afghanistan to pass an English language test to enter the UK.

However, under the Rules an applicant can be exempted from the English language requirement to enter the UK if a decision maker considers there are exceptional circumstances preventing the applicant from meeting the requirement.

The applicant must demonstrate, as a result of exceptional circumstances, they are unable to learn English before coming to the UK or it is not practicable or reasonable for them to travel to another country to take an approved English language test.

Each application for an exemption on the basis of exceptional circumstances will be considered on its merits on a case-by-case basis.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105595>

Visas: Married People

Claire Hanna (SDLP) [107738] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to allow applicants to complete tuberculosis screening and biometric appointments post application decision in the UK, for people seeking to relocate from Afghanistan under more formal visa avenues such as a spousal visa.

Reply from Kevin Foster: There are no current plans to allow applicants in Afghanistan to undertake tuberculosis screening or provide biometrics in the UK after a decision has been made on their applications.

Biometrics, in the form of a facial image and fingerprints, underpin the UK's immigration system to support identity assurance and suitability checks on foreign nationals who are subject to immigration control. They enable us to conduct comprehensive checks to prevent leave being granted to or travel to the UK by those who pose a threat to national security or are likely to breach our laws.

Allowing people to travel before undertaking TB screening would undermine the purpose of the tuberculosis screening requirement, which is to prevent the spread of tuberculosis in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-19/107738>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Housing

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat) [110597] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact of prolonged stays in bridging accommodation on the ability of refugees to settle in other parts of the UK.

Refugees: Afghanistan

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat) [110596] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish her Department's policy and guidance on matching and allocating people to local authority properties under the Afghan Relocations and

Assistance Policy and Afghan citizens resettlement schemes.

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat) [110598] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish targets and timescales for the placement of families in to available properties under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Afghan citizens resettlement schemes.

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat) [110599] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to tackle delays in matching families to local authority properties under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy and Afghan citizens resettlement schemes.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Operation Warm Welcome is a significant cross-government effort, working with local authorities, NGOs, housing organisations and the commercial sector to explore all options available to meet the need for housing. We are working closely with Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities and other stakeholders to identify a range of alternative accommodation options to minimise hotel use and to enable people to get into accommodation as quickly as possible in order for them to begin their new lives here in the UK.

We do not want to keep people in temporary accommodation for any longer than is absolutely necessary and more than 4,000 Afghans who arrived in the UK before, during, and after Operation Pitting have either been matched or are in the process of being matched into properties.

We currently have Home Office Liaison Officers (HOLO's) who's role is to provide support to those in bridging hotel accommodation. The role of the HOLO is to provide both face to face support and remote support when not physically present. They are reactive to the needs of those accommodated in hotels and can provide signposting to other government departments and Local Authorities and ensure safeguarding concerns are appropriately acted upon.

There is a huge effort underway to get families into permanent homes as soon as we can so they can settle and rebuild their lives, and to ensure those still temporarily accommodated in hotels have access to healthcare, education, any essential items they need as well as employment opportunities or Universal Credit.

We have a range of criteria which is taken into consideration when allocating families into permanent accommodation to allow for the best possible matches, this includes family size, vulnerabilities and availability of housing.

We strive to allocate the right families into the right accommodation to ensure they have a smooth integration into their new communities within the UK.

DLUHC have created a new Housing Portal to make it easier for councils to assess the suitability of properties prior to contacting landlords. Offers of property are triaged by DLUHC and sent directly to councils. We are also looking at ways to make more suitable homes available in the private rental sector by engaging with landlords, letting agencies and industry bodies to promote the housing portal and encourage participation in the resettlement programme. We are also working with the Estate Agent Rightmove to identify potential properties available in the private rental sector.

Local Authorities continue to assist with helping families to integrate into communities upon their arrival to their permanent accommodation. We would also ask that Local Authorities who are not already part of the scheme to consider assisting in our efforts to resettle the Afghan people into permanent accommodation in the UK.

There are no plans to publish targets for placing Afghans in permanent accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-24/110597>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-24/110596>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-24/110598>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-24/110599>

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

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

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

The following four questions all received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [106750] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential effect of the increased cost of immigration facing EU nationals coming to the UK as a result of the UK leaving the EU on international exchange student placements of over six months.

Visas: Overseas Students

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [106748] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of bringing the length of the visit period for international exchange students who are visiting the UK on a visitor visa in line with that of academics visiting the UK on an academic visitor visa.

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [106749] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with representatives of universities and other stakeholders on increasing the length of time that short-term exchange students are permitted to stay in the UK.

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [106751] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of her proposed changes to immigration on the (a) number and (b) duration of stay of international exchange students studying in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Under the new simplified immigration rules which came into effect on 1 December 2020, study for up to six months at an accredited institution is permitted under the visitor route.

The visitor route is for a person who wants to come to the UK for a temporary period, usually up to 6 months.

Visitors may also learn about and undertake research as part of a course they are studying overseas.

There are no plans to allow visitors to study for more than six months.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106750>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106748>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106749>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106751>

Visas: Fees and Charges

Stephen Timms (Labour) [109177] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the impact on the number of visa

applications submitted of the rising costs of visa application fees and ancillary fees; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Kevin Foster: An Impact Assessment was published on 12 January alongside the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) (Amendment) Order 2022 and can be viewed through this link [The Immigration and Nationality \(Fees\) \(Amendment\) Order 2022 - Impact Assessment](#).

An assessment of the impact of migration, borders and citizenship fees will be published alongside any future changes to fee levels set by the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Regulations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-21/109177>

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [109261] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution of the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department on 17 January Official Report, cols 9-10, whether her Department has decided not to move the Windrush compensation scheme to an independent body for the reasons given by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Moving the operation of the Scheme from the Home Office would risk significantly delaying payments to people.

We can understand the concerns of those who believe the department which caused the issues facing these individuals, is the one also deciding whether individuals are eligible to receive compensation or not. In response to these concerns the compensation scheme continues to be subject to robust internal scrutiny and regular scrutiny from external stakeholders.

The first stage in deciding a claim for compensation is to confirm an individual's identity and eligibility and this is linked to the immigration status of an individual. It would be difficult to decouple this from the Home Office without increasing the time taken to process an individual's claim and issue payments.

