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### Contents

<a href="#">Immigration and Asylum</a>	<a href="#">Bills in Progress</a>
<a href="#">Equality</a>	<a href="#">Consultations</a>
<a href="#">Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination</a>	<a href="#">Job Opportunities</a>
<a href="#">Other Scottish Parliament and Government</a>	<a href="#">Funding Opportunities</a>
<a href="#">Other UK Parliament and Government</a>	<a href="#">Events, Conferences, and Training</a>
<a href="#">Cost of Living</a>	<a href="#">Useful Links</a>
<a href="#">Other News</a>	<a href="#">Back issues</a>

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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## Immigration and Asylum

### Scottish Parliament Written Answer

#### Ukrainian Refugees: Homelessness

**Kaukab Stewart (SBP)** [S6W-20387] To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S6W-18542 by Shirley-Anne Somerville on 13 June 2023, when it will publish the next cohort of data on homelessness for displaced Ukrainians who have arrived in Scotland, following the August 2023 release, and how regularly data will be published thereafter.

**Reply from Shirley-Anne Somerville:** The Scottish Government gathers data on displaced Ukrainians applying for homelessness support as part of the statutory collection which feeds into the Homelessness in Scotland official statistics series. The intention is to publish this data six-monthly, in line with the timing of the Homelessness in Scotland publication schedule. Annual statistics are published

around late August and a six-monthly update, to give an indication of trends ahead of the next annual publication, is published around late January/early February.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-20387>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-18542>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

### **Paul Sweeney (Labour) [S6M-10188] Free Bus Travel for People Seeking Asylum –**

That the Parliament notes the calls to extend the current provision of concessionary bus travel in Scotland, including in the Glasgow region, to include people seeking asylum; acknowledges the efforts of third sector organisations that are working in the asylum sector in leading the free bus travel campaign, which was launched in December 2021, such as VOICES Network and Maryhill Integration Network; notes that free bus travel for people seeking asylum has been publicly supported by all faith leaders in the Scottish Religious Leaders Forum and also recommended by the Poverty Alliance and Mental Health Foundation; understands that people seeking asylum do not have the right to work and rely on a financial allowance, which amounts to approximately £6 per day; appreciates that asylum and immigration are reserved matters for the UK Government, but considers that there are interventions that can be made within devolved competence to improve the lives of people in Scotland who are in receipt of asylum support; notes the commitment in the Programme for Government 2022-23 to consider how best to provide free bus travel to people seeking asylum, and further notes the calls encouraging the Scottish Government to set out how it plans to deliver on this commitment as soon as possible.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-10188>

## UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

### **Immigration Rules: Statement of Changes**

**The Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick) [HCWS1009]** My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary is today laying before the House a Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules.

#### *EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) and EUSS family permits*

We are making certain changes to the EUSS, which enables EU, other European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss citizens living in the UK by the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020, and their family members, to obtain immigration status.

The effect of the changes is the removal of the right of administrative review for EUSS eligibility refusals and relevant cancellation decisions made on or after 5 October 2023. In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, a right of redress will continue to be provided through a right of appeal. The changes create streamlined arrangements for challenging a decision and align with the approach taken in the rest of the immigration system (where no dual right of redress exists).

The same changes apply to the S2 Healthcare Visitor route, which provides a route of entry to the UK for people who, before the end of the transition period, had requested authorisation from their EEA home state or Switzerland to receive a course of planned healthcare treatment provided by the NHS under the "S2 arrangement".

We are also making some minor, technical amendments to Appendix EU for clarification purposes.

## *Immigration Rules for Pre-1997 Gurkhas, Hong Kong Military Unit Veterans and Family Members*

We are bringing the pre-1997 Gurkha settlement concession into the Immigration Rules and at the same time extending the policy to cover pre-1997 members of Hong Kong military units as announced in March 2023.

The policy recognises Hong Kong veterans have similar circumstances to Gurkhas, stationed in Hong Kong prior to handover to China, although never based in the UK. It will enable those eligible who were discharged before 1 July 1997 to settle in the UK. This will be done by extending the provisions of the settlement concession that already exists for former Gurkhas and their families to Hong Kong military unit veterans and their families. Bringing both cohorts under the rules provides greater transparency for these routes and fairness of treatment.

### *Changes to Appendix Electronic Travel Authorisation*

We have made changes to clarify that the ETA exemption for applicants lawfully resident in Ireland who are travelling within the Common Travel Area will require a person aged 16 or above to demonstrate residency in Ireland, if required by a UK official, in order to benefit from this exemption.

The changes to the Immigration Rules are being laid on 7 September 2023.

All changes in the Statement of Changes will come into effect on various dates from 28 September 2023.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-09-07/debates/23090716000011/ImmigrationRulesStatementOfChanges>

## UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement and Q&A

### **Illegal Migration Update**

**The Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick):** ... Tackling illegal migration is one of the Government's central priorities because it is the British public's priority. People can see that illegal migration is one of the great injustices of our time. It harms communities in the UK, it denies the most vulnerable refugees a chance of resettlement, and it leaves behind a trail of human misery. Indeed, the perilous nature of the small boat crossings was underscored once again last month when six fatalities occurred in a tragic incident off the French coast. ...

That reminds us all why we need to do whatever it takes to stop the boats, which is exactly what the Government have been doing throughout the summer. We started by redoubling our efforts to smash the criminal gangs upstream, well before those gangs are in striking distance of the United Kingdom. We have agreed a new partnership with Turkey to target the supply chain of small boats, which establishes the UK as Turkey's partner of choice in tackling the shared challenge of illegal migration. Two weeks ago I visited my counterparts in Egypt, as the Security Minister visited Iraq, to deepen our law enforcement co-operation with two more strategically important countries in that regard.

In the UK, we have been ratcheting up our activity to break the business model of the gangs. Unscrupulous employers and landlords who offer illegal migrants the ability to live and work in the UK are an integral part of the business model of the evil people-smuggling gangs. We are clamping down on them; we announced over the summer the biggest overhaul of our civil penalty regime in a decade, trebling illegal working fines and initiating a tenfold increase in right to rent fines for repeat offenders.

As we do so, more rogue employers and landlords are getting knocks on the door. Illegal working visits in the first half of this year increased by more than 50% compared with the same period last year. So far in 2023 we have more than trebled the number of right to rent civil penalties issued compared with last year, resulting in a sixfold increase in the number of penalties levied. Following the resumption of the immigration banking measures

in April, banks and building societies are now closing the accounts of more than 6,000 illegal migrants.

As we surge our enforcement activity, we are driving up the returns of those with no right to remain in the United Kingdom. Last month we announced the professional enablers taskforce, which will increase enforcement action against lawyers and legal representatives who help migrants to abuse the immigration system. Lawyers found to be coaching migrants on how to remain in the country by fraudulent means will face a sentence of up to life imprisonment.

Since our deal with Albania in December last year, we have returned more than 3,500 immigration offenders, on weekly flights. As we have done so, we have seen a more than 90% reduction in the number of Albanians arriving illegally. So far there have been more than 12,600 returns this year, with returns in the first half of this year 75% higher than in the same period last year. Of course, those changes follow the landmark Illegal Migration Act 2023, which, coupled with our partnership with Rwanda, will deliver the truly decisive changes necessary to take away all the incentives for people to make illegal crossings from the safety of France.

As we adopt a zero-tolerance approach to illegal migration, the Government have extended a generous offer to those most in need of settlement. The latest statistics published over the summer show that, between 2015 and June 2023, 533,000 people were offered a safe and legal route into the United Kingdom. Last month the Home Office resettled the thousandth refugee through the community sponsorship scheme.

While this Government's focus is on tackling the source of the problem, we have none the less worked to manage the symptoms of illegal migration as best as is practicable. We have made significant improvements at Manston since last year, and it continues to operate as an effective site for security, health and initial asylum checks, despite the pressure of the summer months.

We have worked to ensure that when migrants depart Manston they are now heading to cheaper and more appropriate accommodation, by rolling out room sharing and delivering our large accommodation sites. Those sites are undoubtedly in the national interest, but the Government continue to listen to the concerns of local communities and Members of this House, and throughout the summer further engagement has taken place to ensure that those sites are delivered in the most orderly way possible. We have successfully ended the use of Afghan bridging hotels, with Afghan families now able to move on with the next stage of their lives in settled accommodation, and the hotels are now returning to use by the public.

Reducing the backlog in asylum cases and establishing a more efficient and robust decision-making system is not in and of itself a strategy to stop illegal migration, but it is important for taxpayer value and we have prioritised it. We have transformed the productivity of asylum decision making by streamlining processes, creating focused interviews and instilling true accountability for performance. As of 1 September, we have met our commitment to have 2,500 decision makers, an increase of 174% from the same point last year. As a result, I am pleased to report to the House that we are on track to clear the legacy backlog by the end of the year, and that recently published provisional figures for July show that the overall backlog fell.

Tackling illegal migration is not easy; more people are on the move, and more are mobile, than ever before. Countries around the world are struggling to control it. But our 10-point plan is one of the most comprehensive strategies to tackle this problem in Europe, and that is showing. As of today, arrivals are down by 20% compared with last year, and for the month of August the reduction was more than a third. That is against the reasonable worst-case scenario of 85,000 arrivals that we were presented with when taking office last year.

In contrast, irregular migration into the EU has significantly increased, with Italy alone seeing a doubling in small boat arrivals. In Italy, a 100% increase; in the UK, a 20%

decrease. Our plan is working. There is of course much more to do, but it is clear that we are making progress. ...

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour):** ... This Saturday we saw the year's record number of channel crossings, with more than 870 people making that dangerous journey in a single day, and the total number has now soared to a whopping 21,000 for the year. The only reason the number is not breaking last year's record is the poor weather in July and August—and a strategy that depends on the weather is probably not a very sustainable strategy at all. ...

Do not take my word for it: ... the *Daily Mail* did a day-by-day review. On the Monday, just 39 migrants were brought into the 500-capacity Bibby Stockholm barge. On the Tuesday, the Conservative deputy chairman admitted that his party has “failed” on immigration. On the Wednesday, the Immigration Minister sparked fresh Tory infighting over whether Britain should leave the European convention on human rights. On the Thursday, channel crossings hit their highest daily number for the year. Then, to cap it all, on the Friday, all the asylum seekers were removed from the Bibby Stockholm because of the presence of legionella in the water supply. ...

The Bibby Stockholm was supposed to be a symbol of the Conservatives' cutting asylum costs, but the Minister has not even mentioned those costs today. ... On top of that, new Home Office data in August showed us that the asylum seeker backlog has grown ninefold to an enormous 175,000 under the Conservatives at a cost of £4 billion a year to the taxpayer ...

The Minister boasts about returns of failed asylum seekers going up, but they are actually down 70% compared with when Labour left office in 2010. Forty thousand are awaiting removal, and, at the current rate, it will take the Government more than 10 years to achieve their target. Two thousand fewer foreign national offenders are being removed per year compared with when Labour left office in 2010.

The Minister brags about the legacy backlog—a figment of the Prime Minister's imagination—going down, but he knows full well that the only backlog that matters is that of the 175,000 people, and that number is still going up. ...

There are so many questions that it is difficult to know where to start, but let us start with these: when did the Minister know about legionella on Bibby Stockholm? How much is the barge currently costing? How many people are currently in hotels? Does he actually intend to implement the much-vaunted Illegal Migration Act 2023? ...

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** ... while the rest of Europe sees significant increases in migrants, we are seeing significant falls. Our plan is the most comprehensive of any country in Europe and it is starting to work.

**Priti Patel (Conservative):** ... Of course, [the Minister] is more than aware of the various reports over the summer regarding the Wethersfield site ... Could he explain how long the Government will be using that site? Is the five-year period that has been publicly reported correct? What planning processes will be used beyond the 12 months permitted under the class Q regulations? Are the Government considering increasing the £3,500 per bed space given to councils if the site remains open for more than a year?

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** ... We want to use that site for the shortest possible period. We have not put an end date on our use. We have taken advantage of the emergency planning powers that are available in these circumstances; she knows that that has a limited timeframe, after which further action needs to be taken. It is important that we provide the local community with the resources necessary to manage such sites appropriately. That is why we have provided the £3,500 payment. If the site is used for a sustained period, it is correct that we should look again at that and see whether a further payment is appropriate. We have also provided funding for Essex police and for her local NHS services ...

**Alison Thewliss (SNP):** ... the problem is not the boats; it is the backlogs. ... the flow backlog of people coming into the country continues to increase, and the hidden backlog—

those granted asylum by the courts but left waiting for his party to complete the paperwork—grows and grows. In reality, we have a backlog of 175,000 people waiting for a decision from his Department—the highest number since records began ...

