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

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**The UK Parliament session was 'prorogued' (i.e. ended) on 28 April 2022.
The next session will begin with the State Opening of Parliament on 10 May 2022.**

Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Asylum Seekers (Afghanistan)

John Mason (SNP) [S6O-01021] To ask the Scottish Government how many refugees and asylum seekers from Afghanistan have arrived in Scotland since the Taliban's return to power in 2021.

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government (Shona Robison): Although that is United Kingdom Government reserved policy, Scotland is committed to playing its part in welcoming people who

are fleeing Afghanistan. All 32 local authorities have confirmed their participation in relocation and resettlement schemes.

Afghans are being welcomed into Scottish communities. As of 14 April, 119 families, with more than 480 people, have been resettled in 20 local authorities, and there are six Home Office-procured bridging hotels that are accommodating approximately 350 people. We expect more people to arrive in the coming months.

John Mason: Last week, at the cross-party group on freedom of religion or belief, we heard about the awful situation for minorities in Afghanistan, such as Shia Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. Is the Scottish Government able to put any pressure on or encourage the United Kingdom Government to help minorities in Afghanistan?

Reply from Shona Robison: The member raises an important point, as the situation in Afghanistan continues to be extremely concerning, especially for minority groups and women. I raised the issue in a letter to the then Foreign Secretary, Dominic Raab, on 20 August, and the First Minister raised equality issues in Afghanistan in a letter focused on resettlement to the Prime Minister on 24 August. I followed up with a letter to the Home Secretary on 1 September.

I will write again to the UK Government to press it to do all that it can to support minorities in Afghanistan. The Scottish Government stands ready to help in any way that we can.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13715&i=124453#ScotParlOR>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Refugee Convention 1951

Carol Monaghan (SNP): What recent assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Government's implementation of the 1951 refugee convention. (906551)

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Tom Pursglove): Part 2 of the Nationality and Borders Bill defines the key provisions of the refugee convention. In developing this policy we have considered factors such as the law in other jurisdictions, case law and academic works. All provisions of the Bill, as well as our asylum policy framework, are a good-faith, effective interpretation of the refugee convention and are compatible with it.

Carol Monaghan: The Nationality and Borders Bill as it stands does not comply with the 1951 refugee convention. Former Supreme Court judge Lord Brown has said of the Bill that "several of these provisions flagrantly breach our obligations as interpreted by the UNHCR".—[[Official Report, House of Lords, 4 April 2022; Vol. 820, c. 1882.](#)]

Lord Brown has tabled an amendment to ensure compliance with the convention. Will the Minister confirm that the Government will support Lord Brown's amendment?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: I thank the hon. Lady for raising that point. Under the Vienna convention, it is for Parliament to interpret our international obligations. We will always act in accordance with our international obligations; we have made that consistently clear. The Bill has been through appropriate due diligence, and we will get on and deliver it.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-25/debates/7C23471C-FEBF-42B1-AF9F-A9F3E8D6B4F0/RefugeeConvention1951>

Asylum Seekers: Relocation to Rwanda

Bambos Charalambous (Labour): What estimate [has the Minister] made of the cost to the public purse of the Government's policy to relocate asylum seekers to Rwanda. (906554)

Reply from the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel): Our

world-leading migration and economic development partnership with Rwanda will be a major boost to Rwanda and allow us to focus our efforts on people in need, not those who have the ability to pay people smugglers to make dangerous, illegal journeys from safe countries such as France.

Bambos Charalambous: The policy of sending asylum seekers to Rwanda is unworkable and unethical, and it will either cost billions or result in so few people being sent to Rwanda that it will not act as a deterrent to all the evil people smugglers. Will the Home Secretary tell me how much the policy will cost per person, or what her maximum budget is?

Reply from Priti Patel: ... The UK is providing an initial investment of £120 million of support for the partnership as part of the new economic transformation and integration fund. ...

Scott Benton (Conservative): The Home Secretary deserves immense credit for her plan and her robust approach to deterring illegal immigration. The fact that we have not seen any small boat crossings in the last three days is evidence that some of the pull factors are being removed. Does she agree that if that trend continues, the cost of the policy will take care of itself?

Reply from Priti Patel: ... First, Labour is still trying to work out that doing nothing is not an option at all, because people have died. Secondly, the policy is exactly that: it is all about deterrence as well as ensuring that we can provide the right safe and humane approach for people who need our asylum system while cracking down on people smuggling gangs.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-25/debates/D1A15133-2D24-4E81-8D29-5C010DB3942A/AsylumSeekersRelocationToRwanda>

Illegal Immigration

Craig Tracey (Conservative): What steps [is the Minister's] Department taking to prevent small boat crossings in the Channel. (906543)

Jonathan Gullis (Conservative): What steps [is the Minister's] Department taking to prevent illegal immigration to the UK. (906559)

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Tom Pursglove): There is a whole of Government effort to counter these dangerous and unnecessary crossings. That effort is reflected in the recent changes that the Government have made to operational primacy. We continue to work closely with the French to prevent crossing attempts, guiding vulnerable migrants in France towards support there, and tackling the vile criminal gangs that profit from them.

Craig Tracey: I have raised small boat crossings with the Department on a number of occasions, and I am grateful for the continued efforts to bring the crossings to an end and to ensure that we control illegal immigration. Does the Minister agree that it is important that we use every single power we have to prevent these illegal crossings, which continually put lives in danger; to clamp down on the gangs that facilitate them; and to continue to provide the legal routes by which so many people have already made safe crossings?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: My hon. Friend is absolutely right to highlight the distinction between illegal entry into this country and people coming via safe and legal routes. I know that his constituents in North Warwickshire and Bedworth feel very strongly that the Nationality and Borders Bill needs to pass into law. We need its comprehensive measures to build on our existing powers, to get to grips with this issue, and to tackle it fairly but robustly. I am sure that he will join me in encouraging the other place to get on and pass the Bill this week.

Jonathan Gullis: The people of Stoke-on-Trent North, Kidsgrove and Talke are delighted with this groundbreaking economic and development partnership with Rwanda, which will help to break the business model of vile people smugglers once and for all. Does my hon.

Friend share my concern and that of my constituents that the Labour woke warriors are quite happy to stick with the status quo, meaning that more people are going to leave safe mainland France, risking their lives and putting thousands of pounds in the hands of smuggling gangs, which will mean more death in the channel and illegal economic migrants continuing to enter the United Kingdom?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: ... We need the measures in the Bill; we need the Rwanda model to come to fruition. We are getting on and delivering on that priority.

Ben Bradshaw (Labour): To avoid desperate Ukrainians being added to those trying to cross the channel, the Government's schemes for Ukrainians need to work. Can the Minister explain why the very helpful Members' hub in Portcullis House has been stopped from issuing permission-to-travel letters to MPs? I dealt with a family last week. For two of the family members, the letters were sent to me and I could let the family and their host family here know, and they were all happy about it. For the third family member, the system was stopped at the end of the last week, and officials are saying that they are now no longer allowed to issue MPs with those permission-to-travel letters. It is a complete shambles. Will he sort it out?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: ... I am not the Minister with direct responsibility for the refugee scheme, but I will gladly ensure that his feedback is heard by my noble Friend Lord Harrington. ...

Amy Callaghan (SNP): Despite this Government continually patting themselves on the back, there remain far too many cracks in the Homes for Ukraine scheme. In a recent article published by *The Guardian*, an anonymous whistleblower has revealed that he dealt with numerous cases in which UK visas had been issued for an entire family apart from just one child, effectively stopping the family from travelling to safety. Over the past few weeks, I have been in contact with a constituent who has been doing all she can to help a family from Ukraine who are in that exact scenario, but she is getting nowhere. What is the Minister doing to plug those gaps and to ensure that entire families, not just individuals, can reach the UK safely?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: If the hon. Lady can provide the specifics of that case, I will happily ensure that that is looked at quickly. It is also fair to say that the number of caseworkers dedicated to this work has been increased, and we try to ensure that cases are grouped so that families are processed consistently together, which makes sense, but I would be delighted to look at the specifics of this case. ...

Stephen Kinnock (Labour): The deeply misjudged Nationality and Borders Bill and the Rwanda offloading plan will not only make cracking down on criminal people traffickers much more difficult, but make the cost to the British taxpayer criminally expensive. The British people deserve to know how their taxes are being spent, not least because the failed Australian model ended up costing £1 million per refugee. I ask the Home Secretary how many refugees she expects to send to Rwanda each year. The Prime Minister says it is tens of thousands; is that correct? How many can they house in the detention centres? What will the cost per single refugee be? What will the £120 million be spent on? Finally, given that her most senior civil servant refused to sign off on the plan, when will the Home Secretary publish a comprehensive cost forecast of her unworkable, extortionate and profoundly un-British Rwanda offloading agreement?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: ... The British people deserve to know what his alternative is. I would politely suggest there is none. ...

Diane Abbott (Labour): The Minister claimed that the Rwanda scheme will be a way of diminishing the small boats crossing the channel, but he will be aware that at least one Member of this House does not support his scheme: the right hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), who is not only a former Prime Minister, but a former Home Secretary. Can he explain to the House why he disagrees with his colleague, and what makes him so sure that his scheme will not fall in the courts?

Reply from Tom Pursglove: ... The bottom line here is that there is no single

intervention that will resolve the issue, but we must strain every sinew. We believe this is an important policy intervention that will shift the dynamic and help to preserve lives. That is a fundamental imperative and we cannot put a cost on it. I am convinced that this policy will deliver, along with the wider package of measures we are introducing. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-25/debates/C707BE6C-A96A-40E5-AF8A-D04B7CA010A0/IllegalImmigration>

The "Guardian" article referred to above can be read at

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/23/homes-for-ukraine-whistleblower-says-uk-refugee-scheme-is-designed-to-fail>

Safe and Legal Routes to UK: Nationals of Ukraine and Afghanistan

Philippa Whitford (SNP): What steps her Department is taking to increase the number of safe and legal routes to the UK for nationals of (a) Ukraine and (b) Afghanistan. (906542)

Reply from the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel): ...

The Government have introduced two new safe and legal routes for Ukrainian nationals: the Ukraine family scheme and the Homes for Ukraine scheme. As of 21 April, more than 71,000 visas had been issued under both schemes. Under the schemes, neither route is capped, and the Ukraine extension scheme permits Ukrainians who are already in the UK to extend their stay.

Philippa Whitford: Members from throughout the House have called on the Government to make it easier for people from Ukraine to seek sanctuary in the UK. Will the Home Secretary explain why the schemes for those who try to flee the Taliban are so limited and why, according to her own Department, the Nationality and Borders Bill does not establish safe and legal routes for those fleeing war, conflict or persecution?

Reply from Priti Patel: First, the new plan for immigration spells out absolutely the Government's approach to safe and legal routes. As I have said many times in the House, every safe and legal route needs to be bespoke, based on the crisis that we are seeking to address.

Secondly, in response to the hon. Lady's question about Afghanistan, she will know that under the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme we will welcome up to 20,000 at-risk people who have been affected by the most appalling events in Afghanistan.

That scheme was announced last year and will include women and girls and members of minority groups, given their vulnerability.

Holly Lynch (Labour): A family who are still in Ukraine have been reporting back to their Homes for Ukraine sponsors in Halifax that they have been able to hear the bombs getting closer every day of their 29-days-and-counting wait for a visa. The family in Ukraine have twins under the age of 10 who have, remarkably, had their visas processed at different speeds. A Home Office whistleblower has described the scheme as "designed to fail". Government figures show that 40,000 visas have been issued under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, yet just 6,600 Ukrainians have actually arrived in the UK, because families who need to travel together cannot do so because the visa of just one family member, often a child, is delayed. Will the Home Secretary explain why, if 40,000 visas have been issued, so few Ukrainians have arrived in the UK? What is she doing to correct the situation?

Reply from Priti Patel: ... First, on the reason why low numbers have come to the UK, as I have already said, more than 71,000 visas for both schemes have been granted. The Minister for Refugees, Lord Harrington, went to the region just 10 days ago to find out why and what more could be done to bring over families who have been granted their visas to come over. First and foremost, as we have heard repeatedly from the Ukrainian Government and from Governments in the region ... those families want to stay in region. That is a fact and that is exactly why we are working with the various Governments in region.

The hon. Lady made an important point about families and younger children. Much of that is down to the checks, because they are not always travelling with parents. Safeguarding checks are being undertaken to ensure that they are all linked members of families. They are important checks that have to take place.

Stuart C McDonald (SNP): Less than half of 1% of Ukrainians fleeing Putin's war have so far found shelter in the United Kingdom. There are currently more sheltered in Ireland than are sheltered here, despite our neighbours being 13 times smaller in terms of population. The real reason for this situation is the unnecessary, inappropriate and shambolic visa system that the Home Secretary has decided to impose. Approximately 140 other countries allow visa-free access. Surely, even at this late stage, the Home Secretary must lift visa requirements for all, or at least some, Ukrainians fleeing Putin's war and get things moving.

Reply from Priti Patel: I have repeated many times the reason why we have checks and visas. ... we are not members of the EU; we do not have open borders. I acknowledge that he has a fundamentally different point of view when it comes to open borders and not having checks on those who come to our country but, in this case, security checks are vital.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-25/debates/0607A57D-22B7-474B-A2FD-FB521DBBBAF3/SafeAndLegalRoutesToUKNationalsOfUkraineAndAfghanistan>

Homes for Ukraine: Visa Application Centres

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department to provide an update on the working of the visa application centres in relation to the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Kevin Foster): ... We are delighted that so many British people have already put forward generous offers of help to displaced Ukrainians. Nearly 90,000 visas have been issued so that people can rebuild their life in the UK through the Ukraine family scheme and Homes for Ukraine. ...

As the Ukrainian crisis escalated, we increased appointment capacity across Europe, going from offering about 2,000 appointments a week to offering 13,500 appointments a week. In the run-up to the recent Russian invasion, we established a new visa application centre in Lviv, and we kept our visa application centre in Kyiv running right up until the Russian attack was launched. We also established a new application point in Rzeszów near the Polish border with Ukraine. We were able to offer walk-in and on-the-day appointments to customers wishing to apply for the initial family member concession route and were able to fulfil all appointments wherever they were required.

I am pleased to advise the House that visa application centre appointments are readily available in all locations across Europe, and in the majority of locations are available on the same day for customers looking to book a slot. ...

Wendy Chamberlain: ... We all know that the conflict in Ukraine has been devastating, and the resulting humanitarian crisis is outwith the control of any Government. ... refugees—not “customers”—without passports are required to go through additional checks at in-country visa application centres, following which their permission to travel is provided in person. The majority of those who are required to go through this are very young children who do not yet have their own passport.

The problem is that the VACs are not providing anywhere near the service required and the Home Office seems unable to do anything about it. ...

Reply from Kevin Foster: It is worth outlining where we see the future of our immigration system. As I touched on in my statement, EEA nationals already make fully online applications, for things such as student and skilled worker visas. When we rolled out the British nationals overseas route last year, we included a fully digital

application system, which the vast majority of applicants have used. Our future work is to move away from people having to go to a VAC every time they want to apply for particular types of visas ...

That said, for those who do not have valid international passports the VACs perform a role of carrying out safeguarding checks, particularly in relation to children. For those of a younger age, we are not looking at the same security checks as we would do for an adult. For children, we are ensuring that key safeguarding checks are done. ...

Stephen Kinnock (Labour): ... The latest figures show that of the 74,000 visa applications under the Homes for Ukraine scheme, just 11,100 have arrived—and this is several weeks after the scheme went live. ... will the Minister expand on claims by a whistleblower who was contracted by the Home Office that the Government are deliberately withholding visas for a single child in a wider family to prevent the whole family from arriving? I have been alerted to the case of a family who were told that their visas were ready, but when they went to collect them, the one for their three-year-old child was not there. There are many other deeply troubling cases of this nature. ...

Reply from Kevin Foster: I am aware of the claims—false claims, I have to say—that there is a deliberate move to withhold individual visas. Those claims are absolute nonsense. ... When some people apply through the fully digital system and some via a VAC, some of them may get a decision shortly after others in their party, but that is not a deliberate design or policy. ...

Nearly 90,000 visas have now been issued and we expect to see many more people arriving in our country shortly. ...

Overall, we can see how the scheme is running and the generosity of the British people coming forward. That is what should be reflected when we talk about the scheme. ...

To read this very lengthy question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-28/debates/3C023B59-4760-4049-AD6C-B89B76CD0C5D/HomesForUkraineVisaApplicationCentres>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Asylum: Rwanda

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [155818] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications for her proposal to transport asylum seekers to Rwanda of the 1951 Refugee Convention.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: There is nothing in the UN Refugee Convention which prevents removal to a safe country.

Rwanda is a State Party to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the seven core UN Human Rights Conventions. It is a fundamentally safe and secure country with respect for the rule of law.

The Migration and Economic Migration Partnership agreement requires Rwanda to process claims in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention, national and international human rights laws, and ensure protection from inhuman and degrading treatment or for those recognised as having a protection need, from being returned to the place they originally fled.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155818>

Asylum: Immigration Controls

Lyn Brown (Labour) [153840] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the implications for its policies of offshore

immigration processing schemes used by other countries, including the impact of these schemes on asylum seekers and migrants' (a) safety, (b) access to legal recourse and (c) freedom from persecution.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda is a completely new and innovative approach. Individuals deemed inadmissible to the UK's asylum system may have their asylum claim considered in Rwanda rather than in the UK, with a view to receiving the protection they need in Rwanda if their claim is granted. Rwanda will accept physical and legal responsibility for the relocated individuals. Anyone granted protection will be supported in Rwanda to build a safe and prosperous new life, supported for 5 years with integration support, accommodation and healthcare. Everyone considered for relocations will be screened, interviewed, and have access to legal advice in the UK prior to relocation. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis and nobody will be removed if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them. Rwanda has a strong history of welcoming refugees, gaining international recognition for improving their lives, employability and integration in local communities.

Rwanda will process claims in accordance with the UN Refugee Convention, national and international human rights laws, and will ensure their protection from inhuman and degrading treatment or being returned to the place they originally fled.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153840>

Asylum: Rwanda

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat) [155600] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the costs to the public purse of removing asylum seekers to Rwanda and funding the processing costs for each person relocated.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The UK is funding the processing costs for each individual who is relocated to Rwanda. Every person's needs are different, but we anticipate the amount would be comparable to processing costs incurred in the UK. As this is a long-term partnership over five year, payments will depend on the outcomes delivered including the number of people relocated. Funding is only provided while a person remains in Rwanda.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155600>

Asylum: Rwanda

Lyn Brown (Labour) [153841] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the (a) cost and (b) carbon impact per migrant of her proposals to transport and detain asylum seekers in Rwanda.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: Under the Migration and Economic Development Partnership, people who are relocated to Rwanda will not be detained there. The UK will provide funding for the processing costs for each person relocated there. Every person's needs are different, and funding will only be provided while a person remains in Rwanda.

The UK remains committed to honouring its obligations on climate change, including those contained in the Glasgow Climate Pact. This is unaffected by bilateral agreements signed by the UK, such as the one recently agreed with the Government of Rwanda. The UK continues to work closely with the Government of Rwanda on climate issues, including ahead of the Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in June.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153841>

Asylum: Rwanda

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [155890] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the processing time for asylum seekers and migrants who are sent to Rwanda for processing.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: We anticipate that processing time would take a matter of weeks unless there is a legal barrier to relocation to Rwanda.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155890>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Rwanda

Steve McCabe (Labour) [156364] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the cost of deporting an individual to Rwanda under her recently announced asylum seeker scheme.

Steve McCabe (Labour) [156365] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to prevent an individual who has been identified for deportation to Rwanda under the recently announced asylum seeker scheme from absconding.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The UK is funding the processing costs for each individual who is relocated to Rwanda. Every person's needs are different, but we anticipate the amount would be comparable to processing costs incurred in the UK. As this is a long-term partnership over five years, payments will depend on the outcomes delivered including the number of people relocated. Funding is only provided while a person remains in Rwanda.

We are aware of the risk that people might seek to abscond. Individuals may be placed in an Immigration Removal Centre prior to their transfer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156364>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156365>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Channel Migrants

The following two questions both received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Gordon Henderson (Conservative) [153915] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants who came to the UK by crossing the Channel in 2021 have had their asylum cases processed.

Gordon Henderson (Conservative) [153916] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants who came to the UK by crossing the Channel in 2021 have been removed from the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office routinely publishes data on Irregular Migration to the UK and can be found at: [Irregular migration to the UK, year ending December 2021](#) and also routinely publish data on the number of outcomes of asylum applications at initial decision, broken down by nationality, age, sex and applicant type and can be found at Asy_D02 of the published immigration statistics: [Asylum and resettlement datasets](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153915>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153916>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Refugees: Afghanistan

Steve McCabe (Labour) [153717] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress her Department has made on processing applications to the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Over 15,000 people were supported to come to the UK directly following the evacuation of Afghanistan, and a further 2,000 have since arrived. The Home Office will publish the number of people being offered protection under UK Resettlement programmes in its quarterly Immigration Statistics. The next publication will be in May 2022.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153717>

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

Cherilyn Mackrory (Conservative) [154412] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Afghanistan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme in meeting its aims; and what steps she is taking in continuing to support that scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme commenced on 6 January 2022, providing up to 20,000 women, children and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK.

Eligible individuals can be referred onto the Scheme in one of three ways, as set out in the policy statement. In line with this statement, the Home Office remains committed to achieving the objectives set out for the ACRS.

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

We started to resettle families under Pathway One of the ACRS at the start of the year. In light of the success of our evacuation efforts, we expect to exceed our initial aim of resettling 5,000 through the Scheme in the first year.

We are working at pace to prepare to receive the first referrals under Pathways 2 and 3 as soon as we can, so individuals affected by the events in Afghanistan can safely arrive in the UK and start to rebuild their lives.

We will publish ACRS resettlement figures in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, allowing transparent progress-monitoring.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154412>

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: Ukraine

Refugees: Ukraine

Kevin Brennan (Labour) [906555] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of Ukrainian refugees residing in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office now routinely publishes data on Ukrainians arriving in the United Kingdom under our two new schemes.

Between 11 and 18 April, the number of those arriving under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme more than doubled from 3,200 to 6,600.

15,000 more Ukrainians have arrived under the Family Scheme; meaning that as of 18 April, 21,600 visa holders had arrived in the UK.

We continue to work at pace to ensure more people can arrive more quickly.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-25/906555>

Refugees: Ukraine

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [154494] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department requires undocumented Ukrainians living in the UK to comply with immigration enforcement measures, including detention and the requirement to report at immigration centres.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: Ukrainians living in the UK will need to comply with all immigration rules and procedures, with those who remain undocumented or without status in the UK liable to be placed on immigration bail with appropriate conditions applied, depending on the circumstances of the individual case.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154494>

Visas: Ukraine

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [154493] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether undocumented Ukrainians living in the UK are eligible for the (a) Ukraine Family Scheme, (b) Ukraine Extension Scheme or (c) Homes for Ukraine Scheme; and what support her Department plans to provide to those people.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Undocumented Ukrainians living in the UK are not eligible for any of the Government's three Ukraine Schemes. They may though be able to regularise their status through other routes which are available to those who are undocumented in the UK, subject to meeting the relevant requirements.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154493>

Visas: Ukraine

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [154021] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to enable Ukrainians in the UK whose visas expired prior to January 2022 to apply for the Ukraine Extension Scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Ukrainian nationals will only be able to qualify under the Ukraine Extension Scheme if they were in the UK with immigration permission on 18 March 2022, or if their last permission ended after 1 January 2022. The Government has no plans to change these criteria, although those whose visas expired before this date may be eligible for other routes to regularise their status, providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154021>

Refugees: Ukraine

Darren Henry (Conservative) [154438] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that Ukrainian children and young people can enter the UK in the event that their parent or guardian does not hold their passport or birth certificate without that child or young person having to re-enter Ukraine or attend a visa application centre in another country in Europe.

Reply from Kevin Foster: All Ukrainians, including children, who do not have a valid Ukrainian international passport must attend a Visa Application Centre in person and provide their biometric information, as they will need a secure Entry Clearance document which will convert to permission to enter upon arrival at the UK border. This means we can properly identify a child brought into the UK and link them to their parents or carers and help to prevent child exploitation and trafficking, which is an essential safeguard for children crossing international borders.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154438>

Visas: Ukraine

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [155696] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the conditions are for Ukrainians in the UK on (a) family visas and (b) the Homes for Ukraine Scheme regarding leaving the UK and returning; and whether there are restrictions regarding their leave and visa conditions such as those in the UK on Tier 2 and Tier 4 visas.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Ukrainians in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme are not subject to conditions linked to leaving and returning to the UK. Successful applicants are granted three years' leave to remain, and can work and access public services during this time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155696>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>

Information about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Visas: Ukraine

Sarah Olney (Liberal Democrat) [156567] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Department has a policy in place to ensure that visa applications for members of the same Ukrainian family are processed simultaneously, to help ensure that whole families are able to receive their visas at the same time and travel together.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Applications are normally processed in date order from when documents were uploaded, or after an appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC).

However, as part of the Home Office's commitment to make it easier for applicants to apply to our schemes, Ukrainians with valid passports no longer need to go to a Visa Application Centre to give their biometrics before they come to the UK. This revision to the process can mean that applicants who submitted their applications at the same time, but via different biometric routes, may not receive their visas at the same time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156567>

Visas: Ukraine

Kim Leadbeater (Labour) [151344] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps he has taken to facilitate entry into the UK for Ukrainian citizens with pets.

Reply from Jo Churchill: As a nation of animal lovers, we understand how important it is for those fleeing Ukraine to bring their pets. We recognise that many pet owners will not have been able to complete the preparations needed, especially in relation to rabies. We need to protect the UK's public and animal health and that is why pets coming from the Ukraine may need a period of quarantine. All quarantine and relevant health costs will be covered by the UK Government.

We are acting quickly to ensure that everyone who wants to travel with their pet can, and without delay. Pet owners must contact The Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) to apply for a licence before they travel to the UK. APHA will make all the necessary arrangements and confirm entry dates for when the pet arrives in the UK.

We have been working with stakeholders to increase capacity, and in parallel exploring alternative options with the rescue and rehoming sector, and with licenced boarding kennels and catteries where we have implemented the use of isolation facilities.

We have delivered emergency legislation to authorise the use of a new blood test

for rabies, which reduces the timescale for checking immunity, which in respect can free up quarantine spaces. Results can be turned around in a minimum of 3 days and animals may be eligible for home isolation in England if they are found to have rabies antibodies, subject to strict criteria. This will help maintain our strict biosecurity measures and may allow people to be reunited more quickly with their pets.

We continue to work with APHA to streamline the process, and are continuing to provide information in both Ukrainian, Russian and English to those wishing to travel.

We have provided full guidance on GOV.UK for those fleeing Ukraine to bring their pets to the UK. This provides detailed information on the steps that need to be taken to enter the UK. We have included advice on ports of entry and the process once their pet reaches the UK. People fleeing to the UK from Ukraine with pets should contact the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for a pet licence by email at ukrainepettravel@apha.gov.uk or call +44 3000 200 301 and select option 2.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-31/151344>

Doctors' List of Patients: Ukraine

Michael Fabricant (Conservative) [150980] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance and assistance his Department provides to (a) clinical commissioning groups and (b) general practitioners on enabling Ukrainian refugees who are temporarily resident in the UK to be able to register easily and quickly for GP services.

Reply from Maria Caulfield: The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities produces the 'Migrant health guide', a free, online resource designed to support primary care practitioners. It includes information on migrants' entitlement to the National Health Service, guidance for assessing new patients, tailored health information specific to over 100 countries of origin and guidance on a range of communicable and non-communicable diseases and health issues. In addition, all arrivals will receive a welcome pack in Ukrainian, Russian or English which outlines their entitlement to free health care and includes details of how to register with a general practitioner.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-31/150980>

The Guide referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migrant-health-guide>

Foster Care: Refugees

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [155940] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if he will ask local authorities to show flexibility with regard to the clearance of uncleared adults within homes with in-place fostered children, to enable foster families to accommodate Ukrainian families including adults.

Reply from Will Quince: The decision to become a host family should involve everyone living in the household including children, whose views, wishes and feeling should be taken into account. There will be additional considerations when the household includes children in foster care.

Foster carers are required to give written notice to their fostering provider when there is a change in the composition of the household. We would expect foster carers to contact their fostering service provider and the local authority/authorities for any children already living in their care when considering applying to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (where the local authority is not their fostering service provider).

If a foster carer has capacity to take additional children, we encourage fostering agencies to explore with them what support the foster carer can provide, including to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children already in the country and those who

continue to arrive.

Local authorities are responsible for safeguarding all children that they look after according to existing guidance and the statutory framework. The department expects them to work together with fostering agencies where there is a change to the fostering household composition to ensure that children that they look after are safeguarded.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155940>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Ukraine

Deidre Brock (SNP) [137346] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will take steps to (a) waive all visa requirements and (b) introduce a resettlement scheme for unaccompanied Ukrainian refugee children.

Deidre Brock (SNP) [137347] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support UK charities seeking to provide safe escape routes for Ukrainian orphans and unaccompanied refugee children.

Deidre Brock (SNP) [137348] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to safeguard and promote the welfare of refugee children arriving from Ukraine.

Reply from Kevin Foster: We recognise the deeply troubling circumstances faced by all Ukrainians who are caught up in this conflict, including unaccompanied minors, and the role many countries will need to play to safeguard those children. With respect to UK charities we are aware of a significant interest in assisting Ukrainian children.

Safeguarding and protection of these vulnerable children is paramount. It will generally be in the best interests of a child to reunite with their family members in the first instance. This is also the position of the Ukrainian Government. We have held a number of discussions with leading international organisations who are working hard to ensure appropriate processes are put in place to process and safeguard unaccompanied minors who are fleeing Ukraine.

The Ukraine Family Scheme (UFS) provides an immediate pathway for those Ukrainians, including unaccompanied minors, with family already settled in the UK to come to our country. The relevant safeguarding checks will be performed as part of the application process. The UFS is designed to allow as many people as possible to come to Britain and gives them immediate access to the support they need.

The routes and visa changes which we have announced so far follow extensive engagement with the Ukrainian Government to ensure they respond directly to their needs and asks. We will continue to work closely with them going forward.

We are committed to working with local government to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place, particularly for any unaccompanied children who may arrive and for whom there is no option of being reunited with extended family. The UK already has well established policies in this area for looked after migrant children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-09/137346>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-09/137347>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-09/137348>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Schools: Admissions

Theresa Villiers (Conservative) [156397] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether school applications from Ukrainian refugees will be assessed according to the same criteria as other children.

Theresa Villiers (Conservative) [156398] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether local councils have additional obligations regarding school places in respect of Ukrainian refugees, as compared to other children.

Theresa Villiers (Conservative) [156399] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether local authority obligations to provide school places for Ukrainian refugee children arriving under the family reunion route apply in the area where they live or in the area where their sponsoring family member lives.

Reply from Robin Walker: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education wrote to all directors of children's services on 1 April 2022 asking them to assist refugees from Ukraine in finding school places as quickly as possible. The department followed this up with a similar message to every local authority admission officer on 4 April 2022.

Admission authorities in England must always apply their published admission arrangements. There are no exceptions for Ukrainians or children of any other nationality.

Local authorities in England do not have additional school admission obligations in relation to refugees from Ukraine, they have the same right to a school place as any other child resident in the UK. Local authorities in England have a duty to provide sufficient school places for children living in their area. Parents have a duty to ensure any of their children who are of compulsory school age receive a suitable education.

It is not necessary to have a fixed home address in order to be allocated a school and admission authorities would be in breach of their legal obligations if they refused admission on this basis. The school admissions code states that admission arrangements must be clear about how a child's home address will be determined. The department provides advice, in Ukrainian and Russian, to parents on finding a school place in the Ukraine welcome pack, similar to the advice we provide Hong Kong British National (Overseas) and Afghan migrants. The department have also recently updated our website giving advice to local authorities and schools on the admission rights of foreign nationals.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156397>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156398>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156399>

Children: Ukraine

Ben Everitt (Conservative) [154483] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to support Ukrainian child refugees' access education once in the UK.

Reply from Robin Walker: The government has set up two schemes to support those fleeing the war: the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine. All children and young people arriving under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine have the right to access state education whilst in the UK. Attending school is vital in helping children integrate into the communities in which they are living.