Since the changes we made to the Scheme in December, the amount of compensation paid has risen from less than £3 million to over £32.9 million, with a further £5.8 million having been offered, and there is no cap on the amount of compensation we will pay out.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-21/109261>

The oral contribution referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-01-17/debates/02CB0620-333C-4A95-ABA2-AAF891D4E6A6/WindrushCompensationScheme>

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [105771] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of applications to the EU Settlement Scheme via the Relevant Person of Northern Ireland route are successful; and what assessment she has made of the adequacy of that route to Settled Status.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Consistent with UK Government commitments given to support the restoration of devolved government in Northern Ireland, applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) can be made by family members of a 'relevant person of Northern Ireland', that is of a British or Irish citizen born in Northern Ireland to at least one parent who was then a British or Irish citizen or otherwise entitled to reside permanently in Northern Ireland.

Information on the outcome of EUSS applications which relate specifically to family members of 'relevant persons of Northern Ireland' is not recorded in a reportable

form on our case management system and is therefore not available.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105771>

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

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

Refugees: Scotland

Owen Thompson (SNP) [106789] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of implementing a scheme equivalent to the Scottish Government's New Scots refugee integration strategy on a UK-wide basis.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The UK has a proud history of providing protection to those that need it. This Government is committed to ensuring that they can take positive steps towards integration as they rebuild their lives in the UK and become self-sufficient, providing for themselves and their families and contributing to the economy.

As part of the New Plan for Immigration, we have committed to offering an enhanced integration package for refugees arriving in the UK through safe and legal routes. This is intended to help refugees to integrate into their communities and become self-sufficient more quickly.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106789>

Refugees

Anne McLaughlin (SNP) [103577] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the safe and legal routes to the UK which are available to (a) refugees and (b) asylum seekers as of 13 January 2022.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The UK has a long history of supporting refugees 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. Since 2015 we have resettled over 26,000 refugees through our safe and legal routes directly from regions of conflict and instability.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) commenced on 6th January and will provide up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

In addition to our resettlement schemes, we also operate the following safe and legal routes:

- Refugee family reunion, which enables the spouse or partner and children of a refugee sponsor who are under 18 years of age to join their family member in the UK. More than 39,500 family reunion visas have been granted since 2015
- Afghan Relocation and Assistance Policy (ARAP), for current or former locally employed Afghan staff working for or alongside the UK Government. We have relocated over 8,000 people under ARAP so far, with more continuing to arrive.
- A bespoke immigration route for British National (Overseas) status holders and their family members, which reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to people affected by the restrictions on their rights and freedoms in Hong Kong. As of 30 September 2021, there have been approximately 88,800 applications, with 76,176 successful grants since the route launched on 31 January.

Our New Plan for Immigration demonstrates a strengthening of Government-backed safe and legal routes to the UK, so those in need of protection don't have to put their lives in the hands of people smugglers.

You can find more information on our safe and legal routes at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nationality-and-borders-bill-safe-and-legal-routes-factsheet/nationality-and-borders-bill-factsheet-safe-and-legal-routes>
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-13/103577>

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

Asylum: Applications

Sarah Olney (Liberal Democrat) [105683] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the target time is for processing an application for asylum.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office does not currently have a target time for processing application for asylum, but we are committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay.

We have already made progress in prioritising claims with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. Additionally, we are prioritising older claims and those where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required.

Asylum Operations are working to reintroduce a service standard and will be looking to potentially align this with changes being introduced through the Nationality and Borders Bill the passage of which is key to fixing our broken asylum system. Our intention to reintroduce a service standard aligns with the recommendation from the recent Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's (ICIBI) published report - An inspection of asylum casework (November 2021).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105683>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1034012/An_inspection_of_asylum_casework_August_2020_to_May_2021.pdf

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Interviews

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [111692] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will publish information providing the average time taken from the date of an asylum claim to the date of a substantive asylum interview taking place for each of the least three years.

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [111693] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the time taken between an asylum claim and a substantive asylum interview.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office does not currently report on the average time that is taken between the date of an asylum claim to the date of a substantive asylum interview taking place. However, the Home Office does publish data on the number asylum applications awaiting an initial decision by duration, for main applicants only. This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-september-2021/list-of-tables#asylum-and-resettlement>

We are investing in a programme of transformation and business improvement initiatives that will speed up and simplify our processes, reduce the time people spend in the asylum system and decrease the number of people who are awaiting an interview or decision. These initiatives include conducting shorter, more focused interviews or omitting interviews where it is appropriate to do so, streamlining decision templates for grants and refusals and focusing on improving quality to ensure decisions are right first time. We have extensive recruitment and training

plans in place, including career progression options that will aid the retention of staff.

We are continuing to develop existing and new technology to help build on recent improvements such as digital interviewing and move away from a paper-based system. We are streamlining and digitising the case working process to enable more effective workflow, appointment booking and decision-making. Additionally, we have introduced specialist Decision Making Units, providing greater ownership and management of cohorts of asylum cases.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-25/111692>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-25/111693>

Asylum: Middle East

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [105594] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants for asylum from (a) Afghanistan, (b) Yemen and (c) Syria have been told by her Department, in refusing their asylum claims, that it is safe for them to return to their country of origin, in the last 12 months.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The Home Office are unable to state how many applications for asylum from Afghanistan, Yemen and Syria have been told in refusing their asylum claims, it is safe for them to return to their country of origin in the last 12 months, as this information is not held in a reportable format and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

All asylum claims, including those from nationals of Yemen, Syria and Afghanistan, are considered on a case by case basis, based on the facts presented by the claimant, regardless of the claimant's country of origin and the prevailing situation. Our country policy and information notes contain an assessment of risk and makes it clear that each case will be considered on its own merits and that no one who is at real risk of persecution or serious harm in Afghanistan, Yemen or Syria will be expected to return. The country policy guidance for each country is available on gov.uk, via the following links:

[Afghanistan: country policy and information notes](#)

[Syria: country policy and information notes](#)

[Yemen: country policy and information notes](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105594>

Asylum: Mental Health Services

Lisa Cameron (SNP) [105586] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) funding and (b) services her Department provides to asylum seekers requiring immediately treatment for (i) mental health issues and (ii) trauma in the latest period for which information is available.

Asylum: Health Services

Lisa Cameron (SNP) [105587] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) funding and (b) services her Department provides to asylum seekers requiring (i) GP assessment and (ii) medical treatment in the latest period for which figures are available.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office does not fund or provide medical services to asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers have access to NHS medical services in the same way as other permanent residents.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105586>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-17/105587>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [106752] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many responses to the public consultation on extending the use of Napier Barracks as asylum accommodation for a further further years will be taken into account, given that the extension on its use came into force on 21 September 2021.

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [106753] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason a public consultation on extending the use of Napier Barracks as asylum accommodation for a further five years was not held prior to the decision to proceed with the extension of its use.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Given the increasing pressure on the asylum accommodation system, the Home Office took the decision that retaining the use of Napier beyond 21 September 2021 was necessary to ensure sufficient accommodation was available to uphold our statutory requirement.

The Home Office engaged with statutory partners, members of parliament and local government before the SDO was laid before Parliament. The timing of this decision and the circumstances in which it was made (i.e. the quickly growing need to secure accommodation) dictated only a limited level of engagement could be undertaken. The Home Office is currently consulting on the continued use of Napier Barracks as accommodation for eligible asylum seekers whilst their claims for asylum are being considered. The consultation description is available at: [Napier barracks planning application](#)

All representations made in relation to the Planning Application will be considered to inform the planning process and any representation will be contained within a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) report. This report will be hosted on the Gov.UK website and those who made representations will be notified to advise them the SCI is now in the public domain.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106752>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-18/106753>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Migrants and Refugees

Viscount Waverley (Crossbench) [HL5374] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of (1) a refugee, and (2) a migrant; and what are the practical consequences of the distinction between them.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Refugee status is granted when an individual has a well-founded fear of persecution under the Refugee Convention. Those who are not in need of protection are required to leave the UK or apply for leave to remain on another basis.

Paragraph 334 of the Immigration Rules sets out the circumstances in which an asylum applicant will be granted Refugee Status in the UK. 334(ii) confirms that an individual must be a refugee as defined in regulation 2 of The Refugee or Person in Need of International Protection (Qualification) Regulations 2006.

The 2006 Regulations refer to individuals who fall within Article 1(A) of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees done at Geneva on 28 July 1951 and the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967 and to whom regulation 7 (Exclusion) does not apply.

The Nationality and Borders Bill is aiming to make the definition of a refugee even clearer, improving the consistency of decisions across all decision makers (including the Courts).

The conditions of refugee leave which a person will be granted if they qualify for refugee status under the Immigration Rules is broadly five years' limited leave, access to the labour market and welfare support, and a route to apply for settlement after five years.

The term migrant is not routinely used in legislation – it is more common to refer to “a person subject to immigration control”. The Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002A does include a definition of a migrant for the purposes of section 59(3)(a) being “a person who leaves the country where he lives hoping to settle in another country (whether or not he is a refugee within the meaning of any international Convention)”. However, that definition is used in a specific context and not more broadly in terms of legislation.

In practical terms, an individual subject to immigration control requires specific permission to stay in the UK and will usually be subject to conditions attached to that permission. These conditions vary depending on the type of leave for which an individual applies.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-12/hl5374>

Visas: Dependants

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL5372] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to relax the rules on adult dependent relative visas to benefit non-British NHS staff whose parents are overseas.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office continues to keep the Immigration Rules for adult dependent relatives under review and makes adjustments in light of feedback on their operation and impact. The adult dependent relative rules were reviewed in 2016 and the report of that review can be seen on GOV.UK, under 'Adult dependent relatives review'.

It is right and fair that the Rules for adult dependent relatives apply equally to all and are applied consistently. Whilst we appreciate that for the adult dependent relatives of both British and non-British doctors and other NHS staff, any additional burden to the healthcare system may be offset by their sponsor's contribution to it, any decision to relax the Rules for family members of NHS staff could undermine the principle behind the Rules and would be discriminatory to those in other professions, many of whom face similar concerns and are contributing to the UK in other ways.

Our overall assessment is the Rules represent a fair deal for the UK taxpayer and are helping to ensure public confidence in the immigration system by protecting our public services from the significant NHS and social care costs to which these cases can give rise.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-12/hl5372>

The review referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576644/Adult_dependent_relatives-review.pdf

British National (Overseas): Visas

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) [HL5211] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the debate on 5 January (HL Deb, cols 596–7), what assessment they have made of the cost of citizenship registration fees for children; what steps they plan to take to address this; and what plans they have to extend the British National (Overseas) (BNO) visa scheme to those from Hong Kong aged 18–25 as long as one parent has BNO status.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office has acknowledged the High Court's judgment and is reviewing the fee in line with its duties under Section 55.

A Supreme Court hearing on Child Registration fees took place on 23 and 24 June

2021. We await the final judgment and the ongoing section 55 review before publishing results. The BN(O) route is an unprecedented and generous offer reflecting the UK's historic and moral commitment to the people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK by taking up BN(O) status at the point of Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997. However, we are sympathetic to the circumstances of those aged 18 to 25 who live in Hong Kong and are looking at whether more can be done to support them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-10/hl5211>

The debate referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-01-05/debates/5565C246-FDC7-4A38-86E8-52825DE21125/NationalityAndBordersBill#contribution-1D1CE4A2-042E-4E7D-881E-52974BAF6345>

Information about the BN(O) visa scheme can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/british-national-overseas-bno-visa>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Lord Bowness (Crossbench) [HL5299] To ask Her Majesty's Government why EU citizens with pre-settled status have to re-apply at the end of the five year period to obtain settled status; and what are the consequences of a failure to make the second application within time.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: It has been the UK's long-standing position that EU citizens and their family members granted pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme will have to apply for settled status before their pre-settled status expires in order to stay in the UK. This will ensure they have the immigration status, and secure evidence of this, which they will need to access their rights and entitlements in the UK for years to come. Requiring an application for settled status enables us to confirm the person has fulfilled the requisite criteria and passes appropriate criminality and security checks. They will be reminded of the need to make an application before the expiry of their pre-settled status. We will also allow late applications where there are reasonable grounds for doing so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-11/hl5299>

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

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL5386] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many refugees have been evacuated from Afghanistan to the UK since August 2021; how many of those are currently living in temporary accommodation in the UK; and how many of those have been found permanent homes in England.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Over 15,000 people have been evacuated from Afghanistan under Operation Pitting. A further 1,500 people have been given assistance to enter the UK since the initial evacuation took place.

