



MEMO is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities \(SCoJeC\)](#) in partnership with [BEMIS – empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities](#). It provides an overview of information of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland, including parliamentary activity at Holyrood and Westminster, new publications, consultations, forthcoming conferences, and news reports.

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

Please send information for inclusion in MEMO to MEMO@scojec.org and [click here](#) to be added to the mailing list.

The Scottish Parliament returns from recess on 23 October 2023.

Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament Debate

Safe Asylum Routes: Afghan Refugees

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-10-17/debates/449FB75E-4701-4CA5-999D-E098F278E714/SafeAsylumRoutesAfghanRefugees>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Channel Migrants

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Jim Shannon (SUP) [200600] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

what steps she is taking to reduce the number of people entering the UK illegally by boat.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We have developed a comprehensive ten-point plan to stop the boats and we are focused on delivering it. So far, small boats are down by more than a fifth compared to last year.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/200600>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

John Hayes (Conservative) [199864] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of people who entered the UK illegally on a small boat were men aged between 18 and 40 in (a) 2022 and (b) 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Home Office publishes statistics on small boat arrivals to the UK in the '[Irregular migration to the UK statistics](#)' release. Data on small boat arrivals is published in table Irr_D01 of the '[Irregular migration to the UK detailed datasets](#)', where the data can be broken down by year, sex and age group. The latest data goes up to the end of June 2023.

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. Data up to the end of September 2023 will be published on 23 November 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/199864>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Overseas Students: Afghanistan

Deidre Brock (SNP) [200002] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of granting refugee status to the female medical students who are represented by the Linda Norgrove Foundation.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: As has been the practice under successive Governments the Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases.

We remain committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan and so far have brought around 24,600 people impacted by the situation back to the UK.

We continue to work with likeminded partners and countries neighbouring Afghanistan on resettlement issues, and to support safe passage for eligible Afghans. We also continue to welcome individuals to the UK through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/200002>

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

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

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

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

Dave Doogan (SNP) [199841] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to use biometric data collection when processing asylum applications from Afghan nationals.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We use biometrics to fix and confirm the identities of foreign nationals who apply to come or extend their stay in the UK.

We check them against security and criminality databases which are available to the UK, to ensure multiple applications are not made using multiple identities, and

to identify those who pose a threat to public safety, our national security, or are likely to breach our laws.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-15/199841>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [200461] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, how many expressions of interest have been made to the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme in each month since the opening of that scheme.

Reply from Leo Docherty: The FCDO launched an online system on 20 June 2022, where eligible individuals were able to express an interest in UK resettlement under the first stage of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) Pathway 3. The online system remained open for 8 weeks and closed on 15 August 2022. During these 8 weeks, the FCDO received over 11,400 expressions of interest (EOI) under the first stage of ACRS Pathway 3.

In June, we received approximately 2,900 EOIs (25 per cent of total), in July we received approximately 5,200 EOIs (46 per cent of total), and in August we received approximately 3,300 EOIs (29 per cent of total).

The FCDO has been in contact with all individuals who submitted expressions of interest (EOIs) under ACRS Pathway 3 in its first stage, and we have communicated an outcome on over 11,200 (98 per cent) of the over 11,400 EOIs received. We are continuing to work at pace to allocate remaining places, and will notify others of the outcome as quickly as we can.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200461>

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [200028] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress the Government has made on resettling 20,000 people from Afghanistan since January 2022.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Quarterly data on resettlement arrivals may be viewed within the latest [Immigration system statistics, year ending June 2023](#) (published on 24 August 2023).

The latest published statistics show that both the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) have resettled a total of 21,526 people since the schemes began to operate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/200028>

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

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [200027] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking with Cabinet colleagues to support Afghan families currently living in temporary accommodation.

Reply from Felicity Buchan: The majority of Afghan families have been moved out of bridging accommodation into longer-term accommodation. Less than 15% of families in bridging hotels at the end of March 2023 are owed a homelessness duty and in local authority temporary accommodation.

In addition to the £150 million UK-wide package of support for local authorities and devolved administrations, the Government continues to support councils with Afghan households who are homeless and living in temporary accommodation. £9,150 per household is available to councils to support with homelessness costs as a result of the closure of bridging hotels, as well as £28 per person per day if placed in Temporary Accommodation for up to six months.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/200027>

Refugees: Afghanistan

John Healey (Labour) [202637] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the contribution of the Minister for Veterans Affairs in the debate on Resettlement of Afghans on 19 September 2023, Official Report, column 1253, how many and what proportion of the Afghans housed in hotel accommodation in March 2023 were given at least one offer of permanent accommodation before 31 August 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: There is no published breakdown of the number of individuals who received a property offer during the stated period.

We gave Afghans living in hotels and serviced apartments three months' notice in which they would need to leave their bridging accommodation - and stepped up our support to help them find settled accommodation. This was backed by £285m of new funding for councils which included a flexible housing fund worth £7,100 per person which many LAs used as rent top ups to enable this cohort to access private rented sector properties. The UK Government has granted all Afghans relocated through safe and legal routes with Indefinite Leave to Remain, including the immediate right to work, alongside access to the benefits system and vital health, education, and employment support.

Transparency data has recently been released (published on 19 September 2023), following the end of bridging accommodation use. This provides a helpful overview of the best available operational data as of 31 August 2023, and can be viewed at: [Afghan bridging hotel exit operational data](#). This publication confirms that there were over 8,000 Afghans living in bridging accommodation on 28 March, when the plan to end Bridging accommodation was announced. It also shows that overall, 10,404 people have been housed by a local authorities since June 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-16/202637>

The Minister's comments referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-09-19/debates/610B3446-BD51-4283-A0A8-176862E03CA2/ResettlementOfAfghans>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Ukraine

The following two questions both received the same answer

Refugees: Ukraine

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [200878] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department plans to extend the duration of the (a) Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, (b) Ukraine Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme beyond the initial three-year period.

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [200879] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make it his policy to introduce settlement routes for Ukrainian nationals in the UK on temporary visas under the (a) Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme, (b) Ukraine Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme.

Reply from Felicity Buchan: As the first visas issued for the Homes for Ukraine scheme will begin to expire in March 2025, the Home Office is reviewing what may be needed beyond that date, bearing in mind the situation in Ukraine, the wishes of

the Ukrainian Government, and the needs of Ukrainians in the UK. Announcements will be made in the usual way.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/200878>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/200879>

Refugees: Ukraine

Patrick Grady (SNP) [202782] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing (a) visa extensions and (b) settlement routes for Ukrainian nationals who reach the end of the temporary leave granted through schemes established following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: In line with the situation in Ukraine, working closely with the Ukrainian Government, as well as our international counterparts, we keep the need for a possible extension of UK sanctuary, beyond March 2025, under consistent review.

The UK Government stands with Ukraine and firmly believe that Ukraine will be safe again. When it's safe to do so, Ukraine will need the repatriation of its citizens to help recover and rebuild their economy and infrastructure. Our approach therefore has been to provide 36 months sanctuary under our Ukraine visas, which are temporary and do not lead to settlement. This 36 month period is longer than any other European scheme.

We are however also mindful that permission will start to expire, for the first arrivals under our Ukrainian schemes, from March 2025, and their need for certainty beyond that point to help them to plan ahead, for example if remaining in the UK, entering into rental agreements and living here independently. The scheme is actively under review across government.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-16/202782>

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

Immigration

Martyn Day (SNP) [200016] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of automatically granting citizenship to the parents of children under 18 who are British nationals, in the context of article 9 of the UN convention on the rights of the child.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The current nationality law, the British Nationality Act 1981, defines who is a British citizen. British nationality can be acquired through birth, descent, registration, and naturalisation (subject to fulfilling relevant statutory requirements). There is no power in law to grant British citizenship outside of the statutory provisions of the BNA 1981.

The Act reflects the principle that citizenship should be acquired on the basis of a close and continuing connection with the UK. Parents of British children can apply to naturalise if they wish to and meet the requirements which are designed to test the strength of the applicant's connections with this country.

There are no plans to amend the law in this respect.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/200016>

Visas: Married People

Nicholas Brown (Independent) [200726] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will consult child psychologists on the potential health impact of increasing spouse visa fees on affected children.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Home Office has always provided exceptions to the need to pay application fees in a number of specific circumstances. These include affordability-based waivers for entry clearance and leave to remain on family and human rights grounds. These provisions ensure that the Home Office's immigration and nationality fee structure complies with international obligations and wider Government policy, and we believe represents the right balance between protecting the integrity of the department's funding model while helping to facilitate access to immigration and nationality products and services, including for the most vulnerable. The Home Office published an Equalities Impact Assessment alongside the Regulations that increased immigration and nationality fees in October 2023. This included an assessment of the proposals in line with the Secretary of State's duty under Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009. There are currently no plans to consult on fee levels.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/200726>

The Equalities Impact Assessment referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-and-nationality-fees-equality-impact-assessment/equality-impact-assessment-immigration-and-nationality-fees-accessible-version>

Immigration: Australasia and Canada

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [200218] To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, if he will make an assessment of recent trends in the level of immigration from (a) Australia, (b) New Zealand and (c) Canada; and how many people from (i) Australia, (ii) New Zealand and (iii) Canada reside in the UK.

Reply from Jeremy Quin: The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. ...

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is responsible for publishing long-term UK international migration statistics, the most recent edition is for the year-ending December 2022¹. In this publication, you can find estimates of the level of immigration to the UK from the EU, from non-EU countries, and of British citizens. The ONS does not currently have data below this geographical level. The ONS hopes to publish long-term international migration statistics by individual country in the future.

Table 1 provides estimates of residents of England and Wales whose country of birth is Australia, New Zealand or Canada. Please note that these estimates are based on Census 2021 data and, therefore, are for England and Wales only.

The ONS is responsible for population estimates in England and Wales. Estimates from the Scottish Census 2022 are recently published but not yet by country of birth. The National Records of Scotland (NRS)² should be able to provide you with their Census publication timetable and other data sources they use to publish this information. For information from the Census 2021 in Northern Ireland, you might wish to contact the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)³.

The ONS is currently conducting a consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales until 26 October 2023 and would welcome your input⁴.

When accessing any of the ONS' files you may find it useful to read the 'notes, terms and conditions' contained within them.

Table 1: Number of usual residents in England and Wales, by specified countries of births⁵

Country of birth	Estimate
Australia	112,971
New Zealand	49,149
Canada	69,096

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/longterminternationalmigrationprovisional/yearendingdecember2022>

² <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/about-us/contact-us>

³ <https://www.nisra.gov.uk/contact>

⁴ <https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

⁵ These estimates are based on results from the Census 2021. In the census, respondents were asked in which country they were born. For people not born in one of the four countries of the UK or the Republic of Ireland, there was an option to select "elsewhere". People who selected "elsewhere" were asked to write in the current name for their country of birth.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200218>

Undocumented Migrants: Aviation

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [200802] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the number of inadequately documented arrivals by air.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government's number one priority is keeping the UK safe. As such, the UK is launching an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) scheme to further strengthen the security of our border. The ETA scheme will close the current gap in advance permissions for non-visa national visitors to the UK and enhance the Government's ability to screen such travellers and prevent the travel of those who pose a threat to the UK, making the UK safer.

Under the Carriers Liability scheme, carriers already have responsibilities to ensure their passengers are properly documented for travel to the UK and may be subject to charges if they allow them to travel without the correct documentation. Details of the scheme are published on gov.uk.

To assist carriers, the Home Office issues core guidance regarding the necessary checks carriers are expected to undertake. The Home Office regularly train carriers and their handling agents in the UK and overseas, in documentary requirements and detection techniques. The Home Office publishes alerts to highlight any new trends or arising issues and provides a 24-hour carrier call service to advise carriers on specific documentation concerns.

Home Office teams overseas work closely with UK based colleagues who analyse travel data. Where high risk passengers are identified, teams engage with airlines to ensure that the individual is entitled to travel on the documentation held. Overseas teams are located around the globe, and the focus of their activities is kept under constant review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/200802>

Asylum: Applications

David Evennett (Conservative) [199868] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the average processing time for asylum claims.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We have taken immediate action to speed up asylum processing whilst maintaining the integrity of the system. This includes simplifying guidance and streamlining processes and introducing shorter, focussed interviews, making the interview process more efficient and driving productivity improvements. We have met our commitment to increase the number of asylum caseworkers to 2,500. As of the end of August 2023, provisional data shows that there are 2,510 decision makers in post.

This is more than double the number of asylum caseworkers a year ago in August 2022 and an increase of over 1,200 since December 2022.

We remain on track to clear the legacy asylum backlog by the end of 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/199868>

Asylum

Diana Johnson (Labour) [202263] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has made an assessment of the (a) geographic spread of asylum cases in the legacy backlog and (b) potential effect on local authorities of delivering decisions on all of those cases by the end of 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We are ensuring our cross government partners, such as the (DWP) and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) are sighted on data to enable them to consider the impacts of increased decision making and effectively plan. We are also working with DLUHC to ensure the right asylum decision data is being shared with local authorities to enable effective planning and to lessen the impact on existing homelessness and rough sleeping pressures. Our accommodation providers are directly working with local authorities to notify them when an individual is due to have their asylum support ended.

Data on the geographic spread of asylum seekers in receipt of support (both legacy and flow cases) is published in table Asy_D11 here: [Asylum and resettlement datasets](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/202263>

Asylum: Women

Mark Logan (Conservative) [200559] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to help ensure that female asylum seekers do not fall victim to modern slavery.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: All asylum seekers have an interview on arrival in the UK which includes a series of questions designed to understand whether there are any potential indicators of trafficking and to identify any vulnerabilities.

If there are any indicators present that a person is at potential risk of modern slavery a referral is made to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). The Single Competent Authority (SCA) will make a decision on this referral.

We take the wellbeing of asylum seekers seriously. Robust safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure all asylum seekers are safe and supported.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200559>

Asylum: Children

Caroline Lucas (Green) [199910] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied children are being housed in arranged hotel accommodation as of September 2023; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Under Part 6 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, the Home Office has a legal obligation to support asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute.

The high number of UASC arrivals, particularly as a result of small boat crossings, has placed unprecedented pressure on the National Transfer Scheme. Out of necessity we accommodated UASC on an emergency and temporary basis in hotels while placements with local authorities have been vigorously pursued. 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.

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.

All local authorities are under a mandatory duty to comply with the National Transfer Scheme and significant work is underway to support them in fulfilling their statutory duty to accommodate unaccompanied children nationwide.

Asylum: Hotels

Gregory Campbell (DUP) [202546] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will review the mandatory requirements for hotels used to accommodate asylum seekers.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Under the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999, the Home Office has a statutory obligation to house asylum seekers, who would otherwise be destitute, whilst their claim is under consideration. Eligible asylum seekers are ordinarily placed in housing accommodation; however, the unprecedented number of small boat arrivals has forced the Home Office to consider alternative accommodation options to ensure that we meet our statutory obligations, which has resulted in the temporary use of hotels.

The Home Office is committed to making every effort to reduce hotel use and limit the burden on the taxpayer. This is why we are delivering a range of alternative accommodation sites, maximising hotel space, operationalising the Illegal Migration Act and continuing our hard work to clear the asylum backlog by the end of 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-16/202546>

Asylum: Bibby Stockholm

Zarah Sultana (Labour) [200564] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to allow asylum seekers housed in the Bibby Stockholm barge to enter and leave during the day and night.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Those accommodated aboard the vessel are not detained and are free to come and go.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200564>

Detainees: Children

Stephanie Peacock (Labour) [200566] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many unaccompanied child refugees have been held at detention centres for more than 24 hours since July 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Home Office publishes data on immigration detention in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on people in detention and leaving detention by age group and length of detention are published in tables Det_D02 and Det_D03 of the '[Immigration Detention detailed datasets](#)'. The latest data covers the period up to the end of June 2023. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. Data up to the end of September 2023 will be released on 23 November 2023.

Data on whether detainees are unaccompanied child refugees is not published. Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the code of practice for statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and availability of data.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200566>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Detention Centres: Restraint Techniques

Nadia Whittome (Labour) [201007] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many incidents of (a) use, (b) misuse and (c) unlawful use of force have been recorded on the immigration detention estate in the last 12 months; and for what reason force was used in each incident.

Nadia Whittome (Labour) [201008] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to (a) identify and (b) prevent the (i) misuse and (ii) unlawful use of force against people held in detention under immigration

powers; and what steps she is taking to ensure that there is adequate (A) scrutiny of and (B) transparency on the use of force in such cases.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The welfare of all those in our care is of the utmost importance. We will accept nothing but the highest standards from companies employed to manage the immigration removal estate.

Published guidance, and the training received by detainee custody officers (DCOs) makes it clear that physical force and restraint equipment should only be used after a thorough assessment of risk, and in consideration of each individual's personal circumstances. Where restraints are used, they are removed at the earliest opportunity.

The Home Office reviews all reports resulting from a use of force to identify trends, ensure that techniques are used proportionally, are justified, and are used for the minimum period required.

All escort DCOs are fully trained in HOMES techniques (Home Office Manual for Escorting Safely) and custodial DCOs are trained in Control and Restraint (C&R). Quarterly transparency data on the number of use of force incidents using HOMES techniques and the number of use of force incidents where HOMES equipment was used can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-enforcement-data-Q2-2023>

The Home Office does not publish C&R data.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/201007>
and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-13/201008>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Asylum: Children

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL10450] To ask His Majesty's Government what funding is available to local authorities to support their responsibility for finding suitable and specialist placements for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Local authorities receive through funding from the Local Government Finance Settlement and finance arrangements which apply to the Devolved Administrations. The Home Office provides additional funding contributions to the costs incurred by local government in looking after unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) and former UASC care leavers. UASC and leaving care funding instructions can be found using the link below:

[Unaccompanied asylum seeking children and leaving care: funding instructions](#)

An incentivised funding programme of £6,000 is also offered to local authorities which includes transfers of unaccompanied children from interim UASC hotels and Kent County Council. Transfers will need to take place within 5 working days to qualify for the funding.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-02/hl10450>

Asylum: Children

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL10446] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to report on the circumstances regarding unaccompanied children who have gone missing from hotels, including (1) lessons learned, and (2) steps taken, to prevent recurrence; and when any such report will be published.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The high number of UASC arrivals placed unprecedented pressure on the National Transfer Scheme. Out of necessity the Home Office accommodated UASC on an emergency and temporary basis in hotels

while placements with local authorities have been vigorously pursued. We are working at pace with Kent County Council, other government departments and local authorities across the UK to ensure suitable local authority placements are provided for unaccompanied children urgently and sustainably.

Those in hotels are supported by team leaders and support workers who are on site 24 hours a day. Further support is provided on site by teams of social workers and nurses. Staff receive a number of briefings and guidance on how to safeguard children. All children receive a welfare interview, which includes a series of questions specifically designed to understand whether there are any potential indicators of trafficking or particular safeguarding issues. 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.

When any young person goes missing - UASC or British citizen - the 'missing after reasonable steps' protocol is followed and led by our directly engaged social workers. The process is to follow this protocol developed by the police and work in conjunction with the LA (Local Authorities) children's services to invoke a missing child multi agency strategy meeting chaired by children's services.

The statutory guidance owned by the Department for Education requires local authorities to share information regarding all missing children locally in a multi-agency forum, therefore when a child goes missing from a hotel, the relevant local authority will convene a strategy meeting regarding them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-02/hl10446>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Housing

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL10447] To ask His Majesty's Government how many people have been affected by the change to the move-on period for newly recognised refugees, which gives seven days' notice for them to leave their asylum support accommodation.

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL10448] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to extend the move-on period for newly recognised refugees to at least 56 days, in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 and the applications for Universal Credit; and whether they will publish a strategy to accompany any such plans.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: An individual remains eligible for asylum support for a prescribed period from the day they are notified of the decision on their asylum claim. Where someone is given notice that their asylum claim has been granted, their appeal has been allowed or their asylum claim has been refused but they have been given leave to enter or remain, the prescribed period in legislation is 28 days. There has been no change to the prescribed period.

Individuals should make plans to move on from asylum support as quickly as possible. We offer support through Migrant Help or their partner organisation in doing this. This includes providing advice on accessing the labour market, on applying for Universal Credit and signposting to local authorities for assistance with housing.

We are engaging the Department for Work and Pensions and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on ensuring individuals can move on from asylum support as smoothly as possible.

Figures on the number of discontinuations are not available in a readily reportable format.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-02/hl10447>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-10-02/hl10448>

Press Release

Government consults on safe and legal routes for refugees

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-consults-on-safe-and-legal-routes-for-refugees>

New Publications

The future is safe and legal

<https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/The-future-is-safe-and-legal.pdf>

Immigration Health Surcharge: equality impact assessment 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-health-surcharge-ihs-equality-impact-assessment-2023/immigration-health-surcharge-equality-impact-assessment-2023-accessible>

Updated Guidance: Afghan citizens resettlement scheme

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

Additional family members under Pathway 3 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/additional-family-members-under-pathway-3-of-the-afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme/additional-family-members-under-pathway-3-of-the-afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme-accessible>

Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme in Scotland: statistics - October 2023

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-in-scotland-statistics-october-2023/>

Updated: Homelessness management information - Ukrainian nationals: England

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1159972/Ukraine Homelessness Pressures Publication 19052023.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1159972/Ukraine_Homelessness_Pressures_Publication_19052023.ods)

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>

News

UK Government to launch annual refugee cap in 2025

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/uk-government-launch-annual-refugee-31241023>

Ukrainians, Hong Kongers and Afghans excluded from refugee cap

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/20/ukrainians-afghans-excluded-from-refugee-cap/>

Home Office plan to use MRI to age assess asylum seekers reprehensible

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/westminster/23870675.home-office-plan-use-mri-age-assess-asylum-seekers-reprehensible/>

Migrants will get 30 minutes to make case against deportation

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrants-will-get-30-minutes-to-make-case-against-deportation-qbmrq72zr>

Delay safe routes until illegal crossings drop, think tank urges

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/delay-safe-routes-until-illegal-crossings-drop-think-tank-urges-pfn9rh0dd>

More than half of Britons back Braverman claim that migrant crossings are an ‘invasion’

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/20/51pc-britons-agree-braverman-small-boats-migrants-invasion/>

People smuggler behind 10,000 small boat Channel crossings jailed for 11 years

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/18/people-smuggler-jailed-hewa-rahimpur-essex-small-boats/>

Call to help resettle more Afghans who worked with British military

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-67128211>

Ukrainian refugees face homelessness as UK government support runs out

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ukrainian-refugees-uk-government-support-scheme-end-2023-q2gf77wjs>

Bibby Stockholm: Migrants return to barge amid protest at port gates

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-dorset-67147277>

Asylum seekers to return to Bibby Stockholm barge

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/18/asylum-seekers-to-return-to-bibby-stockholm-berge/>

Dambusters building to be listed in blow to Home Office asylum camp plans

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/10/19/raf-scampton-grade-ii-historic-building-migrants-centre/>

Government to step up deportations in bid to free up space in prisons

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/prison-crisis-full-deportations-b2430118.html>

Helping refugees find work in Scotland

<https://scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/helping-refugees-find-work-in-scotland/>

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Community Relations

News

King Charles urges ‘civility and tolerance even in the most fractious times’

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/royal-family/2023/10/18/king-charles-urges-civility-tolerance-uk-tensions-israel/>

I’m not worried about UK’s racial make-up, says Jacob Rees-Mogg

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/10/17/not-worried-about-britains-racial-make-up-jacob-rees-mog/>

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UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Mental Health: Ethnic Groups

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [200065] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to reduce disparities in maternal health outcomes experienced by black women and women from Asian and Ethnic Minority groups.

Reply from Maria Caulfield: The Department is committed to tackling disparities in maternal outcomes. In March 2023, NHS England published its three-year delivery plan for maternity and neonatal services. The plan outlines how NHS England will make maternity and neonatal care safer, more personalised, and more equitable for all.

NHSE also published its Equity and Equality guidance for Local Maternity Systems which focuses on actions to reduce disparities for women and babies from ethnic minorities and those living in the most deprived areas.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-18/200065>

The delivery plan referred to above can be read at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/long-read/three-year-delivery-plan-for-maternity-and-neonatal-services/>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

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

Energy Bills Rebate: Travellers

Janet Daby (Labour) [200331] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 18 September 2023 to Question 198571 on Energy Bills Rebate: Travellers, if his Department will provide local authorities with assistance to enable Gypsy, Roma and Travellers whose main residence is not on a permanent site to apply for the Housing Support Fund.

Reply from Mims Davies: Local Authorities have the ties and local knowledge to best determine how the Household Support Fund should be provided to their local communities in England.

Under the current Household Support Fund scheme, we are aware that some Local Authorities are providing energy and food support specifically targeted at the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

The Household Support Fund guidance sets out that Local Authorities are expected to identify and provide support to a wide range of low-income households in need, making use of data and other sources of information, including through engaging with third party organisations who may come into contact with people in need.

As part of their delivery Local Authorities must operate an application-based service to ensure those in need have a route to emergency support.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200331>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-08/198571>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Travellers: Caravan Sites

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [200506] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what recent assessment he has made of the effectiveness of short stop sites for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community.

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [200508] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, what steps he is taking to assess the adequacy of the number of sites for Gypsy, Roma and Travellers in local plans.

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [200510] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, if he will make an assessment of the adequacy of his Department's guidance to local authorities on the requirements for the (a) number of pitches and (b) infrastructure within Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites.

Reply from Rachel Maclean: Plan policies, including those relating to gypsy and traveller provision, are tested at examination by an independently appointed Inspector before they can be adopted. The examination of the plan will consider whether adequate site provision has been made for gypsies and travellers based on assessed needs.

This Department does not make an assessment of the effectiveness of short stop sites for the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Community, whether such sites are transit sites or provided as part of negotiated stopping agreements with the local authority.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200506>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200508>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200510>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Football: Ethnic Groups

Bell Ribero-Addy (Labour) [200420] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will meet the Black Footballers Partnership to discuss black representation in football.

Bell Ribero-Addy (Labour) [200421] To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking with Cabinet colleagues to tackle discrimination against black (a) players and (b) ex-players in football.

Reply from Stuart Andrew: There is no place for discrimination in sport, or in wider society. I am committed to ensuring sport does all it can to tackle racism and all forms of discrimination both domestically and internationally.

Fans can be charged with a Football Banning Order and fined if found to use racist slurs towards players at football games. Sentences can be more severe if it has been recorded as a hate crime.

The Government has also amended legislation to extend the use of Football Banning Orders, so that online abusers can be banned from stadiums for up to 10 years in the same way violent individuals are barred from grounds.

I would be happy to meet the Black Footballers Association to discuss black representation in football.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200420>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-09-19/200421>

News

Ethnic minority leaders remain poorly represented in the sector

<https://tfn.scot/news/ethnic-minority-leaders-remain-poorly-represented-in-the-sector>

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Joint Enterprise: Young Black Men

Lord Woodley (Labour): To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks of Lord Bellamy on 14 June (HL Deb col 1990), what steps they are taking to address concerns that joint enterprise case law operates in a harsh way against young black men.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Bellamy): My Lords, joint enterprise case law is primarily a matter for the judiciary. The CPS applies that case law and race plays no part in individual charging decisions. Recognising concerns about possibly disproportionate use of the joint enterprise case law, the CPS has piloted the collection of data on joint enterprise homicide prosecutions. Informed by the results of that pilot, published on 29 September last, the CPS aims to commence a full national monitoring scheme early next year.

Lord Woodley: The new data that the Minister mentioned confirms, unfortunately, that young black men are disproportionately affected in joint enterprise prosecutions, as campaigners such as me have warned for many years. Black people are 16 times—I repeat, 16 times—more likely than white people to be prosecuted for homicide or attempted homicide under joint enterprise laws. It is absolutely shocking, as I am sure your Lordships all agree. Does the Minister therefore agree that this proves indisputably that joint enterprise is being used in a racist way by prosecutors, and basically as a dragnet to Hoover up black urban youth?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, if I may respectfully say so, the results so far of the pilot prove nothing of the sort. The pilot showed a high number of black males in joint enterprise cases in the 18-24 age group and a high proportion of white males in the 30-59 age group. Those figures, taken alone, do not establish discrimination; disparity on its own does not establish discrimination. That is why, to get to the bottom of this, the CPS will build on the pilot and the national monitoring scheme will commence next February, together with other measures that the CPS is taking.

Lord Hunt of Wirral (Conservative): My Lords, given that we all believe everyone is equal before the law, there have been some troubling statistics on criminal charges against ethnic minority groups. Would my noble and learned friend the Minister like to update us on the work that the CPS is doing in that direction?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: ... The national pilot is part of much wider work by the CPS to understand the high number of charges against persons from ethnic minorities. This includes the publication of the CPS *Inclusion and Community Engagement Strategy 2025* and the document *CPS Defendants: Fairness for All Strategy 2025*. But that is combined with statistical research being conducted by the University of Leeds, with an independent disproportionality advisory group established to advise the CPS. The first stage of the Leeds research is published on the CPS website.

Lord Marks of Henley-on-Thames (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the pilot study sample was too small to draw any strong conclusions, as the report and the Minister accepted.

However, it is clear that we need a new, wider study and we welcome the announcement of that study. Does the Minister also agree that great care needs to be taken on the evidence so far compiled with the use of the word “gang”, which may be prejudicial? Does he also agree that young black men appear to be disproportionately charged with these offences, particularly in London? Finally, does he agree that to draw meaningful conclusions, the broader study will need to gather data comparing joint enterprise cases with other cases, which was not done in the pilot study?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, as I have just said, I do not accept that the study so far reveals disproportionality. I accept that this is a very sensitive subject, and we must avoid anything that could be described as inflammatory language. I take on board the noble Lord’s point that we need a proper data study bringing in relevant comparables.

Baroness Blower (Labour): My Lords, the Supreme Court ruled in 2016 that courts had taken a wrong turn over three decades earlier with respect to joint enterprise. Since then, if I am not in error, only one conviction has been overturned, because it is all but impossible to be granted leave to appeal. Does the Minister agree that this appears to be a miscarriage of justice? Does he support the Criminal Appeal (Amendment) Bill put forward by Barry Sheerman to open a new path to appeal?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, I am unable to agree that this indicates a miscarriage of justice. We do not have precise figures on the number of persons who successfully appealed following the Jogee case. Mr Jogee himself, who succeeded, was then retried and convicted of manslaughter rather than murder. Mr Crilly, who also succeeded on appeal, if your Lordships remember, was the gentleman who bravely and famously intervened in the Fishmongers’ Hall incident. His retrial for manslaughter was subsequently abandoned.

Baroness Chakrabarti (Labour): I would like to press the Minister a little further following my noble friend’s question. The Supreme Court, no less, stated in 2016 that the law had been misapplied for 30 years. Leaving issues of race aside, that must mean that a lot of people who should not have faced life imprisonment have faced it. Will the Minister meet other interested noble Lords and campaigners, many of whom are mothers and sisters of those incarcerated, to consider whether for once legislators might assist in remedying judicial error, rather than the other way around?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, it is relevant to emphasise that the Supreme Court in that case said that only if a substantial injustice could be established would the change in the law be relevant to any future appeal. Of course, I am very happy to meet anyone in the category the noble Baroness refers to.

Lord Boateng (Labour): My Lords, the former Prime Minister, the right honourable Theresa May, established the Race Disparity Unit precisely to identify data and figures that give rise to concern and, on the basis of that concern, to take action. This is precisely such a case. It is to her establishment of the audit that we owe the data. Will the Minister therefore undertake to ensure that there is an understanding in the department that it is not only inflammatory language that causes problems but inaction? Can we have some action on this and on the recommendations of the Lammy report, which still have not been implemented?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, to the best of my knowledge, most of the recommendations in the Lammy report have been taken well to heart by all concerned. We are discussing here charging decisions, which are a matter for the CPS. As I have explained, the CPS is taking this very seriously, with the University of Leeds advisory groups. On the pilot concerned, there are two aspects of scrutiny. There is a scrutiny panel, which met quite recently and will meet again in February. All these actions are being taken as part of the wider attempt to get to the bottom of why we have such a high proportion of persons from ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system.

Baroness Thornton (Labour): My Lords, I read the report from 29 September. It would appear, even with the small sample the Minister referred to, that young black men are overrepresented. That is a cause for concern. Will the Law Commission be reporting on the merits of reforming joint enterprise law as a priority before the end of next year? Will the Government be acting promptly to introduce necessary legislation?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: My Lords, as far as I am aware, the Law Commission is looking at the question of reforming the law on appeal. I am not so sure—I stand to be corrected—that it is looking into joint enterprise law, the boundaries of which are for the judiciary. It is an essential part of our criminal law to have a joint enterprise doctrine. The question is: where are the edges to the doctrine?

Lord Farmer (Conservative): My Lords, I have visited several high-security prisons since starting my reviews in 2016. On one such visit I met young black men who were secondary parties in a gang-related incident—I use that phrase advisedly—where tragically someone was murdered. Joint enterprise case law then, pre-R v Jogee, meant they were convicted as principals and facing very long sentences. As we are talking about young black men, and it is difficult to surmount the difficulties in securing justice, I ask my noble and learned friend: what are the Government doing to help young black individuals and other secondary parties to surmount those difficulties in securing justice?

Reply from Lord Bellamy: Prisoners in the position that my noble friend refers to would have been able to consider the Jogee case and appeal if that was the right course or refer their case to the Criminal Cases Review Commission. The Law Commission is looking into the appeal process, but those legal avenues are open to them.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-10-19/debates/51A68832-AABE-4C78-B162-F6E02792260D/JointEnterpriseYoungBlackMen>

Lord Bellamy's comments referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-06-14/debates/83A955D4-6C34-4C80-8527-233E2CA9437C/MiscarriagesOfJustice#contribution-85502A57-C51F-486F-A545-0BF0ED99A786>

The findings of the Crown Prosecution Service pilot referred to above can be read at

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/crown-prosecution-service-joint-enterprise-pilot-2023-data-analysis>

The Crown Prosecution Service Inclusion and Community Engagement Strategy 2025, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/inclusion-and-community-engagement-strategy-2025>

The Crown Prosecution Service Defendants: Fairness for All Strategy 2025, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/publication/cps-defendants-fairness-all-strategy-2025>

The Supreme Court judgement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKSC/2016/8.html>

Information about the Race Disparity Unit, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/race-disparity-unit>

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

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a82009040f0b62305b91f49/lammy-review-final-report.pdf>

Press Release

Antisemitic abuser fined after successful CPS prosecution

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/london-north/news/antisemitic-abuser-fined-after-successful-prosecution>

News

London mayor meets multi-faith leaders as hate crimes rise

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-67168462>

Julie Dettbarn approved as SNP election candidate despite racist post

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/julie-dettbarn-approved-as-snp-election-candidate-despite-racist-post-r0qv8h2qr>

Labour claims Tory mayoral candidate is ‘prejudiced against black Londoners’

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/10/21/labour-smear-tactics-sadiq-khan-tory-mayor-prejudice/>

Scots cop admits vile campaign of racist and sectarian abuse against colleagues

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/scots-cop-admits-vile-campaign-31230107>

Former police officer admits racist abuse of colleagues

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/former-police-officer-admits-racist-abuse-of-colleagues-zdgcpsg9f>

Tell MAMA records six-fold increase in anti-Muslim cases between October 7 and October 19

<https://tellmamauk.org/tell-mama-records-six-fold-increase-in-anti-muslim-cases-between-october-7-and-october-19/>

Antisemitic Incidents –20 October Update

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2023/10/20/antisemitic-incidents-20-october-update>

UK permits antisemitism, says counter-extremism adviser

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-67155942>

Hate marches in Britain are a wake-up call to all decent people

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/hate-march-is-a-wake-up-call-to-the-west-xrn9nzm8l>

Antisemitic incidents on the rise since Hamas attack, says Bury council leader

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/oct/15/antisemitic-incidents-on-the-rise-since-hamas-attack-says-bury-council-leader>

Union calls for greater protection of Jewish students in UK universities

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2023/oct/18/union-says-uk-universities-must-give-greater-support-to-jewish-students>

Jewish schools in north London vandalised with red paint

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/jewish-schools-in-north-london-vandalised-with-red-paint-gsgw3fzxs>

What is antisemitism and why is it affecting communities?

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/national/uk-today/23865535.antisemitism-affecting-communities/>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

Debate

Black History Month

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-10-19/debates/2CCB86CB-25E9-4FE1-A97E-0541DDB8C8A8/BlackHistoryMonth>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Voter Identification: Minority Groups

Gill Furniss (Labour) [906522] What assessment he has made of the impact of the Government's voter identification policies on the turnout of minority groups at elections.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (Felicity Buchan): As we committed to doing in legislation, we are conducting an evaluation of the impact of voter identification at the May polls. We will publish that evaluation no later than November this year.

Gill Furniss: The Electoral Commission's report into voter ID is utterly damning. It found that awareness of the new rules was lowest among black and minority ethnic communities, and take-up of voter authority certificates was minimal. Even the Government's own MPs can see the reality of this failed experiment. The right hon. Member for North East Somerset (Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg) said: "Parties that try and gerrymander end up finding their clever scheme comes back to bite them". Does the Minister agree with her own Conservative colleagues?

Reply from Felicity Buchan: I remind the hon. Lady that 99.75% of the electorate were able to vote successfully. I also remind her that it was the Electoral Commission that called for voter identification. It has existed in Northern Ireland for two decades and was introduced under a Labour Government, and it exists in most European countries.

