

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO is produced by the **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** 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 Parliament website has recently been redesigned, so that links published in previous issues of MEMO may no longer work. To find archive material on the Scottish Parliament website, copy the details from MEMO into the search facility at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/help/searchadvanced.aspx>.

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The UK Parliament is in recess until 3 June 2013.

Immigration and Asylum

Holyrood Parliamentary Question

People of European Roma background

Anne McTaggart: To ask the Scottish Government what steps it is taking to support people of a central and eastern European Roma background living in Scotland. (S4W-14869)

Reply from Shona Robison: The Scottish Government is fully committed to supporting our most vulnerable communities. To this end we are delivering several measures to support people of a central and eastern European Roma background living in Scotland.

During 2012-15 we are providing funding of £255,000 to the Govanhill Law Centre to deliver a project which provides advice and legal representation focusing

Immigration and Asylum Holyrood Parliamentary Question (continued)

largely on the Roma Community. During the same period we are providing £180,000 to Crossroads Youth and Community Association to take forward their Govanhill Together project which promotes cohesion and opportunity by providing one to one advocacy and support particularly for members of the Czech and Slovak Roma communities.

In addition to this, on 18 June 2012, the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, Michael Russell MSP, met with Stephen Curran, Glasgow City Council's Executive Member for Education and Young People and assured him that the Scottish Government will do all it can to assist them undertake further work into identifying key concerns for Glasgow with regards to the education of children from the Roma community.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14869&ResultsPerPage=10>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

British Citizenship

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 6 February (WA 58), what assessment they have made of Dr Thom Brooks' recent evaluation of the Life in the UK Test being "unfit for purpose". [HL156]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): Revised Life in the UK tests based on the new Life in the UK handbook, began on 25 March. The majority of feedback received has been positive. The Government do not share Dr Brooks' view that the handbook goes too far by including information about British culture and history at the expense of practical knowledge.

The test is one of the ways in which those applying for permanent residence or naturalisation as British citizens can demonstrate the required knowledge of language and life in the UK. The majority of those applying will have been in the UK for at least five years and should therefore be aware of practical matters, such as how to contact the emergency services. The Government therefore consider that it is right for the Life in the UK test to concentrate on British history, culture and democracy and that the handbook succeeds in providing information on these topics in an interesting and accessible way.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130521w0001.htm#13052174000582>

Benefits (Immigration)

Andrea Leadsom: What steps he plans to take to restrict access to benefits for new migrants from other EU member states. [155866]

Christopher Chope: What steps he is taking to reduce the eligibility to UK benefits of nationals of other EU member states. [155872]

Reply from the Minister of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Mr Mark Hoban): We are taking steps to tighten further the rules relating to all migrants, not just new migrants. We are strengthening the habitual residence test; the Home Office is creating a statutory presumption that European economic area jobseekers and workers who are involuntarily unemployed will not have a right to reside here after six months unless they can demonstrate they are actively seeking work and have a genuine chance of finding a job; and we will prevent those with no entitlement to work in the UK from claiming contributory benefits.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Andrea Leadsom: Does my hon. Friend agree that it may be a good idea in the longer term to consider a more contributions-based system of benefits for all? One of the biggest problems for many people is although they may have worked and paid into the system for many years, if they are out of work for a period they receive little more than someone who turned up only last week.

Reply from Mark Hoban: My hon. Friend raises an interesting point, but she might be aware that in a contributory benefits system those benefits can be exported to other EU member states, and she may think that is a disadvantage of the contributory system.

Christopher Chope: Why do the Government not insist that out-of-work benefits paid to non-United Kingdom citizens should be paid at the rate of benefit prevailing in the claimant's home country? Should we not insist on that being a red line in the welcome forthcoming renegotiation?

Reply from Mark Hoban: My hon. Friend is aware that we are, in part, operating within a framework determined by the European Union. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State met his German counterpart last week, and further meetings are planned for next month with European employment Ministers to discuss these very issues.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130520/debtext/130520-0001.htm#1305201300023>

English Language: Immigrants

Alan Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps he is taking to support the provision of English language tuition and other educational support for the children of migrant families prior to and during their school years. [156064]

Reply from David Laws: The Government's approach is to give school leaders greater power and responsibility to drive improvement in their schools. This provides them with the freedom and flexibility to offer the right learning opportunities for their pupils for whom English is an additional language.

This approach fits within a broader legal context whereby local authorities have a duty to ensure that education is available for all children of compulsory school age that is appropriate to their age, ability, aptitudes and any special educational needs they may have. This duty applies irrespective of a child's immigration status, country of origin or rights of residence in a particular area.

The evidence suggests that effective outcomes for children learning English as an additional language (EAL) are achieved by schools promoting rapid language acquisition so that these pupils can be included in mainstream education as quickly as possible. Pupils learning EAL are generally taught in a mainstream class alongside their peers. Newly arrived pupils are usually given additional help in learning English by specialist teachers or by bilingual classroom assistants.

Advice and case studies on how to help schools address the needs of EAL learners are available on the Department's and Ofsted's websites.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130520/text/130520w0007.htm#1305211200025>

Overseas Students

Barry Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration she has given to removing international students from the migration statistics. [155543]

Reply from Mark Harper: Students will continue to count in the Office for National Statistics (ONS) net migration figures because students who stay for more than 12 months are long-term migrants, according to the UN definition. The ONS has

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

recently changed its methodology so that in future it will be possible to identify students in emigration as well as immigration flows. This will begin to provide a more accurate measure of the contribution of students to overall net migration from August 2013.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130520/text/130520w0002.htm#13052049000040>

Migrant Domestic Workers

Lord Avebury: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the Kalayaan report *Slavery by Another Name: the Tied Migrant Domestic Worker Visa*. [HL159]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): Kalayaan's report is based on the experiences of 29 overseas domestic workers who have approached them for advice and support and who have come to the UK since the route was reformed in April 2012. In 2012, 15,553 visas were issued to overseas domestic workers coming to work in private households. Therefore the individuals approaching Kalayaan represent only a very small proportion of the total.

The Government recognise that overseas domestic workers can be vulnerable and that there is a risk that abusive employer/employee relationships are imported to the UK. The April 2012 reforms address that risk by ensuring those entering the UK to be overseas domestic workers in a private household do so only for a short time (up to six months) and to accompany an employer who is visiting the UK and with whom they have a pre-existing relationship. To be granted a visa, they must show that they have worked for the employer for 12 months before accompanying him to the UK, and must have signed terms and conditions that certify that the individual will be paid in line with the National Minimum Wage Act. As part of the visa-issuing process, domestic workers are informed of their rights in the UK and where to get help if needed. The Government do not agree with Kalayaan's view that the experiences of the 29 workers who have approached Kalayaan demonstrate that the Government's reforms are not working.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130521w0001.htm#13052174000614>

Immigration: Children

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children from each country of origin arrived in the UK unescorted in (a) 2010, (b) 2011 and (c) 2012; and how many such children have subsequently been returned to their country of origin. [155640]

Reply from Mark Harper: We do not collect data on all unescorted children arriving in the UK. We do know the number of non-British citizen children who were subject to further examination at the border, however, determining how many were unescorted and were subsequently returned to their country of origin, could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130520/text/130520w0002.htm#13052049000037>

Asylum Seekers: Children

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report by the Children's Society Parliamentary Inquiry into Asylum Support for Children and Young People, whether support for applicants will, in future, be increased (1) annually, and (2) in line with income support. [HL155]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Taylor of Holbeach): The Government are in the process of completing an internal review of asylum support rates, which has taken into account the report by the parliamentary inquiry into asylum support for children and young people. Ministers have undertaken to announce the result of the review once it has been completed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130521w0001.htm#13052174000575>

Asylum Seekers

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to allowing asylum seekers the right to work after six months of waiting for a decision on their application.

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, the Government believe that it is important to maintain a distinction between economic migration and asylum. That is why asylum applicants may work only if their application has been outstanding for over a year. A more generous policy would encourage those not in need of protection to claim asylum for economic reasons.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: That is a half-disappointing Answer from the Minister. Does he agree that allowing somebody to work who has been applying for, say, six months would bring them some dignity and some hope? It would also bring in tax revenue and cut the Government's benefit bill. Does he not think that if we continue as now, asylum seekers will have no reason to get up in the morning, no hope and no job to go to? There will just be total despondency. The present system of not allowing asylum seekers to work really just condemns them to penury and despair and is a total denial of their potential.

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I hate to disappoint my noble friend. I accept how important it is for people to work. However, we cannot allow these asylum seekers to work until the 12-month point because it would encourage economic migration. My noble friend talked about the loss of tax revenue, but the current policies of asylum support under Section 95 and Section 4 have reduced expenditure from £1.2 billion in 2003 to below £300 million now.

Baroness Lister of Burtersett: My Lords, will the Minister tell the House what account has been taken of the evidence of the harmful impact on children's well-being of continuing to deny their parents the right to work?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I am sure that it is taken into consideration, but our obligation to asylum seekers is to meet their essential living needs and determine their applications as fast as possible, which we do in a significant number of cases.

Baroness Hamwee: My Lords, the Government have been very careful to keep the distinction between asylum seeking and migration, which, in his Answer to my noble friend, the Minister seemed not to retain. Would he agree that that is important? Would he also agree that it is important not to drive asylum seekers underground, perhaps into the black economy, which denying them the opportunity to work may well do?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I hope that I made the distinction between immigration and asylum seeking very clear indeed. I accept my noble friend's point about the need to avoid driving asylum seekers underground, but that is trumped by the need to avoid making seeking asylum an attractive proposition.

The Lord Bishop of Newcastle: Is the Minister aware that the Church of England's General Synod, representing local churches with considerable first-hand experience of the lives of asylum seekers, voted overwhelmingly that all asylum seekers should have access to work? Does he accept that 12 months is far too long to be unable to provide for their families while waiting for their claim to be resolved?

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I do not accept that 12 months is far too long, because it is backed up by European legislation.

Indeed, there is much good legislation that comes from Europe. The point I would like to make is that asylum seekers can do voluntary work.

Lord Touhig: My Lords, there is anecdotal evidence showing that denying asylum seekers the right to work prevents their integration into British society. Have the Government made an assessment of this aspect of the problem, and if they have not done so, will he agree to do it?

Reply from Earl Attlee: The noble Lord is right: denying asylum seekers the ability to work makes it difficult for them to integrate into our society, and that is what we want. We do not want asylum seekers who have not determined their right to be in the UK to become integrated into the UK, as it makes it more difficult for them to return. When we find that someone has a good claim for asylum, asylum is granted, they can work straightaway and we can then try to integrate them into our society as fast as possible.

Baroness Bakewell: The noble Earl will know that when women seek asylum following often violent sexual abuse in their country of origin, they are most likely to have their application accepted on appeal, so while they hang around without any income, many of them become destitute. How does he propose resolving that problem?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, the legislation is specifically designed to make sure that asylum seekers do not become destitute. They are supported under Sections 95 and 4, particularly Section 95 when their application is being determined. I would like to discuss with the noble Baroness privately why she thinks that female asylum seekers should be more vulnerable to becoming destitute. She has also previously raised with me the difficulties experienced by female asylum seekers, particularly in respect of torture.

Baroness Smith of Basildon: My Lords, asylum seekers sometimes wait years for a decision and delays are increasing. As we have heard, that leaves genuine refugees in limbo and makes it harder to send failed cases home. We currently have a shambolic situation whereby 300,000 people are trapped in the immigration asylum backlog, with 90,000 cases being written off so far or given effective amnesty because papers have been lost in some cases. I know the Minister will tell us that the Government are making organisational changes, but can he say something about the specific practical actions that are being taken to deal with the problem? Does he recognise that the dramatic cut in the number of staff at UK Border Agency has contributed to this backlog?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I do not recognise some of the figures the noble Baroness has quoted. My information is that the expenditure on asylum support has gone down, as I said, from £1.2 billion in 2003 to below £300 million now. I accept that there is a problem in dealing with the legacy backlog, but the Question is about asylum seekers' ability to work. The more we can reduce unfounded asylum claims, the better we can properly determine the genuine applicants and look after them properly.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130520-0001.htm#1305202000168>

Illegal Immigrants

Priti Patel: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people arrested in each of the last five years were found to be living in the UK illegally. [154960]

Reply from Mark Harper: In terms of arrests made by the police, we do not hold this data; each force would need to be approached separately were we to want accurate figures from a police perspective. We work closely with the police to combat illegal immigration; for example, in London we have established Operation

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Nexus targeting immigration offenders in London.

The Home Office makes arrests in the course of immigration enforcement visits where an individual is suspected of committing an immigration related offence.

Data on the reason for arrests are only held at the level of coordinated paper case files or within the notes section of the Home Office's National Operations Database (NOD).

Such data is not aggregated in national reporting systems, which would mean this question could be answered only through a disproportionately expensive manual case search to collate the data.

However, we can confirm that the Home Office arrested 42,340 for immigration related offences between April 2008 and March 2013. This includes arrests made during the course of immigration visits, and those people arrested by police and subsequently transferred to the Home Office.

<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Arrests for immigration related offences</i>
April 2008 to March 2009	9,557
April 2009 to March 2010	7,429
April 2010 to March 2011	7,731
April 2011 to March 2012	7,879
March 2012 to April 2013	9,744

All figures quoted have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130520/text/130520w0002.htm#13052049000035>

Illegal Immigrants

Stephen Barclay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the number of people without the right to remain in the country for each year since 2005. [156646]

Reply from Mark Harper: The clandestine nature of irregular migration and the lack of a common definition mean that it is difficult to produce estimates on the number of people without a right to remain in the UK.

In the last decade there have been two estimates of the illegal migrant population in the UK, giving central estimates of 430,000 (range 310,000 to 570,000) in 2001 (Woodbridge, J. 'Sizing the Unauthorised (Illegal) Migrant Population in the United Kingdom in 2001'. Online Report 29/05, Home Office, London, 2005) and 618,000 (range 417,000 to 863,000) in 2007 (Gordon I., K. Scanlon, T. Travers, and C. Whitehead, 'Economic Impact on London and the UK of an Earned Regularisation of Irregular Migrants in the UK'. GLA Economics, Greater London Authority, London, 2009.).

The 2012 European Migration Network report 'Practical Measures for Reducing Irregular Migration' (Toms and Thorpe, 2012): http://emn.intrasoft-intl.com/Downloads/download.do;jsessionid=BB91F016906F64A5AD8BD0C1D8BA_1586?fileID=2909 sets out the current UK evidence on the illegal migrant population.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130521/text/130521w0002.htm#13052197000119>

Immigration and Asylum (continued)

Press Releases

New statistics show net migration has decreased

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2013/may/72-migration-statistics>

Immigration Statistics

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/201099/immigration-q1-2013snr.pdf

New Publications

Immigration Statistics, January to March 2013

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2013/immigration-statistics-january-to-march-2013>

Children entering detention under Immigration Act powers

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200517/child-detention-apr2013.ods

Monthly asylum application tables

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/200515/asylum-mar2013.ods

Maximising the Development Impact of Migration

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/e-library/documents/policies/immigration/general/docs/maximising_the_development_impact_of_migration.pdf

News

UK immigration policy 'damaging Scottish economy'

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/politics/uk-immigration-policy-damaging-scottish-economy-1-2936945>

Net migration to UK down by a third, figures show

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22643808>

Net migration to the UK: down 89,000 in a year

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/news/datablog/2013/may/23/net-migration-uk-down>

Net migration down by third as students shun UK

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/uk/net-migration-down-by-third-as-students-shun-uk-1-2943259>

UK immigration continues to fall as overseas student numbers shrink

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/uk-immigration-continues-to-fall-as-overseas-student-numbers-shrink-8628822.html>

Stop playing a crude numbers game with immigration. We must be open

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/may/26/britain-must-manage-immigration-better>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

'Deny work to would-be immigrants'

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/uk/deny-work-to-would-be-immigrants-1-2938049>

Afghan interpreters to get right to live in UK

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22620207>

David Laws vetoes plan to force schools to check immigrant status of pupils

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/may/22/immigrant-status-checks-on-schoolchildren-vetoed>

Catholic church says legal aid cuts will harm human trafficking victims

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2013/may/22/catholic-church-legal-aid-trafficking>

The UK's immigration crackdown will lead to a loss of international talent

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/may/24/uk-immigration-crackdown-loss-international-talent>

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Race Relations

News

Afghan teenager out to make peace on streets of Scotland by bringing rival ethnic gangs together in new youth project

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/afghani-teenager-out-make-peace-1900156>

'People in Scotland realise this is not part of the community'

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/people-in-scotland-realise-this-is-not-part-of-the-community.21173207>

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Racism and Religious Hatred

Westminster Parliamentary Question

Schools: Community Cohesion

Baroness Whitaker: To ask Her Majesty's Government how they monitor school governors' responsibility for promoting community cohesion and combating racist bullying; and what have been the results of that monitoring. [HL20]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Nash):

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires all publicly funded schools to promote community cohesion. It is for the governing body to determine how best to fulfil this duty in the light of their local circumstances. Ofsted can identify any inappropriate practices that may undermine community cohesion, and it holds schools to account for the manner in which they handle behaviour and bullying.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130520w0001.htm#1305203000304>

Racism and Religious Hatred (continued) **Press Release**

Statement by Faith Matters and Tell Mama Project

<http://faith-matters.org>

New Publication

International Religious Freedom Report for 2012

<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/irf/religiousfreedom/index.htm#wrapper>

News

Bigotry against Jews and Muslims on the rise, says US

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-22601881>

Scottish Defence League looking to exploit Woolwich outrage

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/scotland/scottish-defence-league-looking-to-exploit-woolwich-outrage-1.96467>

The far right: BNP and EDL mobilise as mainstream leaders strive to contain backlash

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/the-far-right-bnp-and-edl-mobilise-as-mainstream-leaders-strive-to-contain-backlash-8630178.html?origin=internalSearch>

Woolwich murder sparks anti-Muslim backlash

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22664835>

Attacks on Muslims soar in wake of Woolwich murder

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/may/25/woolwich-murder-attacks-on-muslims>

Huge increase in anti-Muslim incidents following murder

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/crime/article3775249.ece>

EDL marches on Newcastle as attacks on Muslims increase tenfold in the wake of Woolwich machete attack which killed Drummer Lee Rigby

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/edl-marches-on-newcastle-as-attacks-on-muslims-increase-tenfold-in-the-wake-of-woolwich-machete-attack-which-killed-drummer-lee-rigby-8631612.html?origin=internalSearch>

London attack: generations divided on feelings about Muslims after killing

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/may/26/public-attitude-muslims-complex-positive>

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Other Holyrood

Parliamentary Questions

Death Certification

Richard Simpson: To ask the Scottish Government whether it plans to modify the new death certification process following the recent pilot exercise. (S4W-14766)

Other Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Michael Matheson: Rather than recommend modifications to the overall process, the test site evaluation highlighted a number of practical issues that could be addressed prior to national implementation in order to make the agreed process run more smoothly.

These issues were mainly related to improving the content and transfer of any required data at different points in the process. They were subsequently discussed by the collective stakeholders who comprise the Death Certification National Advisory Group.

A small panel of key implementation bodies has been established, and work is progressing to address the points raised in advance of the planned national implementation date of April 2014.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14766&ResultsPerPage=10>

Richard Simpson: To ask the Scottish Government whether issues regarding recording ethnicity were identified in the pilot exercise for the new death certification process. (S4W-14769)

Reply from Michael Matheson: Ethnicity is not recorded on the Medical Certificate of Cause of Death (Form 11) and therefore did not form any part of the test sites or their evaluation.

Since 1 January 2012, however, the ethnic group of a deceased person has been recorded as part of the subsequent death registration process, with the consent of the informant.

Over the first six months of 2012, 96.4% of informants provided this information, as publicised at the Ethnic and Health Research Conference in Edinburgh in November 2012.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14769&ResultsPerPage=10>

Richard Simpson: To ask the Scottish Government whether any of the concerns that were raised in evidence to the Health and Sport Committee in session 3 by (a) religious groups and (b) other organisations when considering the Certification of Death (Scotland) Bill were subsequently proved correct and, if so, whether these have been resolved. (S4W-14771)

Reply from Michael Matheson: Since the passing of the Certification of Death (Scotland) Act 2011 at the beginning of Session 4, we have established the Death Certification National Advisory Group, which includes representation from all key organisations with an interest in this work. The group has been instrumental in ensuring that any issues such organisations may have can be discussed and resolved. The process has led to a continual refinement of the new process over the implementation development period.

A concern that was raised early in session 3 related to the possibility of the new review procedures causing significant delay to funerals. The Act therefore contains provisions which allow for an 'expedited procedure', whereby reviews can be conducted in parallel with the registration process in certain circumstances. We have now progressed to ensuring that this expedited procedure will be applied consistently across the country. The Death Certification National Advisory Group, which includes representation from both the Muslim Council of Scotland and the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities, has discussed this matter on more than one occasion. As a result, we are confident that the required consistency will be achieved through Healthcare Improvement Scotland's delivery model. This includes Medical Reviewers located regionally

Other Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

with opportunities for peer review, working to agreed guidance, and under the direct management of one national senior medical reviewer.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14771&ResultsPerPage=10>

Press Release

Scotland can more than afford to be independent

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2013/05/scotland-can-more-than-afford-to-be-independent210>

New Publication

Scotland's Economy: the case for independence

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0042/00422987.pdf>

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New Publication

Making it count - a report into financial management in small charities

<http://www.cfg.org.uk/resources/Publications/~/media/Files/Resources/CFDG%20Publications/Making%20it%20count.ashx>

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Other News

Scottish Human Rights Commission re-election to Chair European Network

<http://scottishhumanrights.com/news/latestnews/article/euronews2013>

The NHS clinics helping victims of genital mutilation

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-22609415>

'Stepping into Diversity' Youth Filmmaking Project

<http://interfaithglasgow.org/youthfilm/>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Holyrood

**** Post-16 Education Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/56717.aspx>

Proposed amendments

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_Bills/Post-16%20Education%20Bill/b18s4-stage2-ml3.pdf

Bills in Progress

Holyrood (continued)

**** Children and Young People Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/62233.aspx>

Education and Sport Committee: Stage 1 evidence session

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=8130&mode=pdf>

Scottish Independence Referendum Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/61076.aspx>

Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/60464.aspx>

Victims and Witnesses Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/59133.aspx>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

The Implications of Scottish Independence for business; higher education and research; and postal services (closing date 7 June 2013)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-innovation-and-skills/inquiries/implications-of-scottish-independence/>