We all want to see an end to the small boats and to people risking and losing their lives in the channel, but that requires safe and legal routes, which do not exist. They certainly do not exist for Iraqis, Iranians, Eritreans or Sudanese people. For Afghans, the Afghan relocations and assistance policy and the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, which they should be able to access, are not fit for purpose, either. Fewer than 50 people have been settled through pathway 3 this year, but just shy of 2,000 have come on small boats in the past two quarters because the system is broken and the Government are not interested in fixing it.

Has the Minister met the Fire Brigades Union regarding his expensive plague ship moored off Dorset? Has he given any thought to how his Illegal Migration Act will actually work? Many in the sector do not understand and have not had any guidance from the Minister on what will happen to the people left in immigration limbo by his Department.

Finally, Scotland has sought an alternative to this broken system, and in the summer we launched our “Citizenship in an independent Scotland” paper. The Government are more interested in pulling up the drawbridge and courting the *Daily Mail*, so will the Minister devolve immigration to Scotland and let us get on with the job of being a welcoming country and playing a role in the world?

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** ... The SNP Government still accommodate only 4.5% of the total asylum population in the UK, while Scotland makes up 8.1% of the overall UK population. In Scottish local authorities where the SNP are the largest party, including in Clackmannanshire, Dundee, East Ayrshire, East Dunbartonshire, Midlothian, North Ayrshire and Falkirk—I could go on—no asylum seekers are being accommodated. In fact, there were only 59 more asylum seekers in SNP-controlled councils in the two months that have passed since we last debated this issue. ...

**To read this very long question and answer session in full see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-09-05/debates/AA777B68-6155-4240-99E2-0E43D2CF1BE1/IllegalMigrationUpdate>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

### Afghan Resettlement

**Selaine Saxby (Conservative)** [906251] What assessment [has the Minister] made with Cabinet colleagues of the progress made on moving Afghan people from hotels to settled accommodation.

**Peter Grant (SNP)** [906266] What recent discussions he has held with Cabinet colleagues on supporting Afghan people who have been resettled in the UK to access independent accommodation.

**Reply from the Minister for Veterans' Affairs (Johnny Mercer):** Hotels are not and never were designed to be long-term accommodation for Afghans resettled in the UK. I am therefore pleased to say that, as of 1 September, in line with our promises, no legally resettled Afghans remain in bridging accommodation. As I told the House on 18 July, there is a small number for whom time-limited contingency accommodation will be provided, including where there is a need to bridge the short gap between the end of notice periods and settled accommodation being ready for them to move into, and in cases of medical need, where a family member requires continued attendance at a specific hospital. ...

**Peter Grant:** ... When we remember that those people are here because they risked their lives for us — they risked their lives in Afghanistan for democracy — why have the

Government not even considered a Homes for Afghans scheme, similar to the Homes for Ukraine scheme that made such a difference to desperate Ukrainian refugees?

**Reply from Jonny Mercer:** Largely because these are two different cohorts. Ukrainians are looking to return to Ukraine in the future; the Afghan cohort are staying here and will be in this country for an indeterminate period. We are looking at all ways that we can continue to assist those who have come over from Afghanistan. ...

**Dan Jarvis (Labour):** The Minister will be acutely aware, as I am, that around 2,000 Afghans who are entitled to the Afghan relocations and assistance policy are stuck in hotels in Islamabad. ... What is the plan to get those 2,000 ARAP-entitled Afghans into settled accommodation?

**Reply from Jonny Mercer:** The hon. Member knows that this has been a long-standing concern of mine, both before Government and in Government. My area of specific responsibility in terms of getting people here and into hotels and accommodation has been completed. That is a Home Office area, and I have not had discussions on it so far, but everybody is aware of our commitment to the people who served in Afghanistan, and the Government will follow through on their commitment to those people.

**To read this question and answer session in full see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-09-07/debates/C06FAB72-FAD9-4A70-BF75-7A2359EC5E5F/AfghanResettlement>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

### Refugees: Afghanistan

**Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [195113]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps people who has assisted the British forces in Afghanistan who are at serious risk of harm from the Taliban can take to seek sanctuary in the UK.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** 24,600 Afghans have been brought to the UK so far. The Government welcomes its responsibility to those who have worked for, and alongside, British forces in conflict zones.

Any current or former staff directly employed by, or for, the UK Government and assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life are eligible to apply for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). To support eligible people in Afghanistan in applying for the ARAP, we have made information available at:

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195113>

### Afghanistan: Refugees

**Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [195296]** To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 19 July 2023 to Question 194186, how many and what proportion of the applications which have been received but not granted ARAP eligibility are (a) awaiting consideration and (b) have been declined.

**Reply from James Heapey:** As of 29 August 2023, we have received over 144,000 applications since the launch of the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme on 1 April 2021. To note, this figure includes duplicate applications. Of the number of unique applicants:

- 3,038 individuals are awaiting an eligibility decision; and
- 75,256 individuals did not meet the ARAP eligibility criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195296>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-14/194186>

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

### **Afghanistan: Refugees**

**Dan Jarvis (Labour)** [197431] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Afghans have been accepted under Category 3 of the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme since August 2021.

**Reply from James Heapey:** Since the end of Op PITTING and the UK's presence in Afghanistan, our ability to offer any in-country support has been severely affected as such we have not accepted anyone under Category 3 of the ARAP scheme. As a result, our priority has been to focus on those eligible for relocation via other categories of the ARAP scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-04/197431>

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

### **Afghanistan: Refugees**

**John Healey (Labour)** [195320] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy applications his Department (a) received and (b) processed in (i) June and (ii) July 2023.

**Reply from James Heapey:** In June 2023, 1,092 applications were received, and an estimated 23,586 applications were processed.

In July 2023, 1,298 applications were received, and an estimated 36,237 applications were processed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195320>

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**

**Dan Jarvis (Labour)** [906263] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she has held recent discussions with Cabinet colleagues on helping more people who have been accepted by the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme and are living in hotels in Islamabad to move to the UK.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The UK made an ambitious and generous commitment to help resettle those fleeing persecution and those who served the UK. Since June 2021, we have brought 24,500 people to safety to the UK.

Any current or former staff directly employed by, or for, the UK Government and assessed to be at serious risk of threat to life are eligible to apply for the ARAP.

The Ministry of Defence first consider all applications under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP). Afghan citizens and their family members assessed as eligible for relocation will then be referred to the Home Office for permission to enter the UK. This is subject to the enrolment of biometrics and security checks.

The Government will honour its commitments to bring eligible people to the UK and will arrange and pay for travel to our country when suitable UK accommodation has been secured. The Government is working intensively with local authorities and other partners to ensure suitable accommodation is secured.

The Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities is also considering



further options to help identify suitable accommodation, so we can welcome more Afghans in third countries. This includes learning the lessons from sponsorship schemes like Homes for Ukraine. We continue to work, including with likeminded partners and countries neighbouring Afghanistan, on resettlement issues and to support safe passage for eligible Afghans.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-08-29/906263>

*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**

**Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op)** [195112] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that there is an adequate amount of accommodation for refugees arriving from Afghanistan through the (a) Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and (b) Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Moving into suitable accommodation will help those relocating and resettling to rebuild their lives in the UK, put down roots, gain employment, and have reliable access to public services like education and healthcare. The government has provided £285 million of new funding to local authorities supporting the Afghan resettlement schemes. This includes £35 million of new funding to enable local authorities to provide increased support for Afghan households to move from hotels into settled accommodation and a £250 million expansion of the Local Authority Housing Fund to help councils to source homes to house Afghans currently in bridging accommodation.

More information regarding additional funding being offered to Local Authorities and Councils can be found here:

[UK government support for resettled Afghans in bridging accommodation factsheet](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195112>

### **Refugees: Afghanistan**

**Alison McGovern (Labour)** [195081] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress her Department has made on relocating Afghan refugees from hotels.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The UK made an ambitious and generous commitment to help resettle those fleeing persecution and those who served the UK. Since June 2021, we have brought 24,500 people to safety to the UK.

Bridging hotels are not and were never designed to be permanent accommodation. Long-term residency in hotels has prevented some Afghans from properly putting down roots, committing to employment and fully integrating into communities. The pace at which people can be moved on is dictated by the availability of suitable accommodation provided by local authorities.

From the end of April 2023, individuals staying in hotels and serviced accommodation began to receive legal notice to leave their temporary accommodation by a certain date. A dedicated cross-government casework team, made up of Home Office Liaison Officers and DWP staff, are based in hotels and work alongside local authority officials to provide advice and support to Afghans.

The Find Your Own (FYO) accommodation pathway has been established and empowers Afghan families to source their own accommodation, rather than the Home Office. Council support staff in hotels will work closely with households to help them navigate the pathway.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195081>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Ukraine

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Homelessness: Ukraine**

**Olivia Blake (Labour)** [195247] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an estimate of the number of Ukrainian households receiving a homelessness relief duty from local authorities in England.

### **Households: Ukraine**

**Olivia Blake (Labour)** [196253] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, with reference to the Homelessness management information - Ukrainian nationals: England, updated by his Department on 29 June 2023, if he will make an estimate of the average numbers of people in each household of Ukrainian nationals.

**Reply from Felicity Buchan:** The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities does not currently collect or hold information on the average household size of Ukrainian households who have had a homelessness duty accepted by an English local housing authority.

Through our Homelessness Pressures Management Information, we do collect some homelessness data on Ukrainian households. As of 31 July, English local authorities have accepted 7,300 homelessness prevention and relief duties for Ukrainian households since 24 February 2022. On 31 July, English local authorities reported providing temporary accommodation for 700 Ukrainian households.

Our Homelessness Pressures Management Information data is ad-hoc and voluntarily provided. It is regularly published on [gov.uk](https://gov.uk).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195247>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195253>

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

### **Naturalisation: Applications**

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [196929] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for naturalisation have been submitted each year since 2010; and what has been the average processing time per year.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on the number of applications for naturalisation and registration of British citizenship. Annual data for citizenship applications can be found in table Cit\_01 of the [citizenship summary tables](#).

The Home Office publishes data on processing times for total citizenship applications against service standards in table VSI\_02 [Visas and Citizenship Migration transparency data](#).

The latest data relates to the year ending June 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196929>

### **Immigration: Fees and Charges**

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [194745] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the oral contribution by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 13 July 2023, Official report, column 526, what the changes to immigration fees will be.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The cost of most work and visit visas will increase by 15%. The cost of study visas, certificates of sponsorship, settlement, citizenship, wider entry clearance and leave to remain visas, and priority visas will increase by

at least 20%.

We will also equalise costs for students and for those using a priority service so people pay the same whether they apply from within the UK or from outside the UK. We will lay Regulations in the Autumn that will set out the specific changes to immigration and nationality fees in more detail.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/194745>

*The oral contribution referred to above can be read at*

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-07-13/debates/677D41A0-5A85-4869-8167-69044929D759/PublicSectorPay>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Migrants and Overseas Students: Health Services and Visas**

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [194744] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential impact of increasing the cost of (a) the immigration health surcharge and (b) student visas on (i) numbers of international students and (ii) international student diversification in the UK.

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [194749] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with (a) the Russell Group, (b) Universities UK and (c) other sector stakeholders on the potential impact of increasing the cost of (i) the immigration health surcharge and (ii) student visas on the higher education sector.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office is increasing application fees across a range of immigration and nationality routes, including for people coming to live, work and study in the UK. Increasing application fees, together with the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS), helps to fund vital services and allowing wider funding to be prioritised for public sector pay awards.

We will lay regulations and legislation in the Autumn to amend the immigration and nationality fees and the IHS levels, which will set out which immigration routes are impacted and will be accompanied by full economic impact assessments.

We keep fees and IHS levels under review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/194744>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/194749>

### **Overseas Students: Surcharges**

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [194746] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she has made a recent assessment of the potential impact of increasing the cost of (a) the immigration health surcharge and (b) student visas on (i) the international student target within the International Education Strategy.

**Reply from Robert Halfon:** The department has been successful in delivering our International Education Strategy ambition of hosting at least 600,000 students per year by 2030 for the last two years, and the government fully expects the UK to continue to be an attractive destination for international students.

The department is increasing fees across a range of immigration routes, including for people coming here to live, work and study, at a time of record high migration numbers. It is the government's policy that those who use and benefit most from the immigration system should contribute towards the cost of operating the system, reducing the burden on the UK taxpayer.

The government's visa fees are competitive globally and there is little evidence that fee increases to date have significantly affected demand on work, study and tourism routes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/194746>

## **Migrants: Health Services**

**Grahame Morris (Labour)** [195015] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of increases to the Immigration Health Surcharge on household debt for migrant workers.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Regulations will be laid in Autumn to amend the Immigration Health Surcharge (Heath Charge) Order and a full economic impact assessment will be prepared.

The expectation of the Government is that migrants coming to the UK to work should be able to maintain and support themselves, reflecting the principle that immigration to our country should bring economic benefits.