On the hon. Lady's point about ethnic minorities, everyone deserves fair and free elections, and it has been ethnic minorities in areas such as Tower Hamlets and Birmingham who have been the victims of electoral fraud.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-10-16/debates/BE6EA935-7DB2-4A11-8D23-9407BFAFF8D3/VoterIdentificationMinorityGroups>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/our-views-and-research/our-research/voter-id-may-2023-local-elections-england-interim-analysis>

New Publication

Statistics on so called 'honour-based' abuse offences, England and Wales, 2022 to 2023

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-2022-to-2023/statistics-on-so-called-honour-based-abuse-offences-england-and-wales-2022-to-2023>

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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/>

Publications

House of Commons Library Briefing: Rising Cost of Living in the UK

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9428/CBP-9428.pdf>

House of Commons Library Briefing: Food Banks in the UK

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8585/CBP-8585.pdf>

News

King driven to create food hubs by concern at cost-of-living crisis

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/royal-family/2023/10/21/king-charles-food-waste-cost-of-living-crisis/>

King Charles to celebrate birthday by launching programme to tackle food waste

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/royal-family/king-charles-birthday-food-waste-b2434011.html>

SNP calls for cap on supermarket food prices

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23856460.snp-calls-cap-supermarket-food-prices/>

Stephen Flynn pushes for French-style price cap on food

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/flynn-pushes-for-french-style-price-cap-on-food-vtrwrhf75>

‘We had no money’: desperate UK public increasingly turning to pawnbrokers to make ends meet

<https://www.theguardian.com/money/2023/oct/21/we-had-no-money-desperate-uk-public-increasingly-turning-to-pawnbrokers-to-make-ends-meet>

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Other News

Viscount rejects court threat in slavery plaque row

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/viscount-rejects-court-threat-in-slavery-plaque-row-bdshkwq59>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

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

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>

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>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

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

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

**** closes this week!**

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>

**** closes this week!**

Drug Use in Ethnic Minority Groups Review (closing date 27 October 2023)

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

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/>

Delivery of relationships, sexual health and parenthood (RSHP) education in Scottish schools - draft statutory guidance (closing date 23 November 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/teaching-guidance-for-relationships-sexual-health/>

Police (Ethics, Conduct and Scrutiny) (Scotland) Bill (closing date 8 December 2023)
<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/justice/police-ethics-conduct-and-scrutiny-bill/>

Democracy Matters (closing date 28 February 2024)
<https://consult.gov.scot/local-government-and-communities/democracy-matters/>

Your Police 2023-2024 (closing date 31 March 2023)
<https://consult.scotland.police.uk/strategy-insight-and-innovation/your-police-2023-2024/>

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>

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Job Opportunities

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

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Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

Scottish Connections Fund

Closing date: 8 November 2023

Scottish Government funding to support initiatives that promote Scotland's international connections. For information see

<https://www.gov.scot/news/connecting-scotlands-diaspora/>

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>

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**** this week!**

Black History Month

Continuing until 31 October 2023 (Scotland-wide)

Black History Month encompasses the histories of African, Caribbean and Asian people in Scotland, and is a time to focus on the sacrifices, contributions and achievements of these communities, bringing people together to offer a space for reflection and learning. To read the full programme of events see <https://tinyurl.com/3e6nvvde>

**** this week!**

The Basics: A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach

26 October 2023 (online, 10.00–3.00)

THRE course for people who are just starting out and want to learn the fundamentals or who know a bit about human rights and equalities and want to know more or are just curious about what a human rights and equalities first approach might be. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yc2rjunv>

**** this week!**

People of colour in the 1921 Scotland Census

26 October 2023 (Glasgow, 2.30–4.30)

Glasgow Museums event to celebrate some of the people of colour recorded in the 1921 census, discuss the snags of such research, and demonstrate how library resources can help. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/2hwr8xf>

**** this week!**

Glasgow Black History Walking Tour

29 October 2023 (Glasgow, 1.00–3.00)

CRER walking tour making a historical journey through Glasgow's mercantile past and examining the city's connections with tobacco, slavery and the abolition movement. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3s58c2w7>

**** this week!**

Black History Walking Tour of Edinburgh

29 October 2023 (Edinburgh, 2.00–4.00)

Edinburgh Caribbean Association walk to relate little-known stories of Edinburgh's many visitors and residents of African, African American and Caribbean heritage from the 16th century to the present day; with a focus on the Caribbean and Edinburgh's role in the Transatlantic Slave System. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/mry2rhbb>

**** Volunteering - A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach**

1 November 2023 (online, 10.00–1.00)

THRE course for anyone working in Scotland's third sector who is responsible for or involved with a volunteering programme and is interested in learning why and how to take a human rights and equalities. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/mw2bk36r>

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/>

**** Funding and Fundraising - A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach**

14 November 2023 (online, 1.00–4.00)

THRE course for anyone working in Scotland's third sector who is involved in funding and fundraising and is interested in learning why and how to take a human rights and equalities approach. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/bdesue5r>

**** Governance - A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach**

15 November 2023 (online, 10.00–12.30)

THRE course for people who have a say, or give advice and support, on how boards or committees are run to provide tools to integrate human rights and equalities into the work of boards and committees. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24kezby3>

**** PANEL Workshop: A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach in Practice**

20 November 2023 (online, 10.00–1.00)

THRE course for people who already know a bit about human rights and equalities and want to know how to apply them to their role and/or organisation. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/dn5dkdud>

**** The Basics: A Human Rights and Equalities First Approach**

27 and 28 November 2023 (online, 2.00–4.00)

THRE 2-day course for people who are just starting out and want to learn the fundamentals or who know a bit about human rights and equalities and want to know more or are just curious about what a human rights and equalities first approach might be. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/bdhtkyd9>

Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre School's Holocaust Memorial Day Event 2024

23 January 2024 (Glasgow, 10.00–1.30)

Scottish Jewish Heritage Centre event for secondary school pupils, providing an opportunity to hear people whose parents were survivors of the Holocaust, and who made a life in Scotland. For information see <https://sjhc.org.uk/news/hmd2024/>

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>

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Useful Links

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

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

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

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

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

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

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/>

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

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SCoJeC
Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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



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



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

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