Beyond 2011: user requirements for future population and socio-demographic information (closing date 10 June 2013)

<http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/beyond-2011/consultations-events/consultations/user-requirements.html>

Design of the Data Sharing and Linking Service (closing date 29 May 2013)

<http://www.isdscotland.org/Products-and-Services/eDRIS/DSLS-consultation/>

Scottish Independence Referendum Bill (closing date 6 June 2013)

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_ReferendumScotlandBillCommittee/RefBill_call_for_evidence_21_March_2013.pdf

See Hear: A strategic framework for meeting the needs of people with a sensory impairment in Scotland (closing date 28 June 2013)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00417992.pdf>

Interests of the Members of the Scottish Parliament Bill (closing date 22 July 2013)

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_StandardsProceduresandPublicAppointmentsCommittee/Inquiries/FINAL_consultation_document.pdf

Children and Young People Bill (closing date 26 July 2013)

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_EducationandCultureCommittee/General%20Documents/Call_for_written_evidence.pdf

Consultations (continued)

Review of the Balance of Competences: Asylum and Immigration (closing date 5 August 2013)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/199891/asylum-immigration-call-for-evidence.pdf

Our Communities, Your Duties (no closing date given)

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/KN9FT6N>

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Job Opportunities

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

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Events/Conferences/Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

The housing journey from seeking asylum to settling in Scotland

30 May 2013 in Glasgow (1.15 – 4.45)

Scottish Refugee Council course for those who work with people seeking asylum and refugees to provide an introduction to core issues affecting those seeking sanctuary in Scotland. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://tinyurl.com/c9wuzp9>.

**** this week!**

Working with interpreters

30 May 2013 in Glasgow (1.15 – 4.45)

Scottish Refugee Council course for those who work with non-English speaking service users, including asylum seekers and refugees, who need a comprehensive understanding of how to work with interpreters. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://tinyurl.com/c8k983b>.

Refugee Week

17-23 June 2013

Festival with over 100 arts and cultural events, including music, comedy, theatre, literature, community celebrations, events in Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee, Perth and as far afield as Mull and New Galloway, to celebrate the contributions refugees have made to Scotland and the communities that have welcomed them. For information see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/5877/RefugeeWeek2013_Programme.pdf

**** Putting U Back into Community**

20 June 2013 in Glasgow (6.00 – 8.00)

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights event to explain local Community Planning and Community Councils, and find out how Glasgow's minority ethnic communities can influence what happens in their local areas. For information see <http://www.crer.org.uk/81-front-page-articles/385-putting-u-back-into-community>

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Mental Health and Ethnicity

30 October 2013 in Glasgow (9.30 – 4.00)

West of Scotland Health and Ethnicity Conference to present an evidence based approach to influence the development of a healthier minority ethnic community in Scotland. Deadline for submissions: 31 July 2013. For information contact Sidra Shirjeel sidra.shirjeel@cc3.org.uk or see <http://tinyurl.com/bmvj354>

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Useful Links

Scottish Parliament <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/home.htm>

Scottish Government <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Home>

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

Directgov (links to UK Government Departments)

http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/AToZOfCentralGovernment/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10013528&chk=8b2gQw

European Parliament <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/>

One Scotland Many Cultures <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>

Scottish Refugee Council www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Scottish Inter Faith Council <http://www.scottishinterfaithcouncil.org/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Equality Advisory Support Service <http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com>

Scottish Human Rights Commission <http://scottishhumanrights.com/>

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

SCVO <http://www.scvo.org.uk/scvo/Home/Home.aspx>

Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) <http://www.oscr.org.uk/>

Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS) <http://www.crbs.org.uk/>

Disclosure Scotland <http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/>

BBC News24 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/default.stm>

BBC Parliament online

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/bbc_parliament/default.stm

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



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.scotlandagainstracism.com/>

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