The Immigration Health Surcharge rates have not increased since 2020, and the cost of providing public services has increased in that time. It is right that we keep the IHS level under review to ensure that it reflects the genuine cost to the NHS of providing healthcare to those who pay it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195015>

*The following four questions all received the same answer*

### **Undocumented Migrants: Albania**

**Mike Penning (Conservative)** [195918] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal migrants have been returned to Albania since the publication of the UK-Albania Joint Communiqué: Enhancing bilateral Cooperation in areas of common interest on 13 December 2022.

**Mike Penning (Conservative)** [195919] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of how many Albanian illegal migrants arrived in the UK since the publication of the UK-Albania Joint Communiqué: Enhancing bilateral Cooperation in areas of common interest on 13 December 2022.

### **Undocumented Migrants**

**Mike Penning (Conservative)** [195920] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants arrived in the UK illegally from (a) Bosnia and Herzegovina, (b) Georgia, (c) Mongolia, (d) Albania, (e) Chile, (f) Kosovo, (g) North Macedonia and (h) Serbia in (i) 2022 and (ii) 2023 to date.

### **Undocumented Migrants: Deportation**

**Mike Penning (Conservative)** [195921] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal migrants were returned to (a) Bosnia and Herzegovina, (b) Georgia, (c) Mongolia, (d) Albania, (e) Chile, (f) Kosovo, (g) North Macedonia and (h) Serbia in (i) 2022 and (ii) 2023 to date.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on detected irregular arrivals in the '[Irregular Migration to the UK Quarterly Release](#)'. Quarterly data on detected irregular arrivals broken down by method of entry and nationality are published in table Irr\_D01 of the '[Irregular Migration detailed datasets](#)'. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to end June 2023.

Further provisional small boat arrivals data is published in the data tables accompanying the 'Statistics relating to the Illegal Migration Act'(opens in a new tab). Numbers of arrivals by nationality are published in table IMB\_01b for Q2 and July 2023.

The Home Office also publishes data on returns in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on returns by destination are published in table Ret\_D02 of the '[Returns detailed datasets](#)'. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to the end of March 2023.

Further provisional returns data is published in the data tables accompanying the '[Statistics relating to the Illegal Migration Act](#)'. Quarterly numbers of returns of

Albanians and all other nationalities are published in table IMB\_05 up to the end of July 2023. Since the signing of the UK-Albania Joint Communique on 13 December 2022, the UK has returned 2,898 Albanian nationals to Albania and covers the period up to 31 July 2023.

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/2023-09-01/195918>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/195919>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/195920>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/195921>

*The communique referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-albania-joint-communique-enhancing-bilateral-cooperation-in-areas-of-common-interest/uk-albania-joint-communique-enhancing-bilateral-cooperation-in-areas-of-common-interest>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Sudan: Asylum**

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [194508] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what steps his Department is taking to resume family reunification for Sudanese nationals following the closure of the visa application centre in Khartoum; and if he make a statement.

**Stephen Morgan (Labour)** [195237] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is taking steps to help secure safe routes to the UK for Sudanese nationals fleeing violence in Sudan.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The UK has a proud history of supporting refugees. Since 2015, we have offered a place to over 533,000 people seeking safety in the UK.

The UK continues to welcome refugees through our existing resettlement schemes which include the global UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Community Sponsorship and the Mandate Resettlement Scheme. The UK is proud to have welcomed Sudanese nationals through both the UK Resettlement Scheme and Community Sponsorship in 2021 and 2022.

While our safe and legal routes are some of the most generous anywhere, we cannot accommodate everyone who wants to come to the UK, and we are not able to open a bespoke route for every situation. The UK has no plans to introduce a designated scheme for Sudanese refugees.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-17/194508>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195237>

*Information about the UK Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1011824/Resettlement\\_Policy\\_Guidance\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1011824/Resettlement_Policy_Guidance_2021.pdf)

*Information about Community Sponsorship, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-full-community-sponsorship/community-sponsorship-guidance-for-prospective-sponsors>

*Information about the Mandate Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/257392/manadateresettlement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/257392/manadateresettlement.pdf)

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Kent Intake Unit: Health Services**

**Alison McGovern (Labour)** [195075] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 July 2023 to Question 193136 on Kent Intake Unit: Health Services, how many medical staff are employed at that Unit.

**Alison McGovern (Labour)** [195076] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 18 July 2023 to Question 193136 on Kent Intake Unit: Health Services, how many medical staff are on duty at that Unit at any one time.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Kent Intake Unit has a 24-hour medical service on site and a purpose-built medical isolation room. A total of 16 medical staff are assigned to Kent Intake Unit on a rota basis.

At any one time one medical member of staff is on duty.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195075>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195076>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-10/193136>

*The following four questions all received the same answer*

### **Asylum**

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour)** [195452] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of asylum decisions made since 1 January 2023 were classed as administrative decisions; and how many and what proportion of such decisions were (a) explicit withdrawals and (b) implicit withdrawals.

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour)** [195453] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of asylum decisions made since 1 January 2023 which were classified as (a) explicit and (b) implicit withdrawals led to (i) a successful appeal and (ii) the submission of a new asylum application by the applicant.

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour)** [195454] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of asylum decisions made since 1 January 2023 which were classified as (a) explicit and (b) implicit withdrawals related to applicants who were living in accommodation provided under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 when the decision was made.

**Stephen Kinnock (Labour)** [195455] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of asylum applicants whose claims have been treated as (a) explicit and (b) implicit withdrawals since 1 January 2023 were subsequently (i) held in detention and (ii) removed from the UK.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum decisions, appeals, support, and detention and returns in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'.

The following data is available:

In the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)':

- initial decisions made on asylum applications, including withdrawals: table Asy\_D02
- outcomes of asylum appeals raised at the First-Tier Tribunal: table Asy\_D07
- asylum seekers in receipt of support, by support type and accommodation type: table Asy\_D09

In the '[returns and detention datasets](#)':

- people in immigration detention
- returns, including asylum-related returns

Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks. The latest data relate to the year ending March 2023, with the exception of returns which cover up to December 2022. Information on future Home Office

statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'. These datasets are published separately, meaning it is not possible to link between them to know whether, for example, an asylum seeker with a withdrawn claim was receiving support or lodged an appeal.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195452>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195453>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195454>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195455>

### Asylum

**Philip Davies (Conservative)** [195858] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people denied asylum have been granted humanitarian protection in each of the last five years.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on people granted humanitarian protection can be found in table Asy\_D02 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks.

Please note that the figures for grants of humanitarian protection include those granted humanitarian protection following a refused asylum claim, however this specific breakdown is not published separately.

The latest data relate to the year ending June 2023. Data for the year ending September 2023 will be published on 23 November 2023. 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/2023-09-01/195858>

### Refugees: Children

**Stephanie Peacock (Labour)** [195444] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of children held longer than the time limit for detention.

**Stephanie Peacock (Labour)** [195446] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that lone child refugees held in detention centres do not feel intimidated and frightened.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** We take the welfare of children incredibly seriously and that is why we have said it is not compassionate to allow people - including vulnerable children - to be risking their lives any longer. We have to break the cycle and stop the boats.

The Home Office have put in place further funding throughout 2023-24 of £6,000 for every unaccompanied child moved from a UASC hotel to a local authority within five working days to encourage quicker transfers into local authority care.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195444>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195446>

### Refugees: Children

**Stephanie Peacock (Labour)** [195445] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that vulnerable children are treated with decency and compassion.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office takes our duty of care towards

children extremely seriously and we prioritise the safety of children and any applications from asylum seeking children.

We have robust safeguarding procedures in place to ensure all children in hotels are safe and supported as we seek urgent placements with a local authority. Children are supported by team leaders and support workers who are on site 24 hours a day. Further care is provided in hotels by teams of social workers and nurses. All contingency sites have security staff on site 24/7 and providers liaise closely with local police to ensure the welfare and safety of vulnerable residents. Decision makers who specifically deal with children's claims complete additional training on Processing Children's Asylum Claims and have additional periods of mentoring. Additionally, decision makers attend a Safeguarding Awareness training which raises awareness of responsibilities of staff who deal with non-detained individuals and aims to ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding procedures for children.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195445>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Asylum: Children**

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195165] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied asylum seeking children who went missing from hotel accommodation remain unaccounted for.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195166] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to publish weekly data on the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children who are missing from hotel accommodation and unaccounted for.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** 5 September 2023

The data requested cannot be provided as it comes from live operational databases that have not been quality assured.

Published data can be found online at: [www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets)

Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) hotels are temporary accommodation that provide safeguarding for a child until they are ready to be transferred through the National Transfer Scheme (NTS) from an entry local authority to another local authority in the UK for ongoing care and support.

There are no UASC hotels in Scotland.

We take the safety of those in our care seriously. We have robust safeguarding procedures in place to ensure all young people in emergency interim hotels are safe and supported as we seek urgent placements with a local authority.

Young people are supported by team leaders and support workers who are on site 24 hours a day. Further care is provided in hotels by teams of social workers and nurses. All contingency sites have security staff on site 24/7 and providers liaise closely with local police to ensure the welfare and safety of vulnerable residents.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195165>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195166>

#### **Asylum: Employment**

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [194504] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will waive the requirement for asylum seekers to seek employment from the shortage occupations list for those asylum seekers who have waited for a decision on asylum claims for more than one year.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Asylum seekers who are in the UK asylum system and have had their asylum claim outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own, are allowed to work. Those permitted to work are restricted to



jobs on the Shortage Occupations List (SOL), which is based on expert advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC). The list comprises skilled jobs where there is an identified national shortage which is sensible to fill, at least in part, through immigration. More information regarding MAC is available at: [Migration Advisory Committee](#).

It is important that our policy approach distinguishes between those who need protection and those seeking to work here who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Therefore, at present there are no plans to waive the requirements to seek employment via the SOL. Asylum seekers do not need to make perilous journeys in order to seek employment in the United Kingdom. There are various safe and legal routes for those seeking to work in the UK under the Points Based System.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-17/194504>

### **Asylum: Temporary Accommodation**

**John Hayes (Conservative)** [195315] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the total cost to the UK taxpayer has been since January 2020 of housing asylum seekers who have arrived on small boats in hotels and other locations.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The number of people arriving in the UK who require accommodation has reached record levels and has put our asylum system under incredible strain.

We have been clear that the use of hotels to house asylum seekers is unacceptable. There are currently more than 51,000 asylum seekers in hotels costing the UK taxpayer over £6 million a day.

The Home Office is making every effort to reduce our reliance on hotels through alternative forms of accommodation to limit the burden on the taxpayer.

As per standard practice, audited costs for the large accommodation sites will be published through the Home Office annual reports and accounts.

To reduce hotel use, asylum seekers will routinely share rooms with at least one person where appropriate. This will minimise the impact on communities while we stand up alternative sites.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195315>

### **Asylum: Temporary Accommodation**

**George Howarth (Labour)** [195673] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers were staying in (a) hotels or (b) other forms of accommodation on 1 September 2023.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on asylum seekers in receipt of support in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on asylum seekers in receipt of support by accommodation type including hotels and other accommodation can be found in table Asy\_D09 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)'.

Please note the data show a snapshot as at the last day of each quarter, rather than the number of asylum applications awaiting a decision over the entire quarter.

The latest data relates to as at 30 June 2023. Data as at 30 September 2023 will be published on 23 November 2023. 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/2023-09-01/195673>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stella Creasy (Labour Co-op)** [195022] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons asylum accommodation providers are required to inform her Department of warning letters they have issued to tenants.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Asylum seekers are clearly advised of the expectations the Home Office and our providers have for them to behave responsibly while they are accommodated in our properties and not to engage in any form of criminal activity.

All incidents are reported to the Home Office immediately by the providers which is a contractual requirement. We then work with the provider to put additional measures in place, if required. This will include working with other statutory bodies including the Police to investigate any potential criminal activities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195022>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stella Creasy (Labour Co-op)** [195023] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether warning letters sent to her Department by asylum accommodation providers are considered during the asylum application process.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** Warning letters are provided where there has been a breach in the conditions of asylum support. They are not taken into consideration during the substantive asylum application process because they bear no relevance to the substance of the claim.

Asylum support is provided on the basis that a supported person and any dependants they have adhere to the terms and conditions attached to it. A breach of the conditions of support may also lead an early suspension or discontinuation of support depending on the severity of the breach. Full details of the conditions of support can be found in the policy guidance on gov.uk. [Conditions of support: caseworker guidance.](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195023>

*The following ten questions all received the same answer*

### **Asylum: MOD Wethersfield**

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195530] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether people accommodated at Wethersfield were transferred from Manston Short-term Holding Facility.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195533] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has carried out an Equality Impact Assessment for the new asylum accommodation centre at MDP Wethersfield.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195534] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether a legal advice provision is available at the new asylum accommodation centre at MDP Wethersfield; and whether she has made an (a) estimate of the number of legal firms in the local area and (b) assessment of whether local legal firms have the (i) capacity and (ii) necessary expertise to take on clients from that centre.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195536] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department is taking steps to monitor the suitability of people for accommodation at the MDP Wethersfield site.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195537] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been transferred to MDP Weathersfield site since 12 July 2023; and how many people are accommodated at the site.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195538] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, where people transferred to MDP Wethersfield were previously accommodated.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195539] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there is an (a) minimum and (b) maximum length of time that people will be accommodated at MDP Wethersfield.