Ukrainian parents will apply for a school place through the in-year admissions process. The department is working with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing

and Communities on developing a welcome pack for Ukrainian migrants. This will include details of the education offer and guidance on navigating the education system. General advice on school admissions can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>

Local authorities will work with families to enable all children to attend school in the local area as soon as possible, even if these places are not in the immediate vicinity of their accommodation. The department understands the challenge of finding suitable school places for new arrivals and will work with local authorities where helpful to make this as smooth as possible.

To support schools' efforts, Oak National Academy have rolled out an auto-translate function across all 10,000 of its online lessons. This means Ukrainian children can access education in their native language.

The department has ensured Ukrainians have access, if they need it, to the same childcare entitlements, as well as university and college courses as a UK citizen.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that all their pupils, including refugees and migrants who have a first language other than English, develop the English language skills they need to access the curriculum and achieve their potential.

Ukrainians aged 19+ and their family members settled under the Ukraine Family Scheme and the Homes for Ukraine in the UK, can access training to gain the skills they need to move on with their lives. This includes provision funded through the adult education budget, including English for speakers of other languages, and Level 3 free courses for job offer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154483>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>

Information about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Overseas Students: Ukraine

Diana Johnson (Labour) [156400] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the Answer to Question 141156 on Overseas Students: Ukraine, whether students who arrive in the UK on the (a) Homes for Ukraine Scheme and (b) the family route are eligible for student finance.

Reply from Michelle Donelan: We are extending access to higher education (HE) student support, home fee status, tuition fee caps, Advanced learner loans and further education 19+ funding for those who are granted leave under one of the three schemes for Ukrainians introduced recently by the Home Office.

This ensures Ukrainians who have been affected by the war in Ukraine can access support on the same basis as those within other protection-based categories (such as refugees).

In line with those within existing protection-based categories, these persons would not be required to meet a three-year period of ordinary residence for HE support, Advanced Learner Loans or further education 19+ funding but would need only to have been ordinarily resident in the UK since their grant of leave.

Access to student support is crucial in enabling them to attend education to improve their skills and enhance the ability of Ukrainians to contribute to the UK, or to the rebuilding of their home country.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156400>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-16/141156>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-a-ukraine-family-scheme-visa>

Information about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://homesforukraine.campaign.gov.uk/>

Detention Centres: Ukraine

Mary Kelly Foy (Labour) [154404] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Ukrainian nationals are being held in Immigration Removal Centres as of 1 April 2022.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The Home Office publishes statistics on people entering and in detention in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'.

The number of people entering detention in each quarter is presented by nationality in table Det_D01 of the '[Detention detailed tables](#)'. The number of people in detention at the end of each quarter published by nationality is in table Det_D02 of the '[Detention detailed tables](#)'.

There were two Ukrainian nationals in immigration detention at the end of December 2021, before the conflict in Ukraine began. People can be held in detention for contravening immigration law or for criminality reasons.

The latest data goes up to the end of December 2021. Data for January to March 2022 will be published on the 26 May 2022.

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154404>

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

Immigration

Virendra Sharma (Labour) [145837] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the (a) rationale and (b) number of applications in the latest period for which data is available for each definition for migration applications classified as non-straightforward.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The complexity of an application varies from case to case due to a range of factors which may include the various checks that must be carried out in the course of assessment.

The Home Office routinely conducts checks with other government departments and external agencies. This may mean the time it takes to process an application may be longer than normal, but in some cases, it is essential we do so.

If an application is deemed complex and expected to take longer than the standard processing timescale, UKVI will write to the customer within the standard processing time and explain what will happen next.

The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Transparency Data provides a breakdown of applications classified straightforward and non-straightforward and is available at Tab VC_02 of 'Visas and Citizenship data: Q4 2021':

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visas-and-citizenship-data-q4-2021>

Latest statistics published on 24 February 2022 shows the breakdown of cases that are classified as straightforward from Quarter 2 2019 until Quarter 4 of 2021 is 5,640,606 and non-straightforward during the same time frame is 629,403. The next set of data is due to be published on 26 May 2022.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-23/145837>

Immigration: Veterans

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [156471] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Written Statement of 23 February 2022, HCWS624 on Outcome of Public Consultation on Settlement Fees for Non-UK Service Personnel, whether non-UK veterans living outside the UK with (a) spent and (b) unspent convictions will qualify under the new policy.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The new policy announced following the public consultation on settlement fees for non-UK service personnel implemented a fee waiver for certain non-UK veterans applying for settlement in the UK. There has been no change to the suitability criteria: those with convictions covered by Part 2, paragraphs 8 to 10b of Appendix Armed Forces will be refused.

The fee waiver policy already applies to non-UK veterans living outside the UK who apply for settlement in the UK more than two years after discharge where the requirements of Part 3, paragraph 11 of Appendix Armed Forces are met.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-20/156471>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2022-02-23/hcws624>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stella Creasy (Labour Co-op) [157346] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications have been made for pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme from people who previously held a Residence Card under the old EU Regulations; and how many of those applications have been refused pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office publishes data on the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) in the '[EU Settlement Scheme statistics](#)'.

The latest published information on EUSS applications received and applications concluded by outcome type to 31 December 2021, can be found in tables EUSS_01 and EUSS_03 available at: [EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, December 2021](#).

Information on EUSS applications from people who previously held a residence card issued under Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2016 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/2022-04-21/157346>

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

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

Homelessness: EU Nationals

Lyn Brown (Labour) [150127] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate her Department has made of the impact of the no recourse to public funds policy on levels of (a) homelessness and (b) rough sleeping for EU nationals in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office works closely with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities to reduce the incidence of rough sleeping among non-UK nationals. The Home Office Rough Sleeping Support Service (RSSS) gives real-time immigration information to local authorities and registered charities, to help them assess rough sleepers' status and entitlements. Where individuals with unresolved immigration status cannot access the support they may be entitled to, the RSSS supports them to resolve their status and gain access to that support.

Migrants with leave under the family and human rights routes, and those who have

been granted leave on the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa route as a British National (Overseas) status holder or a family member of a British National (Overseas) status holder, can apply, for free, to have their NRPF condition lifted by making a 'change of condition' application if they are destitute or at risk of destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances.

For those on other routes, we remain clear that councils and partners should exhaust all options within the law to support those who are unable to access statutory homelessness assistance as a result of their immigration status and to ensure everyone has a route off the street, including those with a NRPF condition. Those who have no recourse to public funds due to not having a lawful immigration status, should seek to regularise their stay or leave the UK. The Voluntary Returns Service offers practical support for most foreign nationals who have decided they want to return home.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-30/150127>

Information about the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) visa can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/british-national-overseas-bno-visa>

Maternity Services: Migrants

Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat) [154266] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists' position statement on Equitable access to maternity care for refugee, asylum seeking and undocumented migrant women, what steps his Department is taking to improve access to high quality interpretation services in maternity care in order to reduce disparities in maternity outcomes for migrant women.

Reply from Maria Caulfield: The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' 'Language interpreting and translation: migrant health guide' provides advice for healthcare practitioners on the health needs of migrant patients, which is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/language-interpretation-migrant-health-guide>

The guidance states it is the responsibility of National Health Service providers to ensure that interpreting and translation services are made available to patients free at the point of delivery.

On 6 September 2021, NHS England and NHS Improvement published 'Equity and equality: Guidance for local maternity systems', which is available at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/C0734-equity-and-equality-guidance-for-local-maternity-systems.pdf>

It asks local maternity systems to consider the impact of language on women's needs and ensure personalised care and support plans are available in a range of languages. The guidance directs staff to resources to support communication between healthcare staff and ethnic minority pregnant women, including the 'Help us help you' maternity campaign, a communications toolkit and the interpretation and translation services framework.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154266>

The position statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.rcog.org.uk/about-us/campaigning-and-opinions/position-statements/position-statement-equitable-access-to-maternity-care-for-refugee-asylum-seeking-and-undocumented-migrant-women/>

Asylum: Applications

Kate Osborne (Labour) [154436] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

how many UK asylum applications are currently outstanding; and what is the average time taken to process an application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office publishes data on asylum and resettlement in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision or further review (outstanding applications) are published in table Asy_D03 of the [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#).

Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to December 2021. Data for the period relating to January – March 2022 is set to be published on the 26 May 2022.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/154436>

Asylum: Applications

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [153906] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the minimum amount of time is that must elapse between when an asylum application is rejected and the same applicant can make a second application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The further submissions process provides a mechanism to consider additional evidence provided after an asylum claim has been refused and appeal rights are exhausted, and before a failed asylum seeker has left the UK. So, there is no minimum time period which must have elapsed before a further submission can be made.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153906>

Temporary Accommodation: Migrants

Gordon Henderson (Conservative) [153917] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants were housed in hotels in the latest period for which figures are available.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office accommodates some supported asylum seekers and resettled Afghans temporarily in hotels. The number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority, although not broken down into hotels or other accommodation can be found at [Asylum and resettlement datasets](#). Data is published on a quarterly basis, with the latest information published 24 February 2022. The next quarterly figures are due to be released in May 2022. There are currently over 12,000 resettled Afghans in bridging accommodation. This cohort includes Afghan nationals who may be eligible for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and British nationals.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153917>

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>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Temporary Accommodation

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [157382] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers living in contingency accommodation are in placed each local authority.

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [157383] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, how many and what proportion of the asylum seekers in contingency accommodation are (a) single men, (b) single women, (c) accompanied children with parents or guardians and (d) unaccompanied minors.

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [157384] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers there are in in contingency accommodation across the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority area. These statistics can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-support>

Data is published on a quarterly basis, with the latest information published 24 February 2022. The next quarterly figures are due to be released in May 2022. The Home Office does not publish a breakdown of these statistics which disaggregates the number of asylum seekers accommodated in a specific type of accommodation or break downs in gender and age. These figures are not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-21/157382>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-21/157383>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-21/157384>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Linton-on-Ouse

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [155819] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to ensure that applications for asylum from people placed in Linton-on-Ouse are processed in a timely manner to prevent deportation and subsequent re-patronisation to the UK.

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [155820] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to ensure that refugees identified for placement at Linton-on-Ouse who have a family connection in the UK are able choose where they stay in the UK.

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [155822] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with relevant stakeholders on how York City of Sanctuary may be able to support refugees in Linton-on-Ouse.

Reply from Kevin Foster: As part of the plans to use Linton-on-Ouse as asylum accommodation, the Home Office intends to support asylum seekers to undertake their asylum application. This support involves processing their claims on site and supporting those who would otherwise be destitute

Destitute asylum seekers who are supported under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 may be accommodated by the Home Office. Where individuals have a connection in the UK with friends or family, they are entitled to reside with them.

As part of ongoing engagement and prior to the site opening, The Home Office will engage with relevant and key stakeholders. Non-Government Organisations will also be encouraged to support the social and cultural needs of residents at Linton. The Home Office will work closely with local political leaders (including their officials), the Local Authority and other partners to discuss developments at Linton-on-Ouse. Key local partners and stakeholders were notified of the plans for Linton at the earliest opportunity and we will continue to engage and consult with key partners and stakeholders as plans develop through scheduled meetings and forums including the Multi-Agency Forum.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155819>
and
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155820>
and
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155822>

Asylum: Deportation

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [153904] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were removed from the UK after their asylum application was rejected in each of the last three years.

Reply from Tom Pursglove: The Home Office publishes statistics on the number of returns from the UK in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. The latest data on asylum-related returns from the UK is published in table Ret_05 of the '[Returns Summary Tables](#)'.

Asylum-related returns relate to cases where there has been an asylum claim at some stage prior to the return. This will include asylum seekers whose asylum claims have been refused and who have exhausted any rights of appeal, those returned under third-country provisions, as well as those granted asylum/protection but removed for other reasons (such as criminality).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-14/153904>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

UK-Rwanda Asylum Partnership Arrangement

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town (Labour): To ask Her Majesty's Government why the UK-Rwanda asylum partnership arrangement was concluded by a Memorandum of Understanding and was not therefore subject to parliamentary scrutiny requirements under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010.

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, the UK has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Rwanda, which has now been published on GOV.UK, for the provision of an asylum partnership arrangement and to address the shared challenge of illegal migration. The duty to lay before Parliament under the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 applies only to treaties. However, the safety, security and dignity of and respect for those relocated is assured through the agreement and will be subject to monitoring. We comply fully with our legal and international obligations.

Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town: The agreement will not be a treaty and it will not be enforceable. Given that the deal would end the Government's legal obligation to certain refugee claimants and therefore reduce their rights, surely such a significant international agreement should be disclosed, debated and agreed by Parliament. Why have the Government tried to slip this agreement out as a memorandum of understanding, hindering Parliament's ability to scrutinise it adequately? Does the Minister accept that important MoUs such as this with Rwanda that affect human rights should be routinely disclosed and debated by Parliament under the terms of the Ponsonby rule?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, as your Lordships' House does, there will be ample opportunity to discuss the aspects of this agreement. It complies with our international and other obligations. There will be ongoing monitoring of the agreement, and there is nothing in the United Nations refugee convention that prevents this happening.

Viscount Hailsham (Conservative): Does my noble friend confirm that, in the face of legal challenge, the Government have withdrawn their turnabout policies? Does this not suggest that the legal advice from the Home Office that the Rwanda policy accords with

our international obligations should be treated with a degree of caution?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, this provision has been in place since 1999. I do not know if it has been challenged before, but it is certainly a long-standing provision that we think meets our international obligations.

Lord Paddick (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the Government have clauses in the Nationality and Borders Bill to enable offshoring, which this House continues to oppose. If this legislation is necessary, why have the Government signed a memorandum with Rwanda before Parliament has approved it? If it is not necessary, why did the Government put it in the Bill in the first place?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I think I have explained the provisions in the Bill. They are underpinned by legislation going back over 20 years but, as I explained to the House during the passage of the Bill, it is the certification process that is now in play in the Bill.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (Crossbench): If, as they say, the Government see the need for new and innovative means of dealing with the migration crisis now, did they have any contact with any of the other signatories to the refugee convention about these new and innovative methods before taking action on their own?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I think it is quite clear why we are taking action now. ...

I am sure that noble Lords have observed that people are dying at sea because of the actions of criminals facilitating journeys to the UK.

Lord Cormack (Conservative): My Lords, are the Government accountable to Parliament or not? If they are, why should an issue as important as this, the deporting of asylum seekers to a third country, not be subject to an affirmative vote in each House of Parliament?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I do not believe that MoUs are subject to a vote in both Houses of Parliament. ...

My Lords, I am just going on what has been the convention over many years. ...

Baroness Chakrabarti (Labour): My Lords, first, why an MoU and not a treaty? I did not hear the answer to that. Secondly, why do the Government seek public interest immunity to protect the secrecy of the pushbacks policy and the fact that the policy could never have been used against asylum seekers? Finally, we hear from parts of the press that the Home Secretary thinks that criticism of the Rwandan deal is xenophobic.

Therefore, can the Minister comment on the US State Department's report on Rwanda of just last year? It reported significant human rights issues, including credible reports of unlawful or arbitrary killings by the Government, forced disappearance by the Government, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment by the Government, and 10 other violations of that magnitude.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I acknowledge the US country report last year on Rwanda. Our own country policy and information team carried out an assessment on safety in Rwanda before we entered an agreement.

That report is expected to be completed in the near future. ...

To continue reading this very lengthy question and answer session in full see
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-04-25/debates/49D479DC-339C-4F3F-B4BC-B12AE5A250BF/UK-RwandaAsylumPartnershipArrangement>

The Memorandum of Understanding referred to above can be read at
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/memorandum-of-understanding-mou-between-the-uk-and-rwanda/memorandum-of-understanding-between-the-government-of-the-united-kingdom-of-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-and-the-government-of-the-republic-of-r>

Homes for Ukraine: Visa Application Centres

[The first answer given by the Minister in the House of Commons](#) was repeated in the House of Lords.

Lord Coaker (Labour): ... why, despite the Minister's best efforts, is a bureaucratic nightmare the reality for many Ukrainians fleeing war? The most alarming thing is that the people bearing the brunt of the Home Secretary's failures are young children. Babies, young children and their families fleeing war are forced to travel hundreds of miles across Europe to get biometrics done. The problem has been reported for weeks, and we have already raised it in the Chamber, so what is being done about it? Apparently, even once a visa approved, the Home Office is failing to tell people that they are finally welcome in the UK. Why is it that 71,000 visas have been approved but that, so far, only 21,600 people have arrived here safely? ...

Reply from Lord Harrington of Watford: ... His first question was why young children need to have their biometrics done, and he said that it could mean they have to travel a long way to do it. The reason why they have to have their biometrics done, and the reason why all this procedure takes place, is simply to make sure that they are indeed the children of the parent they are with. ... For example, I saw a young child whose only form of identification to show that she was indeed the child of that mother was a letter from the doctor who delivered the child in Ukraine. That was acceptable, as are birth certificates. There is not a very high level of proof, but we just have to make sure because of our information about traffickers of young children. ... The noble Lord's second question was, why do we not tell people when they have got the visa? There have been delays, and I am now assured that that is not the case. ...

Finally, the noble Lord asked why there are so few arrivals compared to the total amount of visas. This has been perplexing me. ... There are a number of reasons, and I have commissioned some professional research on it ... I think that there are two reasons. One of them is that it has taken too long for people to get the visas from the time of their application—I accept that and have done my best to make sure that it is not the case ...

The second reason—again, this is not research or a systematic poll or anything like that; it is from speaking to people involved—is that many of the refugees take our visas out in case the worst happens beyond now, but, for the moment, a lot of them believe that they can go back and live in their country, and they wish to stay as close as possible. ...

Lord Paddick (Liberal Democrat): ... Initially, the Home Office said that Ukrainian refugees had to have a visa because of concerns that Russian agents would pretend to be refugees. The Home Office then changed its mind and said that Ukrainian refugees had to have a visa because of concerns, as the Minister has said, about trafficking. Yet, all other European nations have accepted Ukrainian refugees visa free because the Ukrainians put systems in place to protect vulnerable people, and so did the countries receiving them. ...

Reply from Lord Harrington of Watford: ... On the reasons for the visas, I do not recognise the one about the infiltration of secret agents. I do, however, recognise the point about safeguarding, trafficking and so on. ...

To read this lengthy question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-04-28/debates/803D3BE8-5010-4BDC-90E7-BD4550E2FFF1/HomesForUkraineVisaApplicationCentres>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Asylum: Rwanda

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL7894] To ask Her Majesty's Government how long they estimate that asylum seekers will have to stay in Rwanda prior to a decision on their application.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda will see those migrants travelling to the UK through illegal and dangerous methods, considered for relocation to Rwanda, where they will have their asylum claim processed. Once a person is relocated to Rwanda, their asylum claim becomes the responsibility of that country and falls under their jurisdiction. However, we expect asylum claims will be decided within a reasonable period of time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-22/hl7894>

Visas: Ukraine

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL6561] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to waive visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals for up to three years.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government keeps its approach on visas and biometrics under review, informed by the latest security advice.

We are aware of cases where individuals who could pose a national security threat have attempted to enter the UK during crisis situations and checks which are part of the visa process have enabled us to identify these individuals as potential threats. Similarly checks undertaken as part of the visa application process can help safeguard vulnerable applicants such as those aged under 18.

The Government therefore has no plans to waive visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-01/hl6561>

New Publications

Windrush Compensation Scheme data: March 2022

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1071103/WCS_Data_-_Mar_22.ods

“They just left me”: Asylum seekers, health, and access to healthcare in initial and contingency accommodation

<https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/DOTW-Access-to-healthcare-in-initial-and-contingency-accommodation-report-April-2022.pdf>

Harmed not heard: Failures in safeguarding for the most vulnerable people in immigration detention

https://medicaljustice.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/2022_HarmedNotHeard_Final.pdf

News: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Priti Patel defends Rwanda refugee agreement

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/20090022.priti-patel-defends-rwanda-refugee-agreement/>

Asylum offshoring plan beats Parliament's end-of-session deadline

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-61252068>

Priti Patel's Rwanda asylum seeker plan faces first legal challenge

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/27/priti-patel-faces-legal-challenge-over-rwanda-asylum-seeker-plan>

Refugees begin legal challenge to Priti Patel's Rwanda deal

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/refugees-begin-legal-challenge-to-priti-patels-rwanda-deal-nhghn6m36>

Fewer than 200 asylum seekers would be deported to Rwanda under existing rules, analysis shows

<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/uk-news/rwanda-asylum-seeker-home-office-uk-b2064888.html>

Just 2% of migrants will be sent to Rwanda under existing rules

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/just-2-of-migrants-will-be-sent-to-rwanda-under-existing-rules-g9q707f5p>

For many migrants, the view of Rwanda is often far from rosy

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/rwanda-ap-britain-south-sudan-kigali-b2067352.html>

'Too soon to tell' if Rwanda deal is deterring Channel crossings

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/rwanda-priti-patel-border-force-channel-government-b2068449.html>

Rwanda? Weather has stopped migrants, say officials

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rwanda-weather-has-stopped-migrants-say-officials-zdl87t5x0>

News: Channel Migrants

Channel migrant boats: Ministers drop plans to turn back vessels

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-61224309>

Priti Patel's refugee pushback policy withdrawn days before legal review

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/apr/25/uk-refugee-pushback-policy-withdrawn-judicial-review-priti-patel>

Channel pushback policy sunk before court hearing

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/channel-pushback-policy-sunk-before-court-hearing-s5js6q39d>

News: Ukraine

UK government admits to processing delays for Ukraine visas

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/28/government-admits-bureaucratic-issues-causing-homes-for-ukraine-visa-delays>

Around one in five refugees granted Homes for Ukraine visas have arrived in UK

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/homes-government-ukraine-kevin-foster-home-office-b2067350.html>

Home Office failings leave Ukrainians stranded

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/home-office-failings-leave-ukrainians-stranded/>

Ukrainian refugees blocked from opening bank accounts in Britain

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/personal-banking/current-accounts/ukrainian-refugees-blocked-opening-bank-accounts-britain/>

Mother escorts hundreds of Ukrainian refugees to safety in the UK

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/30/mother-escorts-hundreds-ukrainian-refugees-safety-uk/>

News: Other Immigration and Asylum

Priti Patel's controversial immigration plans pass through parliament despite warnings of harm to refugees

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/priti-patel-refugees-immigration-unhcr-b2067028.html>

Nationality and Borders bill becomes UK law

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/nationality-borders-bill-now-set-to-become-law/>

Ukrainian refugees' struggles to get visas are one sign of the UK's broken government – Christine Jardine MP

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/ukrainian-refugees-struggles-to-get-visas-are-one-sign-of-the-uks-broken-government-christine-jardine-mp-3665087>

'Unsafe' UK accommodation threatens asylum seekers' health – report

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2022/apr/27/unsafe-uk-accommodation-threatens-asylum-seeker-health-doctors-of-the-world-report>

New Afghan Citizens Information Service

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/new-afghan-citizens-info-service-launches/>

Glasgow City Council criticised over refugee family's home plan

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-61251112>

Judge condemns council for refusing to rehouse refugee family

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/judge-condemns-council-for-refusing-to-rehouse-refugee-family-n9lrlr90r>

'Computer says no' approach locks refugees out of vital financial services

<https://www.independent.co.uk/money/refugees-asylum-seeker-financial-bank-apply-how-help-id-address-proof-b2065537.html>

Brexit was supposed to take back control of immigration. It hasn't

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/2022/04/24/brexit-supposed-take-back-control-immigration-hasnt/>

Archbishop of Canterbury: Church of England is not a 'passive observer of migration policy'

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/26/justin-welby-church-england-not-passive-observer-migration-policy/>

Archbishop says Church of England not a 'passive observer' of migration policy

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/justin-welby-archbishop-rwanda-government-people-b2066224.html>

We could do far more to help migrants feel British

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/opinion/2022/04/28/britain-immigrant-nation-fails-celebrate-british-citizenship/>

‘They can really fly’: how to teach a refugee child

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/apr/27/they-can-really-fly-how-to-teach-a-refugee-child>

‘I feel very at home’: the UK schools keeping children in touch with their global roots

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2022/apr/30/uk-weekend-supplementary-schools-keeping-kids-in-touch-with-family-history>

‘Hong Kong is strange to me now’: how five refugees are finding their new lives in Britain

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2022/apr/25/hong-kong-refugees-britain-hongkongers-visa-scheme-crackdown>

Cross Borders: a programme of arts and cultural activism

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/cross-borders-qa/>

TOP

Community Relations

News

Churches embark on historic friendship journey

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2022/articles/churches-embark-on-new-friendship-journey>

Catholic Church and Church of Scotland release “Declaration of Friendship”

<https://scmo.org/news-releases/perma/1651136400/article/catholic-church-and-church-of-scotland-release-dec.html>

Interfaith Scotland is looking for young people aged 18-30 to form a new interfaith youth board. The board will represent young people on a national level, with opportunities to influence Scotland’s social and political future. For information see

<http://interfaithscotland.org/youth>

TOP

Equality

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Child Development Review: BAME Children

Pam Duncan-Glancy (Labour) [S6W-07689] To ask the Scottish Government what its analysis is of the reasons for BAME children reportedly being more likely to have missing or incomplete information in their development review.

Reply from Maree Todd: All children in Scotland are offered child health reviews at 13-15 months, 27-30 months and 4-5 years. These reviews are typically carried out by a Health Visitor. They allow monitoring and promotion of a child’s health and

collect data on child development. The latest Early Child Development Statistics cover 2019/20 and are available here

<https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/early-child-development/early-child-development-scotland-201920/>.

The 2019/20 statistics show that the proportion of review records containing meaningful information for every developmental domain was lower for children from certain minority ethnic groups. However, the differences between ethnic groups, in the proportion of records with meaningful information in 2019/20, are the smallest observed to date (since 2013/14).

We remain committed to improving outcomes for all children and that is why we have commissioned an evaluation into the Universal Health Visiting Pathway. Findings from the evaluation will support Health Visitors in continuing to support all young families across Scotland.

In addition, to address gaps in Scotland's equality evidence base, we launched the Equality Data Improvement Programme (EDIP) in April 2021. The EDIP is aligned with our wider Mainstreaming Equality and Human Rights Strategy.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-07689>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Financial Institutions: Ethnic Groups

Steve Baker (Conservative) [155697] To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the report published by Lloyds Bank entitled Black. British. In Business & Proud, what steps he is taking to increase the confidence of the UK's Black business community in the banking and financial services sector.

Banks: Ethnic Groups

Steve Baker (Conservative) [155698] To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the report published by Lloyds Bank entitled Black. British. In Business & Proud, what steps he is taking to increase (a) cultural awareness and (b) Black representation in the banking sector.

Steve Baker (Conservative) [155699] To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the report published by Lloyds Bank entitled Black. British. In Business & Proud, if he will take steps to work with the banking sector on creating a bespoke mentoring programme for Black-owned businesses.

Reply from John Glen: On 17 March, the Government published "Inclusive Britain" in response to the independent report by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, setting out a ground-breaking action plan to tackle negative disparities, promote unity and build a fairer Britain for all. The Government has responded in detail to each of the Commission's 24 recommendations from its report. In some cases, The Government's response has gone further than the report envisaged, to ensure that our action plan is as wide-reaching as possible and builds a fairer and more inclusive society in the long-term.

The Government is very supportive of the Race At Work Charter, which over 100 financial services firms have already signed up to. The Charter commits firms that sign up to take practical steps to tackle barriers that ethnic minority people face in recruitment and progression.

We are also supporting entrepreneurs through the Start-Up Loans scheme, which offers businesses 12 months of free mentoring. Of all loans issued up to December 2021, 20% went to Asian people, Black people, or people from other Ethnic Minorities (excluding White minorities). At the end of December 2021, the

programme had delivered more than 90,000 loans, providing more than £819m of funding to entrepreneurs.

In March 2021, the Parker Review published statistics showing that significant progress has been made on improving ethnic diversity of UK boards, with 89 out of 100 FTSE 100 companies reporting they had appointed a director from a minority ethnic group.

The Treasury remains committed to supporting individuals and businesses of all backgrounds to access the finance they need and continues to engage with the private sector and other government departments including BEIS and Cabinet Office on this important issue.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155697>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155698>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-19/155699>

The Lloyds Bank report referred to above can be read at

https://www.lloydsbank.com/assets/resource-centre/pdfs/black_british_in_business_and_proud_report2021.pdf

“Inclusive Britain”, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-action-plan-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities/inclusive-britain-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_CRED_Report_FINAL_Web_Accessible.pdf

The Race at Work Charter, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/747522/Race_at_Work_Charter.pdf

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

https://assets.ey.com/content/dam/ey-sites/ey-com/en_uk/news/2020/02/ey-parker-review-2017-report-final.pdf

Pregnancy: Ethnic Groups

Alicia Kearns (Conservative) [159098] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, if his Department will review whether the NHS's determination of full term gestation appropriately accounts for different ethnic minority gestation periods.

Reply from maria Caulfield: There are no current plans to do so. Gestational age is measured in weeks, from the first day of the woman's last menstrual cycle to the current date. Pregnant women are offered an ultrasound scan at approximately 10 to 14 weeks of pregnancy. One of the purposes of this scan is to confirm the gestational age of the baby and the estimated date of delivery. Most babies are born between 37 weeks and 41 weeks of pregnancy. Those born at 37 to 38 weeks are considered to be 'early-term' and those born at 39 to 40 weeks are considered to be 'full-term'.

Antenatal surveillance of fetal growth is an essential part of good maternity as fetal growth restriction is directly associated with stillbirth and perinatal morbidity. The Saving Babies Lives Care Bundle includes an element on 'Risk assessment and management of babies at risk of fetal growth restriction'. This stipulates that maternity care providers may choose to use uterine artery Doppler assessment, the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists Green-Top Guideline 31: The Investigation and Management of the Small for Gestational Age Fetus, or the

Growth Assessment Protocol, which uses growth charts customised for constitutional variation such as ethnic origin, maternal size and parity, to monitor standardised fundal height and estimated fetal weight.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-25/159098>

Saving Babies Lives Care Bundle, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Saving-Babies-Lives-Care-Bundle-Version-Two-Updated-Final-Version.pdf>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Prison Sentences: Females

Lyn Brown (Labour) [150122] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the report by Hibiscus Initiatives and others, entitled Tackling double disadvantage, published on 22 January 2022.

Criminal Proceedings: Females

Lyn Brown (Labour) [150129] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the report by Hibiscus Initiatives and others, Tackling Double Disadvantage, published on 22 January 2022, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of the collection of disaggregated data on gender-based violence and its links with (a) Black, (b) Asian, (c) other ethnic minority and (d) migrant women's pathways into the criminal justice system.

Reply from Kit Malthouse: The recommendations included in the "Tackling Double Disadvantage" report are being considered by the Female Offender Minority Ethnic working group established by the Ministry of Justice.

Collecting data allows us to monitor the prevalence of violence against women and girls amongst different groups and further integrate a diverse range of victim experiences into conversations and policy decisions. The Home Office is committed to establishing a data collection on offences where the crime has been motivated by a hostility to the victim's sex, with discussions with police forces ongoing. A voluntary collection on the ethnicity of victims of all crime began on 1st April this year. Together, these collections will allow us to assess gender-based violence by ethnicity.

The Home Office does not collect information on whether a victim or perpetrator of crime was a migrant or not.

In July 2021, we published our cross-Government Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy and on 30th March published the Tackling Domestic Abuse Plan. For the first time, our Strategy and Plan were shaped by the public's views – we ran a national Call for Evidence on Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls which received an unprecedented 180,000 responses. We actively sought input from underrepresented groups and held focus groups to ensure that we heard the perspectives of people from ethnic minority backgrounds and refugee and migrant women expert service providers. In the Tackling VAWG Strategy, we committed to working with the Office for National Statistics to review current available data on violence against women and girls and identify the priorities for data improvement.

The report states its aim to improve outcomes and reduce inequalities for ethnic minority and migrant women in contact with the criminal justice system. We agree it is vital that police officers and criminal justice staff have the right competences and values, and an understanding, especially when dealing with the most vulnerable in our society. The College of Policing's foundation training for all those entering the service includes substantial coverage of police ethics and self-understanding, including the effects of personal conscious and unconscious bias. The initial training undertaken by all officers also covers hate crimes, ethics and equalities, and policing without bias. In addition, the College of Policing have

developed specialist domestic abuse training, the Domestic Abuse Matters programme, which has been, or is in the process of being delivered for, the majority of forces (32 Home Office forces have either completed the training, are currently in process of, or are mobilising). The first responders training makes covers dealing with the specific vulnerabilities of different victims.