Those who we evacuated were a mixture of British Nationals, mixed family units and those who qualified for ARAP and who will qualify for ACRS

There are currently 12,000 in Bridging Hotel Accommodation.

To date we have successfully moved over 4,000 people into permanent accommodation and are working at pace with our Local Authority partners in order to secure permanent accommodation for those still in temporary accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-13/hl5386>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

Lord Sheikh (Conservative) [HL5404] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to integrate Afghan refugees who have arrived in the UK into the UK labour market at a level which is equivalent to their qualifications.

Reply from Lord Callanan: The Government recognises the challenges and upheaval Afghan refugees have faced, and significant work is underway across the whole of Government to support them in rebuilding their lives in the UK.

For qualified Afghan professionals arriving in the UK, we are taking targeted steps to assist them in utilising their skills and experience to participate in the labour market, including to pursue employment in their professions in the UK while upholding UK professional standards.

As part of the cross-government initiative, they can access tailored support to help them address any qualification equivalence barriers through Jobcentre Plus work coaches and the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications (<https://cpq.ecctis.com>). The UKCPQ, specifically, is a service that provides guidance and advice to overseas-qualified professionals to get their qualifications recognised in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-13/hl5404>

Immigration: Afghanistan

Lord Goodlad (Conservative) [HL5311] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to give (1) former interpreters, and (2) the families of these interpreters, from Afghanistan indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK; and if so, when.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) was launched on 1 April 2021, offering relocation to former Locally Employed Staff in Afghanistan who have been assessed to be at serious risk as a result of their work. Work is underway across the whole of Government to ensure the Afghans who stood side by side with us in conflict, their families and those at highest risk who have been evacuated, are supported as they now rebuild their lives in the UK.

All those brought to the UK under the ARAP scheme will have the right to work, access to education and healthcare, and will be able to apply for public funds.

The Home Office has established a dedicated caseworking team, which is working jointly with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office and the Ministry of Defence. This team will contact all those who arrived to discuss their leave arrangements and ensure they get the right form of leave.

Details of the type of leave to be granted to those arriving from Afghanistan, and how they will be supported in obtaining this leave, can be found in the Afghanistan Resettlement and Immigration policy statement.

The policy statement can be viewed here:

<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>

Further information regarding Locally employed staff, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-locally-engaged-staff>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-11/hl5311>

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

Lord Goodlad (Conservative) [HL5313] To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have been made with implementing Operation Warm Welcome.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: We have offered sanctuary, food, medical care, education and support to at least 13,000 people in bridging hotels during and since Operation Pitting.

Since the Minister for Afghan Resettlement announced Operation Warm Welcome, in September 2021:

- More than 4,000 people have moved or are being moved into their new homes since the first ARAP flights in June – this is an unprecedented pace of re-settlement.
- All children who were evacuated under Op Pitting are now in school and those children who have joined us since then are either in school or being placed in schools as quickly as possible.
- 97% of evacuees are registered with GPs and everyone has been offered Covid vaccinations.
- We have launched a brand new housing portal on gov.uk for members of the public to offer accommodation
- We have made it easier for local community groups to support Afghans through the Community Sponsorship Scheme, which will begin welcoming Afghan families later this month.
- We have developed an integration package for Afghan families

We have launched the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme which will welcome up to 20,000 Afghans at risk over the coming years, a brand new safe and legal migration route.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-11/hl5313>

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

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

Undocumented Migrants

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL5240] To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of people living illegally in the UK; which nationality is the most represented among those illegal residents; and whether people overstaying their visas is the main way in which people become illegally resident.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: By its very nature, it is not possible to know the exact size of the illegal population and so we do not seek to make any official estimates on this. For the same reason, we cannot know the nationalities or routes to illegal status of the hidden population. The Home Office is, however, conducting analysis to better understand the nature of the illegal migrant population in the United Kingdom and how individuals move in to and out of it.

The vast majority of people leave the UK on time, in line with the expiry of their visa or leave to remain. However, those who have no right to remain in the UK and do not return home voluntarily should be in no doubt of our determination to remove them.

The Government's New Plan for Immigration will make it harder for people to enter and live in the UK illegally, whilst ensuring that those who do have the right to reside in the UK can do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-10/hl5240>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Bell Ribeiro-Addy (Labour) [889] Child citizenship fees – That this House believes that no child should be priced out of British citizenship; is appalled by the Home Office practice of charging a fee of £1,012 to register a child for British citizenship; is further appalled that the Home Office makes a profit of £640 from each child citizenship application; notes the Court of Appeal ruling of 19 February 2021 which declared this practice unlawful; believes that children born in the UK should be granted automatic British citizenship; urgently calls on the Home Office to immediately cease profiting from child citizenship fees and limit charges associated with child citizenship to the cost of processing applications; and further calls on the Government to review the impact of such fees on children’s human rights.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/59393>

Press Release

Over £41 million compensation offered to the Windrush generation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/over-41-million-compensation-offered-to-the-windrush-generation>

New Publications

Statement of Changes in Immigration rules

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1049311/E02712423_HC_1019_Immigration_Rules_Web_Accessible_.pdf

Updated Guidance: Windrush Scheme: full eligibility details

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-scheme/windrush-scheme>

Updated Guidance: Windrush Compensation Scheme: full rules

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-full-rules/windrush-compensation-scheme-full-rules-accessible-version>

Windrush Compensation Scheme data: December 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1049494/Windrush_Compensation_Scheme_Published_Data_-_December_2021.ods

News

Home Office refuses to equip immigration officers with bodycams despite IOPC advice

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-uk-immigration-enforcement-b2000153.html>

Royal Navy’s reputation will be sunk if it becomes a ‘taxi service’ for Channel migrants, warns commander

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/01/26/royal-navy-taxi-service-migrants-crossing-channel-will-damage/>

Navy can't solve Channel migrant crisis, veteran tells MPs

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/navy-cant-solve-channel-migrant-crisis-veteran-tells-mps-6v9k8pz3r>

Thousands failed by UK's broken asylum system

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/thousands-failed-by-broken-asylum-system>

New rules could prevent thousands of refugees from joining close family in UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jan/24/new-rules-could-prevent-thousands-of-refugees-from-joining-close-family-in-uk>

Home Office accused of 'bullying' asylum seekers into handing over phones

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jan/25/home-office-accused-of-bullying-asylum-seekers-into-handing-over-phones>

Home Office admits unlawful secret policy to seize all Channel migrants' phones

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-phones-channel-home-office-b2002036.html>

Scheme not to detain women seeking asylum leads to only one staying in UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jan/24/scheme-not-to-detain-women-seeking-asylum-leads-to-only-one-staying-in-uk>

How the nationality and borders bill will affect women refugees and asylum seekers

<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/long-reads/nationality-border-women-refugees-asylum-seekers-b1996257.html>

Have a heart for refugees this Valentine's Day

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/show-your-heart-this-valentines-day>

Afghan refugee finds 'bright future' in Northampton

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-northamptonshire-60155909>

TOP

Community Relations

News

UK's ultra-Orthodox Jews launch trust to engage with wider public

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/24/uk-ultra-orthodox-jews-launch-pinter-trust>

Sri Lanka to Coalisland: 'We felt like only people of colour in our town'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-northern-ireland-60147850>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Tackling Racial Inequalities

Marsha De Cordova (Labour): What steps the Church of England is taking to help tackle racial inequalities. (905259)

Reply from Andrew Selous: The Archbishops of Canterbury and York have established the racial justice commission, chaired by my good friend Lord Boateng, in order to help the Church of England become more like the nation it serves. The commission is making good progress and will report in 2023. It updates the archbishops every six months on progress.

Marsha De Cordova: Last April, the Church's anti-racism taskforce published its final report that included a series of recommendations, including around participation and representation. However, I am concerned by a report by the Archbishops' Council on racial justice, published this week, that rejects the recommendation to fund racial justice officers in each diocese and says the recommendations about shortlisting candidates from a black or ethnic minority background are unlikely to be met. That is worrying and unacceptable, as without proper commitment and investment to increase representation, there will be more decades of inaction. Does the Commissioner agree with me that there is role to play to ensure that there are adequate resources to assist the Church in achieving greater representation?

Reply from Andrew Selous: I agree with the hon. Lady that the Church has not done well enough in this area in the past, but I am sure that she will be pleased to learn that, on Tuesday this week, two UK minority ethnic bishops were consecrated at St Paul's Cathedral. There are plans for more UK minority ethnic clergy to take part in House of Bishops meetings. I am sure that, like me, she will also be encouraged by the work of the Peter Stream in several dioceses, which has had great results in broadening both the ethnic and social diversity of those seeking ordination.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-01-27/debates/3A278C30-CF7C-4008-ADA1-D2D877E7B70D/TacklingRacialInequalities>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2021-04/FromLamentToAction-report.pdf>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Senior Civil Servants: Ethnic Groups

Rachel Hopkins (Labour) [103705] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is on track to meet its Inclusive by Instinct Strategy's target of increasing the representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic employees at senior civil service level to 12 per cent by 2025.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Department has made progress in increasing its representation of Black, Asian and minority ethnic people in the SCS, with representation increasing from 6% in 2018 to 7% in 2020.

As part of our response to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review, the Home Office has published Race commitments online, which include both measures and actions to strengthen our talent pipeline and support our progress towards our target. These include Independent Panel Members from diverse backgrounds on our SCS selection panels, an internal enhanced talent development offer for talented Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues in the feeder grades to the SCS, a

Sponsorship Programme between our Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues and our EXCO members and increasing the funding and number of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic colleagues on central Civil Service talent programmes, such as the Future Leaders Scheme.

The Department will publish updated statistics in Q2 of 2022.

[Actions to increase Black, Asian and minority staff at senior levels within the Home Office](#)

[Home Office workforce diversity statistics 2019 to 2020](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-13/103705>

The Windrush Lessons Learned Review, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/876336/6.5577_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_LoResFinal.pdf

New Publication

Number of civil servants by profession of post and ethnicity: 2021

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1049895/Civil-servants-by-profession-of-post-and-ethnicity-2021.ods

News

Planning virtual engagement: are your events inclusive and accessible for disabled people?

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/blogs/planning-virtual-engagement-are-your-events-inclusive-and-accessible-disabled-people>

Record number of Black and Asian students accepted at top UK universities

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jan/27/record-number-of-black-and-asian-students-accepted-at-top-uk-universities>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Debate

Holocaust Memorial Day

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13545&i=122947#ScotParlOR>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Racism in English Cricket

Lord Mann (Non-affiliated): To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the progress towards tackling racism in English cricket. ...

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay): My Lords, the Government are clear that racism has no place in cricket, just as it has no place

in any sport or in our society at large. We welcome the steps taken so far by the England and Wales Cricket Board and the new chairman of Yorkshire County Cricket Club, the noble Lord, Lord Patel of Bradford. These steps are only the beginning. We now expect to see clear and sustained evidence of cultural change across the sport resulting from them. We will continue to hold the ECB to account directly on this and reserve the right to take further measures if necessary.

Lord Addington (Liberal Democrat): ... Will the Government give us an assurance that this will not be something that sticks with cricket, but that they will look wider and make sure that all sport learns from what is found out, and also that cricket will have to learn the lessons learned in other sports? Otherwise, we are in danger of having small reports and struggles repeating themselves over and over again.

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: ... I was very glad that the noble Lord, Lord Patel, held a briefing with interested Peers on Monday, ahead of this Question, to update them on the work he is doing. He made very clear that, while his focus is on sorting out the problems in Yorkshire, he is drawing on the experiences of people from other sports, and the lessons that he is learning and the actions he is taking have implications for other sports and, indeed, other parts of society.

Lord Cunningham of Felling (Labour): My Lords, does the noble Lord have an opinion about the abysmal performance of the Middlesex chairman in front of a House of Commons committee in the last few days when he displayed all the racism that too many white people at senior levels in cricket in this country seem to adhere to?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I agreed with Ebony Rainford-Brent who called Mr O'Farrell's comments at the Select Committee "painful" and "outdated." I am glad to see he has apologised for them, but I share the dismay of many in hearing them. I think it also underlines the important point that racism takes many forms: it can be a sin of commission as well as of omission. It is good if people are focusing on the barriers that might be holding people back from participating in society, but it is completely wrong to stereotype people on the basis of their race or ethnicity, and that is why it was so dismaying to hear what he said yesterday.