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [195541] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much notice people were given of their transfer to MDP Wethersfield.

### **Health Services: MOD Wethersfield**

**Alison Thewliss (SNP) [195532]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the level of healthcare needs that residents at the proposed new asylum accommodation centre at MDP Wethersfield will have; what healthcare provision will be available on-site; whether residents will be registered with local GPs off-site; what estimate she has made of the number of GP practices in the local area; and what assessment she has made of the (a) capacity of those practices to take on new patients and (b) levels of experience in working with asylum seekers and refugees.

#### **Asylum: Military Bases**

**Alison Thewliss (SNP) [195535]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what criteria and process will be used to determine whether a person seeking asylum is suitable to be accommodated at MDP Wethersfield; whether the criteria and process will be the same as those in her Department's Allocation of Accommodation policy for Napier Barracks; and what changes have been made to the criteria and process for Napier Barracks since the High Court found that that they were flawed and unlawful in June 2021.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The first group of asylum seekers is now at Wethersfield.

We will be using a phased approach, gradually increasing the number of asylum seekers accommodated at the site over time and with the site under constant review. The site will be able to accommodate 1700 individuals when fully operational.

The maximum length of stay at the site is currently between six and nine months, except where the Secretary of State is unable to find suitable onward dispersed accommodation despite reasonable efforts to do so.

Furthermore, we have been applying the lessons learned at Napier Barracks to ensure that the Wethersfield site runs efficiently. We appreciate that there are fewer people at Napier but the principles of running a large accommodation site remain the same.

In addition to the checks against policing and immigration databases, at Manston, those individuals identified for the site will be subject to a suitability assessment. Guidance on the suitability criteria used can be found at [Allocation of accommodation](#). Each person's suitability will be assessed at regular intervals and if they are no longer suitable for any reason, they will be moved to alternative accommodation.

All asylum seekers in the UK may contact Migrant Help 24 hours a day, 365 days a year if they need help, advice, or guidance, that includes raising issues relating to safeguarding.

The asylum seekers selected to move to Wethersfield were new arrivals. These asylum seekers had been placed in short stay accommodation pending completion of the asylum registration process and an onward move to contingency accommodation to be arranged. The applicants selected were notified of the transport arrangements by the accommodation provider, and around 24 hours notice was given.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) for Wethersfield has been completed and is currently under a routine review. The EqIA will be monitored and reviewed quarterly.

All the asylum seekers staying at the Wethersfield site will receive appropriate access to legal advice provisions, and legal representatives will be made available through both in-person visits and online videoconferencing. The site will facilitate pre-booked access for legal representatives to visit, including out of hours visits where required, with provision of dedicated space for in-person conversations with asylum seekers, and appropriate videoconferencing technology will also be provided on-site to facilitate virtual meetings. Migrant Help will signpost all asylum seekers to the relevant Legal Providers. Due to the virtual provisions for legal

access on site, access to sufficient legal representation for Wethersfield will not be constrained by the capacity nor expertise of legal providers within the local area alone.

Small boat crossings are dangerous, unnecessary and put lives at risk. There have been appalling and preventable tragedies in the English Channel which must stop. We aim to deter illegal entry to the UK, break the business model of people smugglers and protect the lives of those they endanger. Migrants are intercepted by Border Force and brought to facilities in Dover to begin processing their asylum claims.

Full screening of people's identity, security checks, initial asylum screening and processing is undertaken at Western Jet Foil in Dover and Manston, Kent. Migrants are then moved to suitable accommodation locations as quickly as possible.

In terms of healthcare, extensive work has been undertaken with local and national health partners, including the Multi Agency Forum (MAF) to work through the specifics of healthcare provision being provided on the site. The health subgroup of the MAF was set up specifically to look at how we minimise the impact on local health services and facilitate primary health care on site which has now been established. Financial support is being provided to NHS Mid and South Essex, and the onsite primary health care service will register residents so that is no need to register with local GP practices.

Upon arrival in the UK, all individuals are offered a health check at Western Jet Foil in Dover and Manston, Kent. If necessary, healthcare practitioners at Manston administer medical care. On arrival at Manston, individuals are offered a diphtheria vaccination in line with current UKHSA recommendations in response to the outbreak in this population.

The Home Office has procedures in place to support individuals with potential symptoms of an infectious disease, including isolation spaces within Wethersfield and a designated isolation hotel. The Home Office receives advice and guidance where needed from the local UKHSA Health Protection Team on management of individuals and contacts with a suspected infectious disease. Anyone with symptoms of an infectious disease is made to isolate and can only enter the asylum system once assessed by doctor and deemed to be non-infectious.

The onsite provider has prior experience in meeting the health needs of asylum seekers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195530>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195533>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195534>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195536>

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195532>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195535>

### **Asylum: Passenger Ships**

**Alison Thewliss (SNP)** [194893] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on procuring cruise ships to accommodate asylum seekers as of 18 July 2023.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** There is an urgent need to reduce reliance on hotels to accommodate asylum seekers, to reduce cost to taxpayer and to better manage community impacts. In exploring potential alternative large sites, we continue to consider all available options to source appropriate and cost-effective temporary accommodation.

Vessels have been used safely and successfully by Scottish and Dutch Governments over past year as accommodation.

Other European Governments, in the same situation of needing to provide increased accommodation capacity, are using vessels.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-18/194893>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Asylum: Portland Port**

**Zarah Sultana (Labour)** [195280] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 5 July 2023 to Question 191863 on Asylum: Falmouth, if her Department will publish the results of the statutory inspection.

**Zarah Sultana (Labour)** [195281] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to allow people seeking asylum housed in the Bibby Stockholm barge to enter and leave the barge (a) during the day and (b) at night.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The statutory inspection was carried out prior to the Home Office taking control of the barge.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195280>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195281>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-06-29/191863>

### **Deportation: Albania**

**John Hayes (Conservative)** [195331] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Albanian nationals have been removed from the UK since 2013.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** The Home Office publishes data on returns in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on returns by nationality are published in table Ret\_D01 of the '[Returns detailed datasets](#)'. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to December 2023. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the '[summary tables](#)'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on returns by nationality.

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/2023-07-20/195331>

### **Offenders: Deportation**

**Valerie Vaz (Labour)** [196157] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her Department's policy is on the deportation of foreign nationals convicted of violent crime to their country of origin if it is unsafe.

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** This Government puts the rights of the British public before those of criminals, and we are clear that foreign criminals should be deported from the UK wherever it is legal and practical to do so.

Under the UK Borders Act 2007, a deportation order must be made where a foreign

national has been convicted of an offence and received a custodial sentence of 12 months or more. This is subject to several exceptions, including where to do so would be a breach of a person's ECHR rights or the UK's obligations under the Refugee Convention. Individuals are only returned to their country of origin when the Home Office and, where applicable, the Courts deem it is safe to do so. Each individual assessment is made against the background of any relevant caselaw and the latest available country information.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196157>

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

### Illegal Migration Update

*The Minister's statement to the House of Commons* was read in the House of Lords.

**Lord Coaker (Labour):** ... First, can the Minister explain to us where the Home Office will find the additional £2 billion a year, because it will no longer be allowed to use the foreign aid budget to pay for migrants in hotels? This is a result of the illegal migrants Act. Is this report from the Independent Commission for Aid Impact accurate? Why has it never been mentioned? Did the Minister know about it, because when he was asked about it earlier by another noble Lord, he did not know anything about it. So can he update us on whether this should have been mentioned, or whether the reports of that additional £2 billion are wrong?

This Saturday we saw the year's record numbers for a day, with 870 people crossing the channel. So far this year, 21,000 people have crossed the channel in small boats. Can the Minister tell us how many of those were children and what the estimate is of the numbers waiting in France for the opportunity? If the weather improves, does the Minister expect that that number will continue to grow?

... can the Government update us on plans to house migrants? Is it the case that the Army base in the Prime Minister's constituency is still to be used ...? When will the "Bibby Stockholm" barge be fully utilised? Has all the legionella in the water supply now been dealt with? What happened with "Bibby Stockholm", and when did Ministers become aware of the problems? What plans does the Home Office have for more barges or, as I read in the papers over the Summer Recess, for marquees? ...

Is it not the case that the asylum backlog is still at record levels? Migrants continue to cross the channel in huge numbers, the provision of detention facilities outside hotels is a mess, and costs continue to rise. Can the Minister also update us on how many failed asylum seekers under existing laws are awaiting deportation?

We have continually called for proper returns agreements, particularly with France; safe routes; stronger police action nationally and internationally; dealing with the problems at source; and speedier decision-making. This Government remain in denial, while passing ever more laws, some of which undermine our international reputation. Can the Minister also tell me whether he agrees ...

**Lord German (Liberal Democrat):** ... The previous rules on treating asylum claims as withdrawn provide three reasons that an asylum claim will be treated as implicitly withdrawn. The new version of the rules ... now adds two more grounds: failure to maintain contact with the Home Office or to provide up to date contact details, and failure to attend reporting events unless due to circumstances outside the applicant's control. The Government say that the rule changes are to improve clarity regarding the withdrawal of asylum applications. It is difficult to see how adding yet further grounds will do anything other than increase the number of people who have genuine asylum claims thrown out.

The claims that I want to talk more about are those where, according to the rules, the circumstances in which an asylum claim will be treated as explicitly withdrawn have now

widened. Before, the only circumstances in which a claim would be treated as explicitly withdrawn were where an applicant signed a specified form. Now, an applicant may also “otherwise explicitly declare a desire to withdraw their claim”.

Can the Minister clarify what the “otherwise” circumstances are? These are new circumstances, but nowhere are they explained. How can he be sure that these people do not require protection, and what happens to them once their application has been withdrawn? ...

What, if any, communication exists between the Home Office and local authorities of the names and details of those who are to be released and when? At what point, following the letter telling the recipient they have leave to remain, do recipients receive their biometric certificate, without which they cannot really proceed anywhere? Is there any standard of service in the Home Office on any time gap between the letter arriving saying that they have leave to remain and the biometric certificate being delivered? ...

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Borders (Lord Murray of Blidworth):** ... I will remind the House of the six points contained in the Statement. The first was the agreement we have recently struck with Turkey to take action with the Turkish authorities to disrupt gang activity and to prosecute those who would seek to smuggle people across the channel. The second point was the reiteration of the department’s approach to lawyers who would seek to undermine the efficacy of the asylum system by coaching or by, in effect, enabling fraudulent use of asylum and other routes; we have created the Professional Enablers Taskforce to prevent such an abuse of the system. The third was the massive increases in civil penalties for illegal working and for renting to those who are not entitled to do so.

Fourthly, on the very satisfactory statistics in relation to returns, I need not remind the House that 3,500 Albanians have been returned in recent times—a 90% reduction in the numbers arriving on small boats. Fifthly, my right honourable friend the Immigration Minister reminded the House of Commons that the target of 2,500 asylum decision-makers has now been met. Finally, there has been a 20% reduction in small boat crossings, compared to this time last year. This must be viewed in the context of circumstances where small boat arrivals in Italy have gone up by 100%. ...

On the noble Lord’s question about Catterick garrison. I can confirm that work is ongoing to bring forward accommodation there as part of wider efforts to relieve pressure on the asylum system.

On the noble Lord’s question about the “Bibby Stockholm”, as my right honourable friend made clear in the other place, we are confident that we will be able to return asylum seekers to such accommodation within a fairly short period. Final checks are being conducted.

As to the work with France, I can reassure the noble Lord that our agreements with France have yielded a great deal of success. Our French deal has prevented some 33,000 illegal crossings in 2022—40% more than in 2021. In the first eight months of 2023, around 15,000 of these dangerous, illegal and unnecessary crossing attempts have been prevented. ...

**Lord Howard of Lympne (Conservative):** My Lords, has my noble friend seen the recent, extremely sensible suggestion that, since the boats which are used in such dangerous circumstances to cross the channel do not comply with the safety requirements of the European Union, France and other member states have the power—and, indeed, the responsibility—to confiscate those boats? What representations are His Majesty’s Government making to France and the other countries to exercise these powers?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** ... It is right that Home Office officials and National Crime Agency officers are working closely with the French to try to disrupt the supply of small boats. We now have many of the boats used in the crossings

which have been confiscated following the journeys across the channel. By and large, they are not ones which are sold on the French market; most of these vessels are constructed for the purpose. I have seen them myself, and they are incredibly dangerous and not fit for crossing an area of open water such as the English Channel. I can reassure my noble friend that, from what I have been told, the practice of the French, when they disrupt a launch, is to destroy the effectiveness of the boat and to confiscate what remains of the boat. This is something the French authorities have been handling. We are working, as ever, with them to disrupt the maritime side, and further work to disrupt the upstream provision of both boats and engines is ongoing.

**Baroness Brinton (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, there is a shocking omission from the Statement. During the passage of the Illegal Migration Bill, a number of noble Lords expressed concern for the safety of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children arriving in Kent and who was responsible for them. The Minister repeatedly reassured us that these minors were rapidly transferred to other local authorities beyond Kent because it was not fair for one local authority to manage the numbers. Following a court case last month, the leader of Kent County Council said that the national transfer scheme was failing. Kent is now caring for 661 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and more than 1,000 care leavers. Last month alone, Kent received 489, but only 136 went elsewhere. Shockingly, the judge said that neither Kent County Council nor the Home Office knew where the children are or whether they are safe and well. What is the Home Office doing to make the NTS work? Above all, are these children safe?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Clearly, the Home Office has the judgment of Mr Justice Chamberlain in the decision of which the noble Baroness speaks. The High Court found that Kent County Council was in breach of its obligations under the Children Act in relation to housing these children. It found that the contingency use of Home Office hotels was acceptable for short periods in an emergency where the facilities of Kent were overwhelmed. It was his view that the periods for which these children were in the hotels had exceeded the permissible period. Obviously, the Home Office is considering that recent judgment. As the noble Baroness observed, the practice has been for Kent to take responsibility for these children. Clearly, the national framework is being used and will continue to be used to redistribute the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children around the country. ...

**To read this very long question and answer session in full see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-09-06/debates/12CA2105-0A5F-4EBC-9542-D5ECFAB3A9C7/IllegalMigrationUpdate>

### **Asylum Seekers: Channel Crossings**

**Lord Dubs (Labour):** To ask His Majesty's Government how many people arrived as asylum seekers in the United Kingdom after crossing the channel by small boat during the year to date and what was the comparable figure for 2022.

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Borders (Lord Murray of Blidworth):** My Lords, our published data shows that, so far, a total of 7,349 people made asylum claims in the United Kingdom from 1 January to 30 June 2023, having made a dangerous, illegal and unnecessary crossing of the channel by small boat. The figure for the same period in 2022 is 12,374. This represents a decline of 41%.

**Lord Dubs:** I think the Minister would concede that the weather has played a large part in the movement of numbers, and in most recent days the numbers have been pretty high. Is it not the case that, of those arriving in small boats in the last year, only 1% have had their asylum claim actually decided, and that the number of people forcibly returned who failed the asylum test has gone down very much compared to recent years? ...

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** On the three points the noble Lord raises,



first, I do not accept that the decline is entirely down to the weather. One will have seen that, even in the comparator week of 2022 to this week of September, small boat arrivals are very significantly down, by a sum in the region of 20%. As to his second point, on returns, there is very good news to tell. So efficient now are our returns of Albanians that the number of Albanians crossing the channel has reduced in excess of 90%. As to his final point, on lawyers, abusing our asylum process by providing accounts to individuals to falsely claim asylum is a problem. Noble Lords will have seen the reporting in relation to that. Any responsible Government would agree that this is a dreadful crime which prioritises those who have no claim over those who would have a good claim. ...

**Lord German (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, we are told by the Government that 46% of asylum seekers reach here by small boat. Can the Minister tell us how the other 54% arrive?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** They arrive usually on visas, such as student or work visas, or they overstay on other types of visas.

**Lord Winston (Labour):** The Minister used the phrase that their journey was “dangerous, illegal and unnecessary”. I wonder if he would be kind enough to consider retracting the word “unnecessary”, because it suggests some prejudice as to what we do not know about why people are coming in these waters under such danger, and under great hardship.

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The journeys are unnecessary, and I stand by that. If they are leaving from France or Belgium, they are in a safe country—a signatory of the refugee convention. They can make their refugee asylum claims in those countries. The journey across the channel is dangerous and illegal and they should not do it; it is unnecessary.

**Baroness Brinton (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, last month’s High Court judgment said that the Home Office’s national transfer scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children was failing. The judge said that neither the Home Office, nor Kent County Council, knew where many—possibly hundreds—of the children were, let alone if they were safe, as required under the Children Act 1989. Will the Minister agree to return to the House to explain what it is now doing in the light of that judgment?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** ... I can reassure the noble Baroness that the House is considering the judgment of Mr Justice Chamberlain in that case, and steps are being taken to ensure that the national transfer scheme operates efficiently. As the noble Baroness will appreciate, once the Illegal Migration Act 2023 is in force, the numbers crossing the channel will be lower and the numbers of UASC entering through the channel route will be reduced. Therefore, the problem should ameliorate.

**Lord Blunkett (Labour):** My Lords, the Minister rightly drew attention to the agreement to return Albanians to their home country. The Government themselves claim that 30% of previous arrivals were from Albania. If we take those Albanian returns out, the statistics that have been enunciated this morning are very different from the ones that the Minister was seeking to present, given that the latest stats I have are that, last year, only 10% of those arriving were processed but of those some 86% were granted asylum. That puts a very different picture on the rhetoric that is coming from the Government at the moment.

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** As I say, the history of effecting returns has been difficult hitherto, as it was under the previous Labour Administration. However, I am glad to say that returns are now being effected very successfully to those countries with which we have an agreement, such as Albania, as identified by the noble Lord. Further work will be done in relation to that. Of course, once we have the outcome of the Supreme Court litigation, and the avenue of removal to a safe third country is available, one would anticipate that the number of removals will increase.

**Baroness Berridge (Conservative):** My Lords, could my noble friend the Minister please

elaborate on when he expects the Illegal Migration Act to be in force, because it makes lawful the Home Office accommodation of children who obviously are not going to be returned under that Act? Could he outline to noble Lords whether there will be statistics about where children actually end up once the Act is in force? Will we know whether they are in hotels, or whether they are under the care of the local authority?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I have no doubt that the Home Office will provide statistics, as it does at the moment, on a regular basis. As to the indication of when the provisions of the Illegal Migration Act in relation to transfer come into force, that depends on a number of variables, not least the position in relation to the litigation. However, I am sure that I will be able to revert to the House in due course with news on that.

**Lord Cormack (Conservative):** Could my noble friend expand on the answer that he gave the noble Lord, Lord German, about the 54%? ...

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Of asylum claims made in the 12-month period ending June 2023, 46% were made by those who were entering illegally via a small boat. The remainder were made up of other types of illegal entry—for example, in a lorry, or those who have come to Britain by a lawful route with their tourist, work or study visa and then claimed asylum when they were here, or overstayed a visa when they were here legally. I hope that explains to my noble friend how that figure was arrived at.

**Lord Coaker (Labour):** ... the Minister has spoken of doing more to disrupt the actual supply of small boats, which are often flimsy and extremely dangerous. ... Last night, he said that the Home Office is speaking with the French about what to do about this, because it is a real problem. On a practical level, why is it that we cannot do more to disrupt the supply of these small boats, which are not manufactured in France? Can the Minister update the House on what is happening with that?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I agree with much of what the noble Lord says. Clearly, disruption upstream of the criminal gangs is really important. Minister Jenrick visited Turkey in the last few weeks and the Turks have agreed, with the UK Government, to facilitate work to disrupt the criminal gangs. I understand that a lot of the boats are made in Turkey and a lot of the parts come through there, so that will be a vital part of the battle against the gangs. My right honourable friend the Minister for Security visited Iraq with the same objective. This is an important part of the strategy in fighting the upstream element of the gangs. Working with the French is something that is ongoing, and is one of the benefits of the agreement that the Prime Minister made earlier in the year. I am very grateful for the question.

**To read this very long question and answer session in full see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-09-07/debates/BA58682B-3A91-4266-8E9C-2389F600BCAD/AsylumSeekersChannelCrossings>

*The High Court Judgement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/ECPAT-v-Kent-Council-judgment-270723.pdf>

### **Asylum Applications Backlog**

**Earl Russell (Liberal Democrat):** To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to address the growing backlog of asylum applications and to ensure new cases are processed in an efficient manner.

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Borders (Lord Murray of Blidworth):** We committed to increase our headcount to 2,500 decision-makers. As of 1 September, we have met that commitment. We have taken immediate action to speed up asylum processing while maintaining the integrity of the system. The streamlined asylum process plays an important role in achieving that. We are on track to clear the legacy asylum backlog by the end of

2023. It is presently down by more than 30,000 cases.

**Earl Russell:** ... the asylum backlog had risen to a high of more than 175,000 waiting for an initial decision as of the end of June, up 44% from last year. There was a service standard that set a target of 98% of straightforward cases receiving an initial decision within six months. That was withdrawn in 2019. Can the Minister confirm that this Government are still committed to the efficient processing of asylum claims? If so, when will a new service standard be put in place?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I can reassure the noble Earl that we are very much committed to the efficient dispatch of the consideration of asylum claims. There were 78,768 asylum applications in the year ending June 2023, which is higher than at any time since the European migration crisis. The asylum backlog is high because there are so many applications. We entirely appreciate the point the noble Earl makes—that we need efficient dispatch of these applications—and that is why we have made the reforms and the headway with the backlog that we have.

**Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate (Conservative):** While the application numbers should, of course, reduce ... do we not also have to look at the removals of those who fail to meet the criteria under the 1951 convention? Is my noble friend satisfied that we have discussed enough with the countries of origin—I emphasise “origin”—of these applicants that they will take back those who fail to meet those criteria, particularly countries of origin that claim to be free, democratic respecters of human rights?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** My noble friend is entirely right that one of the keys to the asylum process is to remove those whose asylum applications are refused, but in some cases some countries are difficult about taking back their citizens. The Government take very seriously their obligations to seek to negotiate an improvement in those situations. An example of that being very successfully achieved was in relation to the Albanian cohort. ...

**Baroness Jones of Moulsecoombe (Green):** My Lords, when are the Government going to apologise for having created this backlog by closing all the safe and secure routes, except for a few nationalities? When will the Government apologise for making asylum seekers and refugees, who have experienced the most horrendous conditions, into some sort of right-wing trope and hate figures?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I do not recognise any of the items raised by the noble Baroness. I can reassure her that there will be no such apologies.

**Lord Browne of Ladyton (Labour):** ... The backlog has increased by 44% over the last year. I recently heard a Home Office explanation for this. Apparently, it is “due to more cases entering the asylum system than receiving initial decisions”.

Where I come from, in the west of Scotland, explanations of that nature are responded to with the words, “You don’t say?”. This is a description, not an explanation, of failures. My experience in government was that, when there were failures, the best way to deal with them was to change methodologies. Can the Minister honestly tell us whether, in his review of how this came about, the Home Office has identified any failures on its part that have caused this backlog?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** ... the Labour Party ... resolved the issues in relation to its own asylum backlog by granting an asylum amnesty. That is not something we propose to do. ...

**Lord Ricketts (Crossbench):** My Lords, does the Minister accept that up to a third of the funds intended for overseas development assistance are being spent on the accommodation of asylum seekers, who are unable to work? Does he agree that reducing the backlog of asylum seekers would free up money to spend on overseas development, which is such an important part of Britain’s overseas reputation?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I rather agree with the noble Lord. The Government’s policy is to reduce expenditure on hotels, which will free up more government money to be spent on overseas aid. I can reassure the noble Lord, the

House having passed the Illegal Migration Act, that one of its consequences is that those in the cohort covered by Section 2 will not be able to make asylum claims. As a result, they will not be in the asylum backlog. ...

**Lord Kerr of Kinlochard (Crossbench):** Following the question from the noble Lord, Lord Ricketts, will the Minister confirm that, as reported in today's press, it will no longer be possible to charge to the aid programme the costs of asylum seekers whose claims are deemed inadmissible under the Illegal Migration Act?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** I have not seen the article to which the noble Lord refers. ...

**The Lord Bishop of Durham:** ... how long does the Home Office consider a reasonable length of time for an asylum seeker to provide reasons and evidence as to why their asylum request should be reinstated after receiving a decision and the application is withdrawn? Will the Government publish statistics on the number of applicants reinstated?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** The GOV.UK website contains detailed guidance on circumstances in which a claim will be withdrawn or deemed withdrawn, including a timescale. I do not believe, although I do not have the facts before me, that there is a concrete deadline after which a claim may not be restored, but I will check that and revert to the right reverend Prelate in relation to it.

**Lord German (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, I draw attention to my interests in the register. One of the consequences of the Government's rush to beat the backlog is that those who have the right to remain are given as little as seven days, or sometimes even less, to leave their asylum seeker accommodation—seven days to find a home and a job and, most crucially, to put in a successful application for universal credit. Do the Government believe that making people homeless and passing the buck to local authorities and the voluntary sector, while that may solve the Government's problem, places cash-strapped councils in an impossible position?

**Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth:** Clearly, as the noble Lord knows, it is a priority for the Government to reduce and eliminate the use of hotels. If people have successfully claimed asylum, the position is that they should no longer reside in Home Office accommodation and that they become the responsibility of the local authority. This is a well-known procedure and has been in place for a long time. I do not believe that there is any reason why that should not be the case.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-09-06/debates/D22BDC96-9B74-4529-B864-99235130E46E/AsylumApplicationsBacklog>

## Press Releases

### **Supporting Edinburgh's Ukrainian community**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/supporting-edinburghs-ukrainian-community/>

### **Language and employment courses for Ukrainians**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/language-and-employment-courses-for-ukrainians>

### **Guidance [England only]: Register to host Ukrainians already in the UK**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/register-to-host-ukrainians-already-in-the-uk>

### **Man who posed for selfies as he piloted small boat jailed**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/man-who-posed-for-selfies-as-he-piloted-small-boat-jailed>

### **Migrants involved in violence against French officers jailed**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/migrants-involved-in-violence-against-french-officers-jailed>

## **Charity Inquiry: Care4Calais**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charity-inquiry-care4calais/charity-inquiry-care4calais>

## **New Publications**

### **Evaluation of the New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy 2018-2022**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/evaluation-new-scots-refugee-integration-strategy-2018-2022/>

### **Analysis of social characteristics of international migrants living in England and Wales: Census 2021**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/socialcharacteristicsofinternationalmigrants/census2021data/miq05intmigsocial.xlsx>

### **Annual Report of the Independent Monitoring Board at Gatwick IRC / RSTHF For reporting year 1 January – 31 December 2022**

<https://cloud-platform-e218f50a4812967ba1215eaecede923f.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/sites/13/2023/08/Gatwick-IRC-IMB-2022-annual-report-2.pdf>

### **Updated: Bridging accommodation exit and interim accommodation provision for the ACRS and ARAP: policy guidance**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bridging-accommodation-exit-plans-for-resettled-afghans/bridging-accommodation-exit-for-the-afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme-and-afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-policy-guidance>

### **Climate change-induced migration: UK collaboration with international partners**

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/climate-change-induced-migration-uk-collaboration-with-international-partners/>

### **EU Settlement Scheme quarterly statistics, June 2023**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-june-2023/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-june-2023>

### **Marion's Journey**

Online experience following the flight of refugee Marion Camrass during the Second World War from occupied Poland, through Siberia, then Bukhara and finally to Glasgow where she settled, married and raised her family.

<https://gatheringthevoices.com/marions-journey/>

### **Updated: Overview of the immigration system**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/overview-of-the-immigration-system>

### **Updated: Summary of latest statistics**

#### **How many people come to the UK each year (including visitors)?**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/summary-of-latest-statistics>

#### **Statistics on Ukrainians in the UK**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/statistics-on-ukrainians-in-the-uk>

**How many people come to the UK each year (including visitors)?**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/how-many-people-come-to-the-uk-each-year-including-visitors>

**Why do people come to the UK? To work**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-work>

**Why do people come to the UK? To study**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-study>

**Why do people come to the UK? For family reasons**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-for-family-reasons>

**How many people do we grant protection to?**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/how-many-people-do-we-grant-protection-to>

**Asylum claims on the basis of sexual orientation 2022**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/asylum-claims-on-the-basis-of-sexual-orientation-2022>

**How many people continue their stay in the UK or apply to stay permanently?**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/how-many-people-continue-their-stay-in-the-uk-or-apply-to-stay-permanently>

**How many people are detained or returned?**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-system-statistics-year-ending-june-2023/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned>

**Statistics relating to the Illegal Migration Act: data tables to August 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182539/statistics-relating-to-the-illegal-migration-act-data-tables-to-aug-2023.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182539/statistics-relating-to-the-illegal-migration-act-data-tables-to-aug-2023.ods)

**Windrush Compensation Scheme data: July 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182413/WCS\\_Data\\_-\\_July\\_2023.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182413/WCS_Data_-_July_2023.ods)

**Updated: Afghan Resettlement Programme: operational data**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

**Analysis of Ukrainian nationals in employment in the UK, March 2022 to June 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1180172/Counts\\_of\\_Ukrainian\\_Nationals\\_in\\_Employment\\_-\\_March\\_2022\\_to\\_June\\_2023\\_1.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1180172/Counts_of_Ukrainian_Nationals_in_Employment_-_March_2022_to_June_2023_1.ods)

**Updated: Homes for Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme: Visa data by age and sex of applicant**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1180189/Ukraine\\_Sponsorship\\_scheme\\_visas\\_-\\_by\\_age\\_and\\_sex\\_to\\_30\\_June\\_2023.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1180189/Ukraine_Sponsorship_scheme_visas_-_by_age_and_sex_to_30_June_2023.ods)

**Updated: Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme: Visa data by country, upper and lower tier local authority**

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-visa-data-by-country-upper-and-lower-tier-local-authority>

**Updated Guidance: Pre-matching households to settled accommodation**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-schemes-pre-matching-households-to-settled-accommodation/pre-matching-households-to-settled-accommodation>

**Updated: Migrants detected crossing the English Channel in small boats – last 7 days**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats-last-7-days>

**Updated: Diphtheria: cases among asylum seekers in England, monthly data tables**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/diphtheria-cases-among-asylum-seekers-in-england-2022/diphtheria-cases-among-asylum-seekers-in-england-weekly-data-tables>

**Irregular migration to the UK, year ending June 2023**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/irregular-migration-to-the-uk-year-ending-june-2023/irregular-migration-to-the-uk-year-ending-june-2023>

## News: Rwanda Refugee Policy

**Suella Braverman says ‘we will do whatever it takes’ if Strasbourg thwarts Rwanda plan**

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/aug/28/suella-braverman-strasbourg-rwanda-european-convention-human-rights>

**Rishi Sunak joins forces with Giorgia Meloni to tackle illegal migration**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/09/09/rishi-sunak-giorgia-meloni-italy-migrants-channel-crossings/>

**Rwanda deportation ‘better than returning home’ for asylum seekers**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rwanda-deportation-better-than-returning-home-for-asylum-seekers-drkhcftpb>

**Eleven people listed on first Rwanda flight staged hunger strike**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/23/eleven-people-listed-on-first-rwanda-flight-staged-hunger-strike>

## News: Channel Migrants

**More than 200 people cross Channel in seventh day in a row of recorded journeys**

<https://www.independentco.uk/news/uk/english-channel-rishi-sunak-home-office-dover-stephen-kinnock-b2408376.html>

**Channel migrant boat tally hits new daily record**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/record-number-of-small-boats-cross-channel-d8vz583xc>

**More than 20,000 migrants have crossed Channel so far this year**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/08/30/20000-migrants-cross-channel-this-year/>

**Highest number of Channel crossings this year as 872 migrants arrive in one day**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/highest-number-of-channel-crossings-this-year-as-872-migrants-arrive-in-one-day-lbn6xb6lj>

**Monthly number of people per small boat crossing Channel hits new high**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/01/monthly-number-people-small-boat-crossing-channel-high>

**UK's Horizon deal with EU 'could help stem Channel migrant crossings'**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/07/uk-horizon-deal-eu-help-stem-channel-migrant-crossings/>

**Channel migrants 'resist rescue' until they reach British waters**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/channel-migrants-resist-rescue-until-they-reach-british-waters-hgbqj7qgm>

**Sunak refuses to promise to 'stop the boats' by next election**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/08/21/rishi-sunak-refuses-promise-stop-the-boats-election/>

**Children reaching UK in small boats sent to jail that houses adult sex offenders**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/27/children-reaching-uk-in-small-boats-sent-to-jail-for-adult-sex-offenders>

**Channel migrant who took selfies as he piloted small boat is jailed**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/01/channel-migrant-who-took-selfies-piloted-small-boat-jailed/>

**How dangerous are the English Channel dinghies?**  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-66606459>

**Care4Calais: Watchdog criticises past management of charity**  
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-66596570>

**Charities watchdog criticises Care4Calais for administrative misconduct**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/aug/24/charities-watchdog-criticises-care4calais-for-administrative-misconduct>

## News: Afghanistan

**Government 'failing Afghans' as only 233 people come to UK on flagship resettlement scheme**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-asylum-backlog-resettlement-home-office-b2398856.html>

**Fears for Afghans refugees on deadline to leave hotels**  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-66668296>

**Minister insists all Afghans will be out of hotels within days despite warning deadline will be missed**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/afghan-asylum-seekers-tories-home-office-b2400208.html>



## **Afghan translator's infant son denied visa to join parents in UK**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/afghan-translators-infant-son-denied-visa-to-join-parents-in-uk-kb27xnhlq>

## **News: Ukraine**

### **Ukrainian mother: I love Scotland but after the war I want to go home**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-66604295>

## **News: Other Immigration and Asylum**

### **Just two migrants deported to EU under post-Brexit deal**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-migrants-asylum-seekers-crisis-b2399797.html>

### **New law may block aid being spent on asylum seekers in UK, says watchdog**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-66724394>

### **Government 'needs extra £2bn to house migrants'**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/government-needs-extra-2bn-to-house-migrants-dcf8hh8q3>

### **Pay grievances put Border Force at 'heightened' risk of corruption – watchdog**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/border-force-government-home-office-robert-jenrick-b2407112.html>

### **Suella Braverman does not rule out GPS tagging of Channel migrants**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66637145>

### **'Just a gimmick': Suella Braverman criticised over plans to tag migrants**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/suella-braverman-migrants-tags-asylum-b2400486.html>

### **Albanian migrants cut off GPS tags in social media posts**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/albanian-migrants-cut-off-gps-tags-in-social-media-posts-sms9dnckj>

### **Home Office criticised over immigration detainee medicine removals**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/22/home-office-criticised-over-immigration-detainee-medicine-removals>

### **'I struggle not knowing what the future holds' - Asylum backlog rises to record high, official figures show**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66603767>

### **Asylum cases backlog almost doubles to new record high in blow to Sunak**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-asylum-immigration-small-boats-b2398584.html>

### **Asylum backlog hits new record of 175,000**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/asylum-backlog-hits-new-record-of-175-000-7532vlt8q>

**Rishi Sunak says pressure on the asylum system is unsustainable**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66612663>

**Rishi Sunak: £4bn cost of UK asylum system 'unacceptable'**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/08/25/rishi-sunak-channel-crossings-four-billion-cost/>

**What's the real story behind the record high asylum backlog?**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/politics-explained/asylum-claims-backlog-figures-statistics-ukraine-afghanistan-b2398958.html>

**Britain facing 'permanent asylum backlog' and £5bn accommodation bill under new Tory migration act**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/asylum-backlog-small-boats-rishi-sunak-suella-braverman-b2396733.html>

**Britain pays to house refugees in Iran**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/britain-pays-to-house-refugees-in-iran-6ddcphcqh>

**Homelessness 'inevitably' on rise as asylum seekers' time to exit hotels cut to seven days**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/09/06/asylum-seekers-hotel-exit-time-cut-seven-days/>

**Home Office defies high court by placing 100 asylum-seeker children in hotels**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/01/home-office-defies-high-court-by-placing-100-asylum-seeker-children-in-hotels>

**Migrant interviews cut from seven hours to 45 minutes to empty asylum hotels**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrant-interviews-cut-from-seven-hours-to-45-minutes-to-empty-asylum-hotels-pp6lwsbbr>

**Suella Braverman lines up new £306m migrant detention centres to house 1,000 asylum seekers**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/suella-braverman-rishi-sunak-small-boats-b2396468.html>

**More than 100 Manston asylum camp guards unable to start work**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/20/more-than-100-manston-asylum-camp-guards-unable-to-start-work>

**Home Office ordered to stop work on ex-RAF base for asylum seekers**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/sep/08/home-office-ordered-to-stop-work-on-ex-raf-base-for-asylum-seekers-raf-scampton>

**Bibby Stockholm: Migrants could be back in weeks, says minister**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-66711607>

**Home Office considered using overseas workers in case of disease on Bibby Stockholm**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/22/home-office-considered-using-foreign-workers-in-case-of-disease-on-bibby-stockholm>

**Bibby Stockholm migrants describe 'shock and fear' in letter**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-66611019>

**Bibby Stockholm: Migrants call for Home Office 'support and unity'**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-66611019>

**Bibby Stockholm: Migrant barge faces legal challenge over fire safety**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66636547>

**Braverman's plan to house UK asylum seekers on 'deathtrap' barge faces legal hurdle**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/27/braverman-plan-to-house-uk-asylum-seekers-on-bibby-stockholm-berge-faces-legal-hurdle>

**Bibby Stockholm: ministers accused of playing Russian roulette with asylum seekers' lives**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/30/bibby-stockholm-government-playing-russian-roulette-with-asylum-seekers-lives>

**Asylum seekers say Bibby Stockholm conditions caused suicide attempt**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/25/asylum-seekers-bibby-stockholm-conditions-suicide-attempt>

**People seeking protection should not be forced to share rooms**

<https://scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/asylum-forced-room-sharing-government/>

**Safe homes for those seeking refuge are vital for health**

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/safe-homes-for-those-seeking-refuge-are-vital-for-health-gwenetta-curry-4263429>

**'Inhumane' NHS fees left more than 900 migrants without treatment**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/20/inhumane-nhs-fees-left-more-than-900-migrants-without-treatment>

**Home Office told girl, 5, she must leave UK while mother fights deportation to Nigeria**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/home-office-visa-deportation-nigeria-b2407090.html>

**Braverman: Some charities are 'politically motivated activists masquerading as humanitarians'**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/08/24/suella-braverman-care4calais-clare-moseley-rwanda-migrants/>

**Man acquitted of Glasgow immigration raid protest charges**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-66755835>

TOP

## Equality

### Scottish Parliament Written Answers

#### Remand: Ethnic Groups

**Liam McArthur (Liberal Democrat) [S6W-20195]** To ask the Scottish Government what the (a) longest and (b) average time spent on remand was in (i) 2020-21, (ii) 2021-22 and (iii) 2022-23, also broken down by ethnic group.

**Reply from Angela Constance:** The following table shows the average (median) and longest continuous time (expressed in days) spent on remand before transition to the sentenced population or departure, in 2020-21 and 2021-22. Data for 2022-23 is not yet available.

Table 1: Average (median) and Longest (Maximum) Number of Days Spent of Remand

	2020-21			2021-22		
	Count	Median	Maximum	Count	Median	Maximum
Overall	7,934	30	996	8,620	31	888
White	7,543	30	996	8,111	31	878
Asian, Asian Scottish Or Asian British	150	35	504	161	37	638
African, Caribbean or Black	106	27	403	164	28	514
Other Ethnic Group	89	39	487	131	32	888
Mixed Or Multiple	44	38	461	52	29	508
(Missing)	2	-	-	1	-	-

Source: Scottish Prison Population Statistics

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-20195>

### Remand: Ethnic Groups

**Liam McArthur (Liberal Democrat) [S6W-20196]** To ask the Scottish Government how many people in total are currently being held on remand, and what the (a) longest and (b) average time spent on remand is among those people, broken down by ethnic group.

**Reply from Angela Constance:** As of the morning of 1 August 2023 there were 2,275 people on remand. The following table shows the average (median) and longest (maximum) continuous time (expressed in days) spent on remand, by ethnic grouping.

The start date of this collection imposes an upper limit on the continuous time to date spent on remand of 1,225 days. Less than five individuals were at that limit, held under the Extradition Act 2003 (S8).

Ethnicity Group	Count	Median	Maximum
All	2,278	70	> 1,225
White	2,118	68	> 1,225
Asian, Asian Scottish Or Asian British	54	91	911
Other Ethnic Group	46	89	405
African, Caribbean Or Black	44	91	713
Mixed Or Multiple	13	75	257

Note: The average (median) and maximum values represent continuous days on remand to date and due to differences in the way the data are processed, they are not comparable with the "Time on Remand (to departure or transition)" reported in the Official Statistics'

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-20196>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

### Energy: Travellers

**Caroline Lucas (Green)** [196264] To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies of the report by National Energy Action entitled Plugged In, published in July 2023, on the level of Government support for the energy costs for (a) Gypsy, (b) Traveller, (c) Roma and (d) other nomadic communities' households; and whether her Department is taking steps to ensure nomadic communities can access energy support schemes.

**Reply from Amanda Solloway:** The Government will provide a £600 voucher to itinerant boat travellers who are registered with the Canal and River Trust as continuous cruisers and held a long-term licence for a minimum of one day while the Energy Bills Support Scheme Alternative Funding was open. We have been unable to establish a robust method for households in caravans not on permanent sites to prove that their caravan is their main or sole residence, whilst protecting public funds against fraud. However, we recommend that these households visit the 'Help for Households' webpage on GOV.UK to view alternative support that may be available.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196264>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.nea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Plugged-In-Final-Report.pdf>

### Energy Bills Rebate: Travellers

**Carol Monaghan (SNP)** [196921] To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of extending the Energy Bills Support Scheme to gypsies and travellers living in roadside camps.

**Reply from Amanda Solloway:** The Government has been unable to establish a robust method for households in caravans not on permanent sites to prove that their caravan is their main or sole residence, whilst protecting public funds against fraud. However, we recommend that these households should contact their local authority to apply for the Housing Support Fund. We also recommend that they visit the 'Help for Households' webpage on GOV.UK to view what other support they may be eligible to receive

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196921>

### Energy Bills Rebate: Travellers

**Carol Monaghan (SNP)** [196922] To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of not including gypsies and travellers living in roadside camps from the Energy Bill Support Scheme on those people.

**Reply from Amanda Solloway:** The Government has been in contact with representatives of itinerant travellers to understand their concerns and seek to overcome barriers to accessing the EBSS Alternative Funding. We have been unable to establish a robust method for households in caravans not on permanent sites to prove that their caravan is their main or sole residence, whilst protecting public funds against fraud. We recommend that these households should contact their local authority to apply for the Housing Support Fund and also visit the 'Help for Households' webpage on GOV.UK to view what other support they may be eligible to receive

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196922>

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

### **Cricket: Equality**

**Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op)** [195361] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps her Department is taking to help implement the recommendations in the report of the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket entitled Holding up a mirror to cricket.

**Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op)** [1953612] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket report Holding Up A Mirror To Cricket, what recent discussions her Department has had with (a) the ECB and (b) the MCC on that report's findings.

**Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op)** [1953613] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, with reference to the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket report Holding Up A Mirror To Cricket, if her Department will discuss recommendation 18 of that report with the MCC.

**Reply from Stuart Andrew:** The government is clear that there is absolutely no place for racism, discrimination, bullying or harassment in sport or society. It is for the England and Wales Cricket Board to implement recommendations from the Independent Commission for Equity in Cricket's report, and we welcome their commitment to bring forward a plan to tackle these serious issues, which must be addressed fully. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport is having regular conversations with the ECB to discuss what actions they will take in response. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport has not had any direct conversations with Marylebone Cricket Club.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195361>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195362>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-20/195363>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://theicec.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/ICEC-Recommendations.pdf>

## **New Publications**

**The disproportionality of ethnic minority teachers in England: trends, patterns, and problems**

<https://routledgeopenresearch.org/articles/2-13>

**A Response to: Race Equality in Probation follow-up: A work in progress**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182900/Race\\_Equality\\_In\\_Probation\\_a\\_follow\\_up\\_-\\_A\\_work\\_in\\_progress\\_action\\_plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182900/Race_Equality_In_Probation_a_follow_up_-_A_work_in_progress_action_plan.pdf)

**UK Parliament House of Commons Library Briefing: Sharia-compliant alternative student finance**

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9774/>

## **News**

**Police reject black applicants at higher rate than white, data reveals**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/31/police-reject-black-applicants-at-higher-rate-than-white-data-reveals>

**Lack of diversity in teaching in England means minority ethnic pupils miss out**  
[https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/aug/29/lack-diversity-teaching-means-minority-ethnic-pupils-england-miss-out?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/aug/29/lack-diversity-teaching-means-minority-ethnic-pupils-england-miss-out?CMP=share_btn_tw)

**White privilege classes 'ignore poorer pupils'**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/08/26/teachers-white-privilege-working-class-pupils/>

TOP

## Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

### Scottish Parliament Written Answer

#### **Persecution: Religion and Faith**

**Donald Cameron (Conservative)** [S6W-20212] To ask the Scottish Government what actions it is taking to protect people of religion and faith from persecution.

**Reply from Emma Roddick:** The Scottish Government condemns all incidents of religious persecution and the targeting of innocent people based on their beliefs.

The Scottish Government's new [Hate Crime Strategy](#) was published on 24 March 2023. The strategy sets out a vision for a Scotland where everyone, including people of faith, live free from hatred and prejudice. The strategy was informed by those with lived experience of hate crime, including faith communities. A delivery plan, setting out immediate and longer term activity, will be published later this year. In addition, the Scottish Government's [Faith and Belief Engagement Strategy for Scotland](#) was published on 22 March 2023. It was developed in partnership with faith and belief organisations and makes a clear commitment to strengthen communication and collaboration with Scotland's diverse faith and belief communities. It aims to enable fairer representation for minority groups and intersectional voices, and to further support community cohesion.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-20212>

### UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Racial Discrimination: Education**

**Tom Hunt (Conservative)** [196522] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department is taking steps to ensure that (a) critical race theory and (b) white privilege and other contested terms are not taught in schools.

**Reply from Nick Gibb:** Political issues relating to racial and social justice can be taught in a balanced and factual manner, just as pupils are often taught about a range of different views on other topics, but schools should not teach contested theories and opinions as fact.

The Department is aware that there has been increasing focus on political impartiality in schools over the last few years. This has been challenging for head teachers, teachers and staff with a lack of clarity about what the legal duties in this area really mean. That is why the Department has published clear and comprehensive guidance to help those working with and in schools to better understand legal duties on political impartiality. The guidance can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/political-impartiality-in-schools>

As with other aspects of the curriculum, schools have flexibility over how they

deliver these subjects. It is important that schools take full responsibility for ensuring lessons and materials are age appropriate, suitable and politically impartial, particularly when using materials produced by external organisations. When teaching, schools should consider the age of pupils and their religious and cultural background.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-01/196522>

### **Hinduism: Discrimination**

**Navendu Mishra (Labour)** [195248] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment his Department has made of trends in levels of Hinduphobia.

**Reply from Lee Rowley:** Anti-Hindu hatred is abhorrent and has no place in our communities. The Government continues to work with police and community partners to monitor and combat it.

The Home Office publishes statistics which can be found at: [Hate crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022](#).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-07-19/195248>

## **New Publications**

### **Experiences of Racism in Scotland's Night-Time Economy**

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/615c1bee105b4f55a98326d0/t/64edd5626c47625233eb8387/1693308266811/Experiences+of+Racism+in+Scotland%27s+Night-time+Economy.pdf>

### **Preventing and combating racism and intolerance within law enforcement agencies**

<https://rm.coe.int/preventing-and-combating-racism-and-intolerance-within-law-enforcement/1680ac7542>

## **News**

### **Two admit racially abusing FM Humza Yousaf**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-66594380>

### **Pair admit racially abusing Humza Yousaf in Dundee**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/pair-admit-racially-abusing-humza-yousaf-in-dundee-dvhcxc39f>

### **No 10 crackdown on racism as minister warns officials n-word slurs won't be tolerated**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/racist-slur-n-word-uk-government-b2395394.html>

### **Sadiq Khan's office under fire for suggesting white families 'don't represent real Londoners'**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sadiq-khan-white-family-official-website-b2396431.html>

### **Met Police: Ex-officers admit sending racist WhatsApp messages**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-66743803>

### **Race equality leader hits out at UK's denial of institutional racism**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/aug/30/race-equality-leader-hits-out-at-uk-denial-of-institutional-racism>



**Anti-Semitism campaigners criticise BBC over Ken Loach film**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/09/02/anti-semitism-campaigners-condemn-bbc-over-ken-loach-film/>

**Neo-Nazi prison officer jailed for having white supremacist 'murder manual'**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-66671559>

**'Neo-Nazi' ex-prison officer jailed for possessing terrorist handbook**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/ashley-podsiadsharp-prison-officer-farright-terror-b2402495.html>

**Man wins payout over Reading probation office monkey chants**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-berkshire-66598290>

**Contractor who suffered monkey chants and racial abuse at Probation Service wins payout**

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/contractor-who-suffered-monkey-chants-and-racial-abuse-probation-service-wins-payout>

**Police officer who sent 'grossly offensive' racist messages to ex-partner jailed**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/metropolitan-police-london-croydon-irish-mauritius-b2399465.html>

**Furious inquiry chair hits out at Post Office accused of trying to hide 'n-word'**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/post-office-scandal-inquiry-n-word-b2405009.html>

**Belfast mosque leader's worries after Nazi flags flown nearby**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-66590588>

**PSNI begin hate crime investigation after Nazi flags hung outside Belfast mosque**

<https://tellmamauk.org/psni-begin-hate-crime-investigation-after-nazi-flags-hung-outside-belfast-mosque/>

**Anti-Semitic posts by former European Court of Human Rights judge exposed**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/08/24/bostjan-zupancic-echr-judge-anti-semitism/>

**Chatham: Jewish cemetery vandalism treated as hate crime**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-kent-66605449>

**Gravestone damage at Jewish cemetery investigated as hate crime**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/jewish-crimestoppers-rochester-people-medway-b2398842.html>

**Man arrested over damaged gravestones in Jewish cemetery in Kent**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/aug/25/man-arrested-over-damaged-graves-in-jewish-cemetery-in-kent>

**Schoolboy Nazi admits terror offences**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/schoolboy-nazi-admits-terror-offences-cqzqgrnbl>

**Kelso Cochrane: Trying to unlock the secrets of a 64-year-old racist murder**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-66498551>

**Hate must never be the price of freedom of speech**

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23735142.daniella-theis-hate-must-never-price-freedom-speech/>