The new full-time National Policing Lead for Violence Against Women and Girls, DCC Maggie Blyth, has included building trust and confidence as a key pillar of the Policing VAWG National Framework for delivery. This includes working with charities supporting ethnic minority and migrant women and girls to avoid their specific needs being overlooked.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-30/150122>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-03-30/150129>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Double-Disadvantage-Action-Plan.pdf>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Motion

Foysoil Choudhury (Labour) [S6M-04183] Islamophobic Hate Speech – That the Parliament expresses its concern at reports of recent incidences of Islamophobic hate speech being spread on social media channels in communities in Scotland; calls on social media companies to exercise responsibility in relation to the material that they allow on their platforms, and believes that hate speech has no place in a civilised society.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-04183>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Spotify: Antisemitism

Rupa Huq (Labour) [160538] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking with Spotify to help ensure that anti-Semitic content on that platform is swiftly removed.

Reply from Chris Philp: Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society. The UK is taking robust action to tackle harmful online content, including antisemitism. Tech companies may already be held liable for illegal third party content that they host if they are aware of it and fail to remove it expeditiously. Tech companies that publish illegal content are already liable for it.

We also introduced the Online Safety Bill to Parliament on 17 March 2022 and it passed its second reading in the House of Commons on 19 April.

The Bill will give online companies, such as Spotify, new duties of care for user-generated content that they host on their service. Companies will have duties to prevent the proliferation of illegal content, including illegal hate speech, on their platform, and ensure that children who use their services are not exposed to harmful or inappropriate content. They will also be required to have effective and accessible mechanisms for users and affected persons to easily report concerns and seek redress.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-26/160538>

New Publication

All Together Now: Inclusion not exclusion: supporting all young people to succeed in school

<https://thecommissiononyounglives.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/COYL-Education-report-FINAL-APR-29-2022.pdf>

News

Tory councillors disciplined for 'hate' directed at Jewish Labour candidate

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/27/dan-ozarow-tory-councillors-disciplined-campaign-jewish-labour-candidate>

Tory councillors rebuked for 'negative' campaigning blamed for sparking online antisemitic abuse against rival

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/conservative-hertsmere-dan-ozarow-antisemitism-b2066034.html>

Anti-Semitism rose dramatically in 2021 – report

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-61228552>

Black children over-policed in schools, report says

<https://www.bbc.com/news/education-61263246>

No, the British countryside isn't racist

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/25/no-british-countryside-isnt-racist/>

Immersive UK digital map of people's stones painted for the UK Holocaust Memorial launches

The Foundation Stones Map allows people to explore the stones in 3D in locations across the country and listen to the stories behind them ... Inspired by the Jewish custom of placing stones on graves and headstones, every stone will become part of the Memorial and is a promise to remember the past and build a future free from hate. ...

Foundation Stones invites everyone to paint a stone for the UK Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre to remember the six million Jewish men, women and children murdered in the Holocaust and all other victims of Nazi persecution. People can also dedicate their stones to those murdered in subsequent genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. People have until Holocaust Memorial Day on 27th January 2023 to take part.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/immersive-uk-digital-map-of-peoples-stones-painted-for-the-uk-holocaust-memorial-launches>

Biff, Chip and Kipper book pulped by Oxford publishers in racism row

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/26/cancelled-biff-chip-kipper-book-pulped-oxford-publishers-racism/>

Biff, Chip and Kipper books pulped amid Islamophobia concern

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/biff-chip-and-kipper-books-pulped-amid-islamophobia-concern-cpjf8zfdc>

Almost half of cricket fans do not think the sport has a significant problem with racism
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2022/04/28/almost-half-cricket-fans-do-not-think-sport-has-significant/>

Racism review in Scottish cricket leads to police involvement
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/racism-review-in-scottish-cricket-leads-to-police-involvement-wrfk0mv0h>

Survey finds 68 per cent of football fans believe the sport has a racism problem
<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/government-survey-racist-ipsos-azeem-rafiq-b2067340.html>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Scottish Parliament Motions

Foyso Choudhury (Labour) [S6M-04126] Eid Mubarak – That the Parliament notes the celebration of Eid al-Fitr, beginning on 2 May 2022, depending on the moon sighting; understands that this marks the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan and the breaking of the Ramadan fast; further understands that in this period Muslims give thanks to God for helping them complete their fasting, prayers, charity and zakat (giving alms to the poor) during Ramadan; expresses its hope that Muslims worldwide are able to celebrate this occasion in peace and security, and wishes the Muslim community in Scotland, and around the world, Eid Mubarak.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-04126>

Pam Gosal (Conservative) [S6M-04139] Wishing Eid Mubarak to All Those Celebrating in the UK and Around the World – That the Parliament wishes all those celebrating the festival of Eid in the UK and around the world a joyous Eid al-Fitr; understands that the festival follows after 30 days of Ramadan, where fasting takes place from dawn to dusk; further understands that this is an opportunity to share values of Islam, including the values of family, community and charity; believes that, with so many people around the world facing hardships, these values are more important than ever, and acknowledges what it sees as the enormous contributions that Muslims make across Scotland and the whole of the UK, which it believes enriches communities across this nation.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-04139>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Marriage: Ceremonies

Baroness Cox (Crossbench) [HL7850] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Nuffield Foundation report, When is a wedding not a marriage? Exploring non-legally binding ceremonies, published on 8 March; and, in particular, of the conclusion that wedding law reform is achievable and long overdue.

Reply from Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The Government notes the conclusion of the Nuffield Foundation's report. The Government remains committed to assessing the case for more comprehensive and enduring reform to marriage law once the Law Commission has completed its fundamental review of the law in this area. The final report will take into account the findings of the Nuffield Foundation and is due in July. The report will support the Government in understanding what types of ceremonies are taking place, why they are taking place and what the demand for them is, and who conducts them, in order to consider the implications of changing the law on marriage on all groups.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-04-22/hl7850>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/when_is_a_wedding_not_a_marriage_-_exploring_non-legally_binding_ceremonies_-_final_report.pdf

Information about the Law Commission review referred to above can be read at

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/weddings/>

New Publication

State Opening of Parliament – history and ceremonial

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9501/CBP-9501.pdf>

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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 Parliament Written Answer

NHS: Emergency Footing

Emma Harper (SNP) [S6W-08306] To ask the Scottish Government whether the NHS will continue on the emergency footing that the Cabinet Secretary for Health and Social Care previously extended to the 30 April 2022.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: Once again, I want to thank our health and care staff for their magnificent work to date. The last few months have been enormously difficult and our health and care services are continuing to deal with a challenging combination of issues.

We are now seeing a steady reduction in new Covid cases. However, I am aware that the system remains under significant pressure. We must continue with a measured and consistent approach to the recovery and renewal of the vital service that we all rely upon. This will require balancing the capacity of the NHS and the wellbeing of our workforce to respond to increasing demands of emergency and urgent care, whilst reducing the backlog of planned care.

As we move through the next phase of the Strategic Framework, we will continue to support our NHS Boards to deliver against commitments in the NHS Recovery Plan and associated Delivery Plans to enable our NHS to plan and prepare the future delivery of health and social care services to our communities. We are confident that we have continued to build on lessons learned and that NHS Boards will be able to respond appropriately to any further challenges which lie ahead.

With that in mind, I have decided that the NHS will no longer remain on an emergency footing after 30 April 2022.

There are temporary terms and conditions provisions that were enacted to support the NHS through this time, including to support those who came back to work on a temporary basis to aid with pandemic response. We will now take the opportunity to review these, and will work through the established structures to set a timetable to return to normal arrangements. In the meantime, these temporary measures remain in operation.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-08306>

Scottish Government Press Releases

New 'stay at home' guidance published

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-stay-at-home-guidance-published/>

Message from the Health Secretary, Humza Yousaf
<https://twitter.com/scotgovhealth/status/1519964708299804672>

End of the Highest Risk List
<https://www.gov.scot/news/end-of-the-highest-risk-list/>

Too early to understand the exact impact Covid-19 has had on excess deaths in Scotland, says Holyrood Committee
<https://www.parliament.scot/about/news/news-listing/too-early-to-understand-the-exact-impact-covid19-has-had-on--excess-deaths-in-scotland>

Scottish Government Publications

Covid-19 Daily Dashboard
https://public.tableau.com/app/profile/phs.covid.19/viz/COVID-19DailyDashboard_15960160643010/Dailyupdate

Daily COVID-19 Cases in Scotland
<https://www.opendata.nhs.scot/dataset/covid-19-in-scotland>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance: staying at home
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-getting-tested/pages/changes-from-1-may-2022/>

UK Government Publications

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection Survey, UK: 29 April 2022
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/conditionsanddiseases/bulletins/coronaviruscovid19infectionsurveypilot/29april2022/pdf>

News

Covid infections in record drop of nearly one million, says ONS
<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-61270786>

People with Covid in Scotland no longer need to self-isolate
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-61272252>

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Scotland's Census ** new or updated this week

**** The census deadline has been extended to 31 May 2022 ****

Scottish Parliament Ministerial Statement and Q&A

Scotland's Census 2022

The Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson): ... Census day in Scotland was 20 March 2022. I am pleased to note that well over 2 million households have already submitted their responses. I extend my thanks to all the households that provided responses prior to the deadline. Their participation in this once-in-a-decade exercise is hugely appreciated.

To date, 77.2 per cent of Scottish households have provided a census return. That is a substantial figure, given everything that is happening in the world right now. I understand that many people might be dealing with other concerns. Recent world events have caused anxiety for many people, and have remained a focus for the media—quite rightly—in recent weeks. Closer to home, people are still dealing with the impacts of Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis. Given those challenges, I appreciate that another ask of people is difficult. However, I cannot stress enough how important it is for the Government to hear the voices of the remaining 604,000 households that are still to return forms before the deadline of Sunday 1 May. That figure includes many thousands of people who have begun the census online but have not yet completed it and thousands of others who have requested a paper copy but have not yet returned it.

That is why I am announcing today that National Records of Scotland will continue to accept census returns until the end of May. In support of that, we will provide an additional budget investment this year of up to 7 per cent of the programme costs, which amounts to £9.76 million. That will allow the census collection period to continue for four weeks, in order to give everybody the opportunity to complete Scotland's census, and it will allow all outstanding returns to be captured so that everybody's voice can be heard.

To be effective, a census requires a high response rate and a response that captures the diversity of our communities and their needs appropriately. I reassure members that that is a valuable further investment. Research shows that every £1, or equivalent, that is invested in a census generates £5 to £6 of broader economic benefit. ...

The Scottish Government announced the decision to move Scotland's census to 2022 following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. That decision was not taken lightly, and it remains the right decision. ...