Lord Haselhurst (Conservative): ... Does my noble friend acknowledge that the sweeping changes that have been made at Yorkshire County Cricket Club under the direction of the noble Lord, Lord Patel, indicate the sort of measures that may have to be taken more widely in sport to ensure that potential players, spectators and lovers of sports can find a real welcome when they are involved, either as players or as members?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Like my noble friend, I was impressed by the summary given by the noble Lord, Lord Patel of Bradford, of the work that he has undertaken since he became the chairman of Yorkshire County Cricket Club nine weeks ago. He outlined the many actions that are being taken, and I agree that these will have a wider application for other cricket clubs and other sports.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Labour): My Lords, has the Minister seen the reports that many county cricket clubs charge huge amounts of money for young players who have been identified as having particular skills to go into training programmes? He will know that there is a concern at the higher reaches of cricket that there is a dominance by pupils from public schools. Does he not think that the ECB needs to take action to make sure that these training programmes are open to everyone?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The noble Lord, Lord Hunt, is right: there are many barriers which hold people back, and the Government are working with Sport England and other agencies to dismantle those barriers and make sure that everybody has the opportunity to participate in sport, whoever they are and wherever they come from. There is obviously work for the ECB to do, and lessons are being learnt in Yorkshire at the moment, but the noble Lord is right that these barriers go beyond matters of race.

Lord Dholakia (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, Yorkshire has shown clearly how racism had affected cricket in the past and, thanks to the effort of the noble Lord, Lord Patel, that things are now improving. I would like to know what is being done in youth clubs and schools to ensure that people from diverse communities are aware that racism should not be a bar in pursuing a career in cricket?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: Over the last four years, Sport England's investment in the ECB has focused on equality and diversity, with a commitment to fund, for instance, its south Asian action plan and its south Asian female activators project, to give just two examples of how it is encouraging people from different backgrounds to take their rightful places and reach their full potential in this sport.

Lord Faulkner of Worcester (Labour): My Lords, I declare an interest as a member of Worcestershire County Cricket Club, which has a proud record of inclusion and cultural and ethnic diversity going back over 60 years, starting with the great Basil D'Oliveira, followed by his son and this grandson, all of whom have been associated with the club. The chairman is from an ethnic minority background and his insistence on good governance and diversity is a model that other counties should follow, and the club is certainly well ahead of the ECB guidelines. Could the Government have some conversations with Mr Hira to see what Worcestershire is doing right and how others can learn from it?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: The noble Lord is right that we should point to the many happy examples of people who are getting it right and who are working very earnestly and very hard to make sure that people from all backgrounds are able to enjoy cricket, whether as players or spectators. In his capacity as president of Northamptonshire County Cricket Club, my noble friend Lord Naseby came to the briefing with the noble Lord, Lord Patel, and we are always happy to point to examples of clubs that are getting it right, and from which others can learn.

Lord Bassam of Brighton (Labour): My Lords, we have heard this afternoon a litany of responses which focus on racism, and rightly so. For our part, it is very frustrating to see the responses of senior people in cricket, and others across the sport, who are determined to bury their heads in the sand on this issue. The announcement that Clare Connor will lead a review into dressing room culture in the men's and women's games is very welcome, but that must be only one part of the sport's response. Yesterday the chair of Glamorgan County Cricket Club noted that his own club's efforts to promote diversity were only possible after years of work to make the club financially sound. What work is the government department doing with the ECB and the clubs themselves to ensure that schemes such as those promoted by Glamorgan get off the ground and start to produce the results and make the fundamental changes that cricket needs?

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: As I said, we are watching the ECB closely and reserve the right to take further action if we think that is needed. But since November, the ECB has made some structural developments for long-term cultural change, which is what we need to see, including publishing its plan for diversity and inclusion. It has also committed to forming a new anti-discrimination unit by June this year. The Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket, which was established in March 2021, has opened a call for evidence and will publish a report in the summer this year, examining all the issues relating to race and equity in cricket. We are glad to see that work is being done.

Baroness Blower (Labour): My Lords, I am sure the Minister would like to congratulate Show Racism the Red Card on taking on Monty Panesar as a patron and a very active member of that charity, working in schools to ensure that the message of anti-racism gets through. However, I feel that the Government may very well have to do more, because those remarks made by the Middlesex chairman yesterday, to which my noble friend has already referred, were utterly appalling and speak of deep-seated bigotry and bias; he

clearly thought that what he said was reasonable, while I am sure everyone in this House believes that it was not.

Reply from Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay: I am very happy to extend my congratulations to Show Racism the Red Card. There are many organisations, individuals and role models who are doing sterling work in highlighting the issues that have been faced by so many people for far too long, pointing to the way forward and making sure that people are inspired to enjoy playing or watching their preferred sport to the best of their abilities.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-01-26/debates/E0EAB09A-4E8B-490F-BA6C-997933D002E9/RacismInEnglishCricket>

Press Release

Education Secretary leads call to tackle antisemitic abuse on campuses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/education-secretary-leads-call-to-tackle-antisemitic-abuse-on-campus--2>

New Publication

The Dinner Table Prejudice: Islamophobia in Contemporary Britain

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/documents/college-artslaw/ptr/90172-univ73-islamophobia-in-the-uk-report-final.pdf>

News

Why I'm speaking out against my own party's Islamophobia

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/why-im-speaking-out-against-my-own-partys-islamophobia-bbqk2vv9k>

Nusrat Ghani: PM orders Cabinet Office to investigate 'Muslimness' claim

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-60108377>

Nusrat Ghani: Boris Johnson orders inquiry into claims of Islamophobia

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/nusrat-ghani-boris-johnson-orders-inquiry-into-claims-of-islamophobia-3538668>

Boris Johnson orders inquiry into Nusrat Ghani's Islamophobia claims

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/24/boris-johnson-orders-inquiry-nusrat-ghanis-islamophobia-claims/>

Boris Johnson under pressure over Islamophobia as he orders inquiry into MP's sacking

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-nusrat-ghani-islamophobia-b1999730.html>