TOP

## **Other Scottish Parliament and Government**

### **Programme for Government 2023-24**

#### **First Minister's Statement**

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15414&i=131479#ScotParlOR>

#### **Debate**

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15414&i=131480#ScotParlOR>

#### **Debate: Equality within the 2023-24 Programme for Government**

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15417&i=131517#ScotParlOR>

### **Scottish Parliament Tributes to her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

#### **Anniversary of the Death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15420&i=131544#ScotParlOR>

### **Scottish Parliament Motion**

**Annie Wells (Conservative) [S6M-10222] Celebrating Rosh Hashanah, Jewish New Year 2023** – That the Parliament wishes all those celebrating Rosh Hashanah, which begins at sunset on 15 September and ends at nightfall on 17 September 2023; understands that Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year and one of Judaism's holiest days; further understands that the festival begins on the first day of Tishrei, the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar; acknowledges that Rosh Hashanah commemorates the creation of the world and marks the beginning of the Days of Awe, a 10-day period of introspection and repentance that culminates in the Yom Kippur holiday, also known as the Day of Atonement, and recognises that many Jews across Scotland will be celebrating the Jewish New Year by attending synagogue, and after which, returning home for a festive meal steeped in symbolism and tradition, and to spend time with family and friends while reflecting on the year before, the one that has past, and the year ahead, to start afresh.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-10222>

### **New Publications**

#### **Programme for Government 2023-24**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/programme-government-2023-24/>

**The 2023-24 Programme for Government – three missions: “equality, opportunity and community”**

<https://spice-spotlight.scot/2023/09/07/the-2023-24-programme-for-government-three-missions-equality-opportunity-and-community/>

TOP

## **Other UK Parliament and Government**

### **Press Releases**

**The Prime Minister's words on Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-prime-ministers-words-on-her-late-majesty-queen-elizabeth-ii>

**Overhaul of Prevent underway with new guidance published**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/overhaul-of-prevent-underway-with-new-guidance-published>

**Home Secretary orders review into political activism in police**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-orders-review-into-political-activism-in-police>

### **New Publications**

**Prevent duty guidance: Guidance for specified authorities in England and Wales 2023**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1182780/14.258\\_HO\\_Prevent\\_Duty\\_Guidance\\_v5c.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1182780/14.258_HO_Prevent_Duty_Guidance_v5c.pdf)

**Updated Glossary of terms**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/glossary-of-terms>

**Sociodemographic differences in the risk of testing positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), England: 12 September 2020 to 13 December 2021**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/bulletins/sociodemographicdifferencesintheriskoftestingpositiveforcoronaviruscovid19england/12september2020to13december2021/pdf>

### **News**

**Suella Braverman: Home Secretary orders review into police impartiality**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-66693802>

TOP

# **Cost of Living**

## **Scottish Government Website**

### **Help during the cost of living crisis**

Most households are concerned about the cost of living, with worries about issues such as rent and mortgages, food and utility bills, energy costs, and debt.

In response, the Scottish Government has launched a new website that provides information to help people access support with

- Energy and Bills
- Benefits and Income
- Children and Families
- Debt and Money
- Health and Wellbeing

Your local council might be able to help if you need urgent help with money, food or fuel – contact the council for information.

<https://costofliving.campaign.gov.scot/>

## **Publication**

**A New Framework for Tackling Poverty: The interim report of the Poverty Strategy Commission**

<https://povertystrategycommission.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/PSC-Framework-Report-230831-Web-FINAL-revised.pdf>

## **News**

**Poverty Strategy Commission Interim Report**

<https://povertystrategycommission.org.uk/interim-report-press-release/>

**Dodging properly increasing benefits by inflation is irresponsible**

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/dodging-properly-increasing-benefits-inflation-irresponsible-jrf>

**Rising numbers seek help for energy bill debts, warns Citizens Advice**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-66592714>

**Energy bills drop slightly for winter but will remain high**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-66607005>

**Cold home deaths in Scotland 'double' during cost of living crisis**

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23770042.cold-home-deaths-scotland-double-cost-living-crisis/>

**Scotland cost-of-living crisis: Number of Scots being made homeless due to housing costs rises sharply**

<https://www.scotsman.com/health/scotland-cost-of-living-crisis-number-of-scots-being-made-homeless-due-to-housing-costs-rises-sharply-4277815>

### **Why rents are up 19 per cent in rent-cap Scotland**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/why-rents-are-up-19-per-cent-in-rent-cap-scotland-x3wfl5gmh>

### **Poor people 'surviving not living' as UK social contract collapses, says report**

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/04/poor-people-surviving-not-living-as-uk-social-contract-collapses-says-report>

### **Universal Credit falling so far short of the cost of essentials is putting the health of millions at risk say health bodies and charities**

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/universal-credit-falling-so-far-short-cost-essentials-putting-health-millions-risk-say-health>

### **Children going to bed hungry only a mile from where Gucci plans to open a flagship store**

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/divided-edinburgh-children-going-to-bed-hungry-only-a-mile-from-where-gucci-plans-to-open-a-flagship-store-susan-dalgety-4269237>

### **The rising cost of retirement**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/the-rising-cost-of-retirement-j7g5hl7hb>

### **A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2023**

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/minimum-income-standard-uk-2023>

TOP

## **Other News**

### **Some crimes will not be investigated in Police Scotland pilot project**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-66706656>

### **Police Scotland: 'Some crimes won't be investigated due to cuts'**

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23767630.police-scotland-some-crimes-wont-investigated-due-cuts/>

TOP

## **Bills in Progress**

\*\* new or updated this week

### **Scottish Parliament**

#### **\*\* Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

Royal Assent

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill/bill-becomes-an-act>

Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Act 2023

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2023/5/contents/enacted>

#### **\*\* Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

Scottish Government: Gender recognition reform: Section 35 order challenge - petition as adjusted 9 August 2023

<https://tinyurl.com/5886fk7r>

Scottish Government: Gender recognition reform: Section 35 Order challenge - note of argument for the Scottish Ministers

<https://tinyurl.com/cjftm7th>

## **Police (Ethics, Conduct and Scrutiny) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/police-ethics-conduct-and-scrutiny-scotland-bill>

## **UK Parliament**

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3257>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3263>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3304>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3264>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3248>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3249>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3282>

### **Immigration and Nationality Fees (Exemption for NHS Clinical Staff)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3436>

### **\*\* Online Safety Bill**

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

Third Reading, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-09-06/debates/4AC6A32E-0C53-46C7-A714-AD4165C484D7/OnlineSafetyBill>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/52440/documents/3890>

and

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0362/amend/online\\_rm\\_ccla\\_0908.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0362/amend/online_rm_ccla_0908.pdf)

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3164>

## Scotland (Self-Determination) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3413>

## Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Draft Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/terrorism-protection-of-premises-draft-bill-overarching-documents>

TOP

## Consultations

\*\* new or updated this week

**\*\* Drug Use in Ethnic Minority Groups Review** (closing date 22 September 2023)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/drug-use-in-ethnic-minority-groups/drug-use-in-ethnic-minority-groups-call-for-evidence>

**A Human Rights Bill for Scotland** (closing date 5 October 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/equality-and-human-rights/a-human-rights-bill-for-scotland-consultation/>

**Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator: Improvements to the Annual Return** (closing date 6 October 2023)

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/news/share-your-feedback-on-improvements-to-the-annual-return/>

**The future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales** (closing date 26 October 2023)

<https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

**\*\* Experiences of people from ethnic minority backgrounds in community ownership of buildings and land** (closing date 27 October 2023)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/DiverseCommunityOwnership>

**Let's Be Heard – Sharing Scotland's COVID Experience** (closing date 31 October 2023)

<https://lbh.covid19inquiry.scot/>

**\*\* Management of burial grounds, application for burial, exhumation, private burial and restoration of lairs: regulation in Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/regulation-burial-scotland/>

**\*\* Statutory inspection of burial authorities, cremation authorities and funeral directors** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/statutory-inspection-burial-authorities/>

**\*\* Funeral director licensing scheme for Scotland** (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/licensing-funeral-directors-scotland/>

**\*\* Regulation of alkaline hydrolysis** ('water cremation') in Scotland (closing date 17 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/burial-cremation/regulation-alkaline-hydrolysis/>

**\*\* Democracy Matters** (closing date 28 February 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/local-government-and-communities/democracy-matters/>

**ITV/Tell MAMA survey on mosque safety in the UK** (closing date not stated)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/V7V5B6L>

**\*\* In-Law's Abuse (Women Only) Survey** (closing date not stated)  
Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre survey to gather lived experience to understand how prevalent in-laws abuse is within BME communities living in Scotland.  
<https://t.co/bSFFBVBIHi>

TOP

## Job Opportunities

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

TOP

## Funding Opportunities

\*\* new or updated this week

### **People's Postcode Trust**

**Note that this application will only be open for 24 hours. Applications can be submitted from 10 am on 2 October 2023**

*Application forms will go live at the above date and time and must be **started and submitted** within the submission window. In the meantime, a copy of the application questions can be downloaded in order to help you prepare your submission.*

National Lottery funding of between £500 and £25,000 for projects on a wide range of themes including supporting marginalised groups and tackling inequality. Funding priorities include communities experiencing racial inequity, people with disabilities, and the LGBT+ Community. For information and to apply see

<https://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/>

and

[https://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/media/2724/3\\_ppt\\_fundingguide\\_2023.pdf](https://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/media/2724/3_ppt_fundingguide_2023.pdf)

### **\*\* Democracy Matters Community Engagement Fund 2023/24**

*Closing date: 26 January 2024*

Scottish Government funding of up to £300 (possibility of higher funding to assist with accessibility) to support organisations and groups to host conversations and gather the views of people across Scotland on how we can create a system of inclusive local democracy. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/4ds8r9h2>

### **Cost-of-Living Support Scotland**

*Application deadline not stated*

National Lottery funding from £10,001 to £75,000 for projects to help support individuals, families and communities currently experiencing hardship as a result of the cost-of-living increases. The programme aims to fund activity that reduces the impact of, or prevents financial insecurity so that people have more resilience and are more able to identify ways to deal with the impact of increased cost of living in their lives, are able to shape activity in their community to address the increased cost-of-living, and have more access to support and services that will help them to deal with the increased cost of living. For information and to apply see

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/cost-of-living-support-fund>

TOP



**\*\* this week!**

### **A Human Rights Bill for Scotland**

11 September 2023 (Portree, 10.00–12.00)

19 September 2023 (Dundee, 10.00–12.00)

Scottish Government consultation on proposals for a new Human Rights Bill, including information about the proposals, and an opportunity to tell the Scottish Government your views in order to inform development of the Bill. For information about each event see:

Portree <https://tinyurl.com/3kny2u5j>

Dundee <https://tinyurl.com/yckunjtv>

### **Developing a Volunteer Strategy**

19 September 2023 (Stirling, 10.00–4.00)

Volunteer Scotland course to discuss the purpose of developing a strategy for volunteering, the benefits of a volunteering strategy for the wider organisation, and steps to develop a strategy. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/mu3dkx53>

### **Supporting Volunteers**

4 October 2023 (Stirling, 10.00–4.00)

Volunteer Scotland course to discuss building a positive relationship with volunteers, plan and deliver a suitable induction process, identify and apply different support methods, and manage some of the challenges of supporting volunteers. For information see

<https://tinyurl.com/2nbpr7se>

### **\*\* Maritime Leith's Black History**

13 October 2023 (Edinburgh, 1.00–2.00 and 3.00–4.00)

20 October 2023 (Edinburgh, 1.00–2.00 and 3.00–4.00)

A tour of Trinity House to discover the stories that link their collections and maritime Leith with Black History. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3bbkvkve>

### **\*\* Scottish Interfaith Week**

12–19 November 2023 (Scotland-wide)

Scottish Interfaith Week provides an opportunity for interfaith groups, faith communities, schools, organisations and local communities across the country to celebrate Scotland's religious diversity, bringing people together to promote dialogue, understanding and co-operation between Scotland's diverse religious communities and cultures. For information see <https://scottishinterfaithweek.org/>

### **Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals**

14 February 2024 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAIH course to find out about fundamental issues of housing, homelessness and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals and look at how service users might prepare themselves for an economy in recession and cost of living spiralling. For information see

<https://www.paih.org/what-we-do/migrants-rights-courses>

### **Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

15 February 2024 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAIH course explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant and the process involved in making a claim for asylum. The course also explores the journeys and barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers reaching and building a new life in Scotland and their respective entitlement to services. For information see

<https://www.paih.org/what-we-do/migrants-rights-courses>

## No Recourse To Public Funds

21 February 2024 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAIH course to help frontline workers identify a tenant's current status, clarify what this means in terms of access to public funds and plan effective support where difficulties arise. For information see <https://www.paih.org/what-we-do/migrants-rights-courses>

TOP

## 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>

**New Scots** <https://newscots.scot/>

**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/>

**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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