Every household must complete Scotland's census. In addition to being a civic responsibility, completion of the census is a legal responsibility, as it has always been for previous censuses. Failure to meet that responsibility can result in prosecution, which could lead to a criminal record and a fine. However, the shared focus is—and must be—on ensuring that people are supported and encouraged to complete the census. Help will remain available to people throughout May, via the census website and the free helpline. Completing the census enables better decisions about the things that matter to us all. It is essential that we maximise participation and ensure that everyone is heard and has their needs captured. It is vital that we secure as high a response rate as possible, so that the census can be effective in delivering its many benefits for future public services. ...

Donald Cameron (Conservative): ... The SNP ignored our calls to hold the census in sync with the rest of the United Kingdom, when they would have benefited from a UK-wide publicity campaign that managed a 97 per cent response rate. Despite our warnings, the SNP insisted on going it alone and delaying the census until this year ...

Does the cabinet secretary accept that it was a mistake to delay the census? Can he guarantee that there will be no further delays beyond the end of May? ...

Reply from Angus Robertson: ... I have already addressed a number of the three questions that Donald Cameron asked in succession. First, it was not a mistake to hold the census on an appropriate date that was not in the middle of the pandemic. Secondly, I do not believe that there will be further delays. ...

Sarah Boyack (Labour): What work was done to analyse the impact of not using a paper

response form in relation to people who are not digitally connected—from the length of time that it took for people to get through on the phone to get a paper copy, to people simply not getting around to it because a paper copy was not distributed to everyone? ...
... some houses will have got multiple letters, envelopes, census notification cards and reminders. All of that is rather more than an envelope with a form. As the cabinet secretary has told us, thousands have started but not yet completed the digital form, and enumerators will now have to tour our communities. Would the higher rates that we have seen in previous years have been achieved if we had all simply been sent a paper copy at the start?

Reply from Angus Robertson: ... On the issue of digital versus paper returns, Sarah Boyack and other members will be aware that this census is the first that has significantly focused on trying to maximise digital returns. The figures are running at around 90 per cent of returns being made via digital means, and 10 per cent being paper returns. Anybody and everybody who would prefer to make a paper return can do so.

One element that Sarah Boyack omitted in her questions relates to the rate of return from people who have been issued with paper returns. That is one of the lessons that we are having to learn. We are trying to understand that right now. ... There are literally tens of thousands of people who have been sent any number of written interventions encouraging them to take part and have gone as far as ordering a paper census copy, but have not yet returned it. ...

Sarah Boyack pointed to something that is quite important. We need to get to the bottom of why people who have been repeatedly encouraged in paper form and by house visits to reply have not yet replied. ...

Fulton MacGregor (SNP): For the benefit of people at home or people who may be watching this later and who have not yet completed the census, will the cabinet secretary outline how completing the census benefits people in Scotland and aids policy making?

Reply from Angus Robertson: The census is incredibly important. It takes place only every decade—every 10 years—and it is the official count of every person and household in the country. Scotland has relied on the information that the census provides for more than 200 years. It remains the best way to gather vital information that the Government, councils, the national health service and a range of users in the public, private and third sectors need, and the results help local authorities, businesses and the Government to plan a wide range of vital public services to improve the lives of those who live and work in Scotland. That is all the more reason why any people who are wondering why it is so important for them to return their census should do so in the days ahead and should not delay. We are doing everything that we can to drive up the participation numbers in the 2022 census. Anybody who is listening to our deliberations now has a better understanding of why it is so important and I appeal to everybody to take part in the census as a matter of priority. ...

To read this statement and very lengthy question and answer session in full see

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13715&i=124481#ScotParlOR>

Press Releases

Extension to Scotland's Census

<https://www.gov.scot/news/extension-to-scotlands-census/>

Final opportunity for census return

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/news/2022/final-opportunity-for-census-return>

News

Scottish census deadline extended after poor response

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-61255699>

SNP abandons census deadline after a quarter of Scots fail to respond

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2022/04/27/snp-abandons-census-deadline-quarter-scots-fail-respond/>

About Scotland's Census 2022

Scotland's Census 2022

<https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/taking-part-in-the-2022-census/scotland-s-census-2022/>

Complete Scotland's Census now

<https://www.census.gov.scot/>

MEMO+ Scotland's Census 2022

https://www.scojec.org/memo+/2022/22iii_scotlands_census_2022.pdf

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. Getting the right things out, starts with filling it in

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tC2plmy827c>

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. What am I filling in and why does it matter?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w8AjE_2z2Kg

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. What exactly is Census Day?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ypmk4F3rLhs>

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. What do I need to know about filling it in?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z8e_Kza2XpM

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. Am I legally required to fill it in?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZm1By8A12g>

Video: Scotland's Census 2022. Can I get help filling it in?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RsF1UZBeXgY>

Video: How to complete your census online

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4TQA9yKSpfA>

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Local Elections

Local Council elections will take place in Scotland on 5 May 2022.

Local Councils are responsible for making decisions about how money is spent to provide local services such as education, social care, housing, road, public transport, and leisure facilities.

Who can vote?

- Everyone aged 16 or over who is legally resident in Scotland can vote, unless they have been convicted of election offences, or are serving a prison sentence of one year or longer.
- You don't have to be a British citizen to vote, but if you don't have British citizenship, you must either have leave to remain, or else not need leave to remain (such as Commonwealth citizens and their children who came to the UK before 1973).
- Refugees do have the right to vote.
- Asylum seekers do not have the right to vote.
- Although voters must be legally resident in the UK, this doesn't mean that they must have a permanent address. Homeless people, people living in boats or caravans, people in the gypsy or traveller communities and others without a settled home can vote if they have made a "declaration of local connection".

How to vote

- In person at your local polling station – [click here](#) to find out where your polling station is.
- By post – if you applied for a postal vote by 19 April 2022.
- By proxy (allowing someone to vote on your behalf). In an emergency, you can apply for a proxy vote any time until 5pm on election day.

How to complete the ballot paper

- You can vote for as many or as few of the candidates as you like.
- Number the candidates in your order of choice:
 - Write the number "1" in the box next to your first choice,
 - Write the number "2" in the box next to your second choice,
 - Write the number "3" in the box next to your third choice,and so on.
- You don't have to number every candidate – if you don't want to give a vote to some of the candidates, you can leave their boxes blank.
- If you make a mistake on your ballot paper you can ask for a new one.

For more information see:

Your guide to the Scottish council elections

https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-03/ECO0306_Scotland_Voting_Guides_DIGITAL-AW.pdf

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Other News

Ramadan: First time fasting for young Muslims

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-61257701>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Scottish Local Government Elections (Candidacy Rights of Foreign Nationals) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/scottish-local-government-elections-candidacy-rights-of-foreign-nationals-bill>

UK Parliament

**** Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

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

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Asylum Seekers (Return to Safe Countries) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Barnett Formula (Replacement) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Housing Standards (Refugees and Asylum Seekers) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Human Trafficking (Sentencing) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Immigration (Health and Social Care Staff) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Modern Slavery (Amendment) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

**** Nationality and Borders Bill**

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

Commons Disagreements and Reasons

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/46276/documents/1756>

Ping Pong: Lords consideration of Commons Disagreements and Reasons

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-04-26/debates/9D6C7A2C-933D-4E4B-9FB1-09CA151E9BE2/NationalityAndBordersBill>

Lords Non-Insistance and Amendments in Lieu

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0308/210308v2.pdf>

Ping Pong: Commons consideration of Lords Non-Insistance and Amendments in Lieu

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-04-26/debates/6254645E-540D-4C4A-921A-EED42D7517A7/NationalityAndBordersBill>

Bill passed and Royal Assent received

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

**** Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill**

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

The 2021-2022 session of Parliament has ended and this Bill will not progress any further.

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Consultations

**** new or updated this week**

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill (closing date 16 May 2022)

https://yourviews.parliament.scot/ehrcj/gender-recognition-reform-bill/consult_view/

Free early education for disadvantaged 2-year-olds: eligibility for NRPF

(closing date 20 May 2022)

<https://consult.education.gov.uk/2-year-old-early-education-entitlement-team/free-early-education-for-disadvantaged-2-year-olds/>

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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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

Debiasing our systems, debiasing ourselves – an introduction to tackling unconscious bias

3 May 2022 (online, 10.00–1.00)

Interfaith Scotland course exploring the evidence of unconscious bias and methods for reducing its impact on our decisions, behaviour and processes. The session will also describe the steps that we can take to become more aware of potential bias and how to reduce its impact on our interactions with colleagues, service users and others. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y67cy5x8> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Working with People from Diverse Religious Backgrounds

9 June 2022 (online, 1.00–4.30)

Interfaith Scotland course on improving our confidence in discussing and responding to the religion and belief of those we work with. We learn about the core beliefs and cultural practices of the main faiths, and the individual needs that may arise from a person's faith or belief identity. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/ye2ntnpv> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Refugees: Asylum and Resettlement

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>

Advantage is invisible – understanding unintentional discrimination

6 July 2022 (online, 1.30–3.30)

Interfaith Scotland course exploring why discrimination is common even when our intentions are to work fairly with all staff and service users. The role of the dominant identity in shaping our working culture and practices will be discussed, and we will consider the persistent pattern that advantage tends to be hidden from those that have it. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/2d5zwje9> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Interpreting culture – improving cross-cultural communication

11 August 2022 (online, 11.00–1.00)

Interfaith Scotland course on cultural diversity. Our cultural background has a profound influence on each of us. It shapes our behaviour, values and beliefs. It even affects our thought processes and how we perceive the world. In this course we explore how culture forms a lens through which we interpret each other's behaviour and learn how to improve our inter-cultural communication. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yckbt9hs> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Our lives are ruled by the stories we tell ourselves – how interpretation shapes interaction

13 September 2022 (online, 10.00–12.00)

Interfaith Scotland course exploring the impact of our inner narratives - our meaning-making - on our interactions and relationships. We will consider ways we can become more aware of our readings as they form, and more cautious about their accuracy. We will also discuss tools for more authentic conversations. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/m63kxvrm> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Working with Interpreters

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

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

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

Supporting Refugee Integration

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>

Introduction to Working with Religious Diversity

26 October 2022 (online, 10.30–12.30)

Interfaith Scotland short course where delegates will improve their confidence in discussing and responding to the religion and belief of those they work with. We explore guiding principles behind working with religion and belief diversity. Then we take a closer look at the core beliefs and cultural practices of Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/2p88vnps> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Working with Unaccompanied Refugee Children

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>

Intention versus impact – exploring challenges around group labels and unintended offence

6 December 2022 (online, 1.30–3.30)

Interfaith Scotland short course exploring the language used to describe groups of people, particularly in relation to Protected Characteristics like race, disability, religion and belief. We also consider how we can respond to unintended interpretations, confusion or offence by exploring the difference between the speaker's intention and the impact on the listener. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/k9hz52pk> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

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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
Empowering Scotland's Ethnic and
Cultural Minority Communities

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



*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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