Boris Johnson orders inquiry into Nusrat Ghani's Islamophobia claims

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/chief-whip-mark-spencer-denies-claims-from-muslim-mp-nus-ghani-f6w2xhvrxr>

Boris Johnson said he 'could not get involved' in MP's 'Muslimness' sacking claim
<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/boris-johnson-said-he-could-not-get-involved-in-mps-muslimness-sacking-claim-3538439>

Nusrat Ghani: PM said he 'could not get involved' over 'Muslimness' sacking claim
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jan/23/nusrat-ghani-needs-to-make-formal-islamophobia-complaint-says-raab>

Nusrat Ghani: MP says government failed to take Islamophobia complaints 'seriously'
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/nusrat-ghani-muslim-mp-boris-johnson-b1998889.html>

PM says he takes 'Muslimness' sacking claim seriously after belated inquiry
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19870185.pm-says-takes-muslimness-sacking-claim-seriously-belated-inquiry/>

Anas Sarwar calls for independent probe into Islamophobia
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19870973.anas-sarwar-calls-independent-probe-islamophobia/>

Anas Sarwar: Lack of independent probe into Islamophobia 'would stink of cover-up' says Anas Sarwar
<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/anas-sarwar-lack-of-independent-probe-into-islamophobia-would-stink-of-cover-up-says-anas-sarwar-3539850>

Sarwar: Lack of independent probe into Islamophobia 'would stink of cover-up'
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/islamophobia-equality-and-human-rights-commission-scottish-labour-tories-boris-johnson-b1999511.html>

Nusrat Ghani: Ex-minister's claims reignite rows over Tories and Islam
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-60118044>

Cabinet ministers demand 'proper' investigation into Nusrat Ghani Islamophobia claims
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2022/01/23/nusrat-ghani-urged-boris-johnson-make-formal-complaint-claim/>

Head of Conservative Muslim Forum says Boris Johnson must explain why he sacked Nusrat Ghani
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-muslim-nusrat-ghani-b1999579.html>

Equality and Human Rights Commission response to reports of Islamophobia in the Conservative Party
<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/response-reports-islamophobia-conservative-party>

Nusrat Ghani's allegations reignite claims that Tory party is Islamophobic
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jan/23/nusrat-ghanis-allegations-reignite-claims-that-tory-party-is-islamophobic>

Nusrat Ghani: a Muslim pioneer who was unexpectedly sacked
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jan/23/nusrat-ghani-a-muslim-pioneer-who-was-unexpectedly-sacked>

The ugly truth about Tory Islamophobia: forget the assurances, it will happen again
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jan/24/ugly-truth-tory-islamophobia-nusrat-ghani-anti-muslim>

Tory Islamophobia: the rot starts at the top
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jan/24/the-guardian-view-on-tory-islamophobia-the-rot-starts-at-the-top>

PM and Gove have ignored me, says Islamophobia adviser
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/pm-and-gove-have-ignored-me-says-islamophobia-adviser-m6snkcvrt>

Nusrat Ghani: Sacking of Muslim MP could trigger equalities inquiry
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/nusrat-ghani-sacking-of-muslim-mp-could-trigger-equalities-inquiry-6k8pqktlw>

Islamophobia isn't just a Tory problem – it runs right through British society
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jan/27/islamophobia-tory-british-society-media-anti-muslim-racism>

'All my life people have told me to lose my Muslimness' – politicians on their battle with Islamophobia
<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2022/jan/27/all-my-life-people-have-told-me-to-lose-my-muslimness-politicians-on-their-battle-with-islamophobia>

University of Birmingham survey reveals Islamophobia is the posh person's prejudice
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/news/latest/2022/01/university-of-birmingham-survey-reveals-islamophobia-is-the-posh-person's-prejudice.aspx>

Middle-class Britons more likely to be biased about Islam, finds survey
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/25/middle-class-britons-more-likely-to-be-biased-about-islam-finds-survey>

Ofcom to investigate BBC's anti-Semitism report
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-60083325>

BBC apologises over report on antisemitic bus attack as Ofcom launches probe
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/media/bbc-antisemitic-bus-attack-report-b2001765.html>

BBC faces Ofcom probe after alleged 'misreporting' of anti-Semitic incident
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/01/26/bbc-accused-thinking-lot-anti-semitism-row-deepens/>

Ofcom investigates BBC over reporting of antisemitic attack
<https://www.theguardian.com/media/2022/jan/26/ofcom-investigates-bbc-over-reporting-of-antisemitic-attack>

Ethnic minority lawyers facing bias
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ethnic-minority-lawyers-facing-bias-7hxc72ns>

School governors in England to be offered anti-racism training
<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/jan/25/school-governors-england-offered-anti-racism-training>

'There is absolutely systemic racism': BAME headteachers share their views
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/jan/25/there-is-absolutely-systemic-racism-bame-headteachers-share-their-views>

UK school scraps 'discriminatory and archaic' hair policies to encourage students to express their culture
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/uk-schools-culture-discrimination-policy-b1998924.html>

School cuts loose on harsh hair policy
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/school-cuts-loose-on-harsh-hair-policy-nfzvvgkx>

NHS course text 'linked Bible to racism'
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/nhs-training-linked-bible-to-racism-58gjf5q3v>

Humza Yousaf leads Scotland in heartfelt message on Holocaust Memorial Day
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19879980.humza-yousaf-leads-scotland-heartfelt-message-holocaust-memorial-day/>

Holocaust Memorial Day: 'It is imperative to never forget'
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-scotland-60155896>

Why we must never forget the Holocaust
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19869583.agenda-must-never-forget-holocaust/>

World remembers Holocaust as antisemitism rises amid pandemic
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19879111.world-remembers-holocaust-antisemitism-rises-amid-pandemic/>

Holocaust Memorial Day: TikTok launches plan to fight Holocaust denial
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-60156673>

TikTok adds new features to educate users on the Holocaust and antisemitism
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/tiktok-unesco-world-jewish-congress-b2001984.html>

Blackwell's book advert called notorious anti-Semitic forgery 'interesting' and 'possibly genuine'
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/01/25/blackwells-bookstore-fire-anti-semitic-advertisement/>

Blackwell's lists antisemitic book as 'interesting'
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/blackwells-lists-antisemitic-book-as-interesting-wl5r28tjv>

Companies such as Amazon cannot be allowed to profit from antisemitism
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/companies-such-as-amazon-cannot-be-allowed-to-profit-from-antisemitism-m76d5885g>

Teenager charged after two Jewish men attacked in London on eve of Holocaust Memorial Day
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/haringey-jewish-men-attacked-b2002246.html>

Teenager charged over suspected hate crime after Jewish men attacked
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/jan/27/teenager-arrested-after-two-jewish-men-attacked-in-north-london>

Ashley Cole: Man arrested over alleged racist abuse
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-wiltshire-60181358>

Kick It Out to work with ECB to tackle discrimination issues in cricket
<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/cricket/azeem-rafiq-ecb-mps-tom-harrison-yorkshire-b2000170.html>

Middlesex chairman apologises for 'painful' and 'outdated' views on black and South Asian interest
<https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/60125897>

English cricket hit by fresh racism furore after Middlesex chairman forced to make grovelling apology
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2022/01/25/middlesex-chairman-facing-backlash-outdated-claim-black-people/>

TOP

Other Scottish Parliament and Government

New Publication

Citizens' Assembly of Scotland: research report
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/research-report-citizens-assembly-scotland/>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Out-of-school Education: Islam

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL5587] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Barran on 18 January (HL5056 and HL5057), what steps they take to ensure that radical Islamism is not being taught in madrassas in the UK; whether they have any evidence that radical Islamism is being taught in those settings; and if so, what further steps they intend to take.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The government is committed to ensuring all children are safe, wherever they are educated, including safe from extremism and radicalisation. The department is actively working with the education sector, national partners, and local partners to safeguard children and young people from these risks. In addition to the work that we do with schools and colleges to ensure our children and young people are resilient to extremist ideology, we jointly fund with the Home Office a network of experts who provide frontline support to education providers

We have also established an online form to allow concerns regarding extremism within the education sector to be reported directly to the department, to complement

our existing counter extremism helpline, and we encourage anyone with a concern to use this service.

As mentioned in my answer of 18 January, in instances where the department becomes aware of a provider where extremist activity might be taking place, we will also work closely with relevant agencies, such as the local authority, Ofsted and the police to act. In those rare cases, such as the case of Umar Haque in 2018, which saw the attempted radicalisation of several children in a London Madrassa through devious and sophisticated grooming techniques, we have worked closely with safeguarding partners to intervene and safeguard the children, and to act against the perpetrators. In the case of Umar Haque, we saw multi-agency action result in the conviction of him and his associates under the Terrorism Act 2006.

However, while there are many legal powers in place to protect children in out-of-school providers including madrassas, which have been proven to be effective, we have not ruled out further action.

As outlined in my previous answer, the department has been taking forward a package of activity aimed at further enhancing safeguarding in this sector. This includes the provision of over £3 million of targeted funding to pilot ways in which we can boost local capacity further to identify and intervene in out-of-school providers of concern, and testing the utility of existing powers held across multiple agencies, such as local authorities, the police and Ofsted, to safeguard children attending these providers.

These pilots were taken forward with the intention of building our evidence base to inform our national next steps for supporting safeguarding in the sector, including the need for any legislation. This work concluded at the end of last year, and we are currently evaluating the outcome of these pilots. We will set out our next steps to this work in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-01-20/hl5587>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-16/hl5056>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-12-16/hl5057>

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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 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 Government Press Releases

Changes to working from home advice

<https://www.gov.scot/news/changes-to-working-from-home-advice/>

International travel restrictions eased

<https://www.gov.scot/news/international-travel-restrictions-eased/>

COVID Recovery and Reform Bill introduced

<https://www.gov.scot/news/covid-recovery-and-reform-bill-introduced/>

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 statement – 25 January 2022

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-25-january-2022/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): distance aware scheme

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-distance-aware-scheme/>

UK Government Publications

The R value and growth rate

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

Updating ethnic contrasts in deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), England: 8 December 2020 to 1 December 2021

Report

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/updatingethniccontrastsindeathsinvolvingthecoronaviruscovid19englandandwales/8december2020to1december2021/pdf>

Data

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/updatingethniccontrastsindeathsinvolvingthecoronaviruscovid19england>

News

Scotland's work from home guidance to be relaxed next week

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-60130299>

Covid passes and face mask rules end in England

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-60147766>

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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>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-01-27/debates/3B436076-9BAB-4EEE-8AE7-8651FFDC1ED8/NationalityAndBordersBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-01-27/debates/9B12A59D-38A4-4DB1-8C21-9E694BE50BAE/NationalityAndBordersBill>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/44981/documents/1324>

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

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

Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee Report: The Draft Online Safety Bill and the legal but harmful debate

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/8608/documents/86960/default/>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

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

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

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

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

Review of the operation of the Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland

(closing date 7 March 2022)

<https://tinyurl.com/2hpz9wu9>

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

Workplace Equality Fund

Closing date for applications: 11 April 2022

Scottish Government funding to support employers in identifying, addressing, and diminishing longstanding barriers facing particular priority groups in entering and progressing within the labour market. The central goal of the fund is to incentivise and support collaborative projects that aspire to reduce employment inequalities and cultivate positive, fair, and inclusive workplace practices, with the intention of improving employment opportunities and progression policies within Scottish workplaces; particularly for the identified priority groups, improving knowledge, skills, and practices with respect to addressing employment inequalities; thereby engendering significant improvement for priority groups, and create and maintain an inclusive working environment through employees and employers working in partnership. For information and to apply see

<https://equalityadvice.scot/>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

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>

**** this week!**

Welcoming refugee families in Scotland through Community Sponsorship

3 February 2022 (online, 5.30–6.30)

Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees information session to explain how community sponsorship works, hear from a family who has been resettled through this programme and the faith community that welcomed them, and find out possible next steps for community sponsorship in your context. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/39c4m3d5>

Refugee Week Conference

7 February 2022 (online, 10.30–12.45)

11 February 2022 (online, 10.30–12.45)

Online conference to share inspiration, learning and ideas ahead of Refugee Week 2022 in June. The Refugee Week conference is for anyone who is interested in taking part in Refugee Week, an annual festival celebrating the contributions of refugees. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/2p9bdva9>

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>

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

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

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>

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 bi-lingual 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>

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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SCoJeC
Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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



BEMIS 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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