

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO is produced by the **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** in partnership with the **Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland**. 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.*

Contents

[Immigration and Asylum](#)

[Equality](#)

[Racism and Religious Hatred](#)

[Other Holyrood](#)

[Other Westminster](#)

[New Publications](#)

[Other News](#)

[Bills in Progress](#)

[Consultations](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

[Funding Opportunities](#)

[Events/Conferences/Training](#)

[Useful Links](#)

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Immigration and Asylum

Westminster Debate

Police Interpreters

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090311/halltext/90311h0009.htm#09031162000004>

Ministerial Statement

Migration Reform (Points-Based System)

Phil Woolas (Minister for Borders and Immigration): The Government are continuing to deliver the biggest shake-up of the immigration system for over 45 years, delivering a stronger border that maximises the use of new technology, a selective Australian-style points system to control migration and a clear expectation that newcomers need to earn the right to stay.

Last year we made key changes to our border protection, including checking fingerprints before we issue a visa, screening all travellers against watch-lists and introducing a single border force with police-like powers for frontline staff. We also introduced Tiers 1, 2 and 5 of the Points Based System for skilled and temporary workers and new rules for business and special visitors.

Immigration and Asylum Ministerial Statements (continued)

I have laid the immigration rules that will implement Tier 4 of the Points Based System (PBS) for international students.

The PBS is part of a robust system of controls that is designed to prevent illegal migration and to welcome only those migrants that the country needs. This Government are committed to encouraging people from overseas to study in the United Kingdom. We recognise the contribution that international students make to the UK economy and the benefits that encouraging overseas students brings in terms of diffusing British values and fostering a positive view of the UK overseas. At the same time it is also vital that we prevent abuse of our student migration rules by those who whose real intention is to work here without proper authorisation.

The new rules set stricter limits on courses involving work placements to ensure these are not used as a route for disguised employment and limit the amount of time those coming to the UK to study as adults can spend on low level courses.

In addition, the new rules will require those who come here to study to have a licensed sponsor before they can be admitted. In doing so, we will be ensuring that those who benefit from migration take responsibility for the migrants that they bring to the UK, and take more responsibility for their recruitment decisions.

These rules also make specific provision for child students coming to the UK under Tier 4, and clearly set out the care arrangements that must be in place to safeguard these children before they will be able to come to the UK for their education.

Full details of the changes appear in the explanatory memorandum that I laid with them. Policy guidance for those seeking admission under Tier 4 is also being made available today on the United Kingdom Border Agency's website at

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/>

Other key changes made by this Statement of Changes are:

The new rules also make changes to Tier 1 of the Points Based System for highly skilled workers. Applicants under the Tier 1 (Post-Study Work) route will no longer receive points for postgraduate certificates and diplomas other than UK postgraduate certificates of education and those applying for their first period of leave under Tier 1 (General) will no longer receive points for bachelor's degrees or for previous earnings of less than £20,000.

The amendments to Tier 1 (General) were announced by the Home Secretary on 22 February. At a time of rising unemployment it makes sense to control inflow and be more selective about the migrants who come to the UK. This more selective Tier 1 policy will give the most highly skilled migrants—the migrants who make the greatest economic contribution to the UK—access to the labour market while ensuring that other skilled migrants can only enter under Tier 2, which is designed to ensure that migrants are only admitted for skilled work where there is nobody available within the resident labour force to fill the post. An impact assessment for this change and an enhanced resident labour market test is available in the House Library.

The amendment to Tier 1 (Post Study) will also contribute towards this aim while ensuring that the UK remains an attractive destination for skilled migrants studying for a bachelor's degree. The removal of the postgraduate certificates and diploma route from Tier 1 (Post Study Work) also responds to evidence of a high level of abuse of these provisions. However, we will continue to award points for UK postgraduate certificates of education as there is no evidence of abuse of the qualification and students must meet robust requirements including mandatory previous qualifications in order to gain this qualification.

We are also amending the Tier 2 and 5 rules introduced in November to enable overseas qualified nurses and midwives to switch from the Government authorised exchange sub-category of Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) into Tier 2 (General) on completion of their registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council and to allow footballers who come to

Immigration and Asylum Ministerial Statements (continued)

the UK in the creative and sporting sub-category of Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) to switch into Tier 2 (Sportsperson) category of the Points Based System (PBS). The new rules will also allow, subject to certain conditions, private servants in diplomatic households who have been working in the UK in the international agreement sub-category of Tier 5 for a continuous period of five years to be eligible to apply for settlement.

The new rules introduce further clarification of the activities in which business visitors are permitted to engage.

The new rules amend the existing knowledge of life provisions, deleting the provision under which applications for indefinite leave in categories that require the knowledge of language and life in the United Kingdom but do not meet this requirement are automatically considered for an extension of stay.

The new rules make provision for unmarried and same-sex partners of armed forces members who are exempt from immigration control to be granted limited leave and make provision for spouses, civil partners, unmarried and same-sex partners of members of HM Forces to be granted indefinite leave where their serving spouse-civil partner-unmarried or same-sex partner has completed at least five years continuous service.

The new rules also amend the existing definition of public funds.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/wmstext/90310m0001.htm#09031098000012>

Immigration and Asylum (War Crimes)

Phil Woolas (Minister for Borders and Immigration): The Race Relations (Immigration and Asylum) (War Crimes etc.) Authorisation 2007 and the Race Relations (Nationality) (War Crimes etc.) Arrangements 2007 enable the Secretary of State to subject certain applications to more rigorous scrutiny than she subjects like applications from persons of other nationalities to, for the purposes of determining whether the applicant has committed, or been complicit in the commission of, or otherwise been associated with the commission of war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide. Copies of the authorisation have been placed in the Library.

The condition for subjecting these applications to more rigorous scrutiny is that the applicant is a national of a State specified on a list approved personally by the Minister for the purpose of the authorisation and arrangements. I have now reviewed and approved these lists in accordance with our commitment to do so annually.

The authorisation and arrangements will continue to be reviewed on an annual basis and will both remain in force until revoked.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/wmstext/90310m0001.htm#09031098000012>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Laurence Robertson [248431]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the number of failed asylum seekers living in the UK; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Since the phasing out of embarkation controls in 1994 no Government have ever been able to produce an accurate figure for the number of people who are in the country illegally and that includes unsuccessful asylum seekers. By its very nature it is impossible to quantify accurately and that remains the case.

As part of the Government's 10-point plan for delivery, by 2010 over 95 per cent. of non-EEA foreign nationals will be counted in and out of the country.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

This is part of a sweeping programme of border protection which also includes the global roll-out of fingerprint visas, watch-list checks for all travellers before they arrive or depart from the UK and ID cards for foreign nationals.

The Government's plans, set out in "Enforcing the Deal" published on 19 June 2008, set a clear goal to target and remove the most harmful people first, working with local authorities and enforcement agencies to shut down the privileges of the UK to those breaking the rules.

Copies of this document are placed in the Library of the House. It is also available to view at:

http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/managingourborders/enforcementbusinessplan08_09/enforcementbusinessplan08_09.pdf?view=Binary

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/text/90310w0016.htm#090310143000012>

Paul Burstow [260760]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2009, *Official Report*, column 152W, on entry clearances, what the (a) maximum, (b) minimum and (c) average processing time was for those applications not processed within the public service agreement target times; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Phil Woolas: In financial year 2007-08 we only measured visa processing times against PSA targets. We did not monitor performance outside these targets. New customer service standards for visa processing times were introduced in January 2009 and are published on the Border Agency's Visa Services website, together with actual monthly processing times for each visa-issuing post. These are end-to-end processing times which include processing at Visa Application Centres (run by our commercial partners) as well as processing at Visa Sections.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/text/90310w0020.htm#090310143000031>

Lord Hylton [HL1726]: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many economic migrants (a) entered, and (b) left, the United Kingdom in each of the past six months.

Reply from Lord Patel of Bradford: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the UK Statistics Authority. I have asked the authority to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, National Statistician, to Lord Hylton, dated March 2009.

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how many economic migrants (a) entered, and (b) left, the United Kingdom in each of the past six months. (HL 1726)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses the International Passenger Survey (IPS) to estimate flows of international migrants into and out of the United Kingdom. The IPS is a sample survey and cannot provide monthly estimates of migration. However ONS does provide annual estimates of migrants entering and leaving the UK for work-related reasons. The latest migration estimates, for 2007, show that 243,000 people entered the UK for work related reasons and 173,000 left.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90310w0002.htm#090310120000591>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Lord Hylton [HL1681]: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are investigating the hours of work, payment of minimum wages, rates for overtime and unsocial hours, entitlements to holiday pay and sickness benefit and pension rights of migrant and agency workers.

Reply from Baroness Vadera: The Government believe there are significant levels of protection for these workers already in place.

All workers are protected by the Working Time Regulations which cover working hours and statutory holiday pay. The regulations ensure that all workers can only work a maximum of 48 hours per week on average unless they sign a voluntary opt-out agreement. The regulations also provide all workers with 4.8 weeks of statutory paid annual leave per year rising to 5.6 weeks in April 2009. Rates for overtime and working unsocial hours are a contractual matter between the individual parties.

All workers are also entitled to the national minimum wage (NMW). The Government promote and enforce payment of the NMW through simple and effective means which support workers and businesses by deterring employers from underpaying their workers and removing the unfair competitive advantage that underpayment can bring. New automatic penalties of up to £5,000 for employers found not to be complying with the NMW were brought in under the Employment Act 2008. HM Revenue and Customs are responsible for enforcing the national minimum wage. In 2007-08, they helped to restore £3.9 million in arrears to over 19,000 workers.

Entitlement to the state pension scheme is based on the national insurance contributions that an individual pays, is treated as paid or is credited with. Migrant and agency workers can build up entitlement to the state pension in the same way as other workers. Migrant workers also have the same rights as other workers when it comes to access to private pension schemes arranged by the employer. This includes stakeholder pensions where the employer has a statutory duty to designate at least one scheme for which membership is on offer to all employees (including migrant workers) who have been employed for a continuous period of three months. Whether or not these rights apply to agency workers would depend upon whether they are treated as employees for the purpose of the stakeholder pension scheme regulations.

Following the work of the Vulnerable Workers Enforcement Forum, which reported in August 2008, the Government are also redoubling their efforts to ensure that potentially vulnerable workers are fully aware of their existing rights. We have recently launched a £1 million campaign on this, with the initial focus on agency workers specifically.

We will also be launching a consultation in the near future on the implementation of the EU agency worker's directive, which will, consistent with the CBI-TUC agreement of 20 May 2008, introduce equal treatment for agency workers in respect of basic working and employment conditions, after 12 weeks in a given job.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90311w0001.htm#09031182000272>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Lord Hylton [HL1679]: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether certain employers have deducted income tax and national insurance from migrant and agency workers and retained the proceeds; if so, what evidence they have of such practice; and how many prosecutions there have been for such offences in recent years.

Reply from Lord Myners: HM Revenue and Customs does not generally keep data relating to the income tax and national insurance contributions deducted from migrant and agency workers and retained by the employer.

HM Revenue and Customs' specialist Labour Provider Units, which undertake compliance activity regarding gangmasters, does keep data relating to those gangmasters who have been subject to investigation. Since April 2006, the period for which data are readily available, the Labour Provider Units have concluded approximately 570 compliance settlements where there were failures to account correctly for income tax and national insurance contributions.

In the period since April 2006, two gangmasters have been prosecuted by the police with the active assistance of HM Revenue and Customs.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90310w0002.htm#090310120000596>

Lord Hylton [HL1890]: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will always use the discretion conferred by paragraph 2(e) of Schedule 1 to the British Nationality Act 1981 to waive the English language requirement for naturalisation applicants aged between 18 and 65 where it would be unreasonable to expect them to meet those requirements.

Reply from Lord West of Spithead: The use of discretion to waive the requirement is always considered when it is requested by a naturalisation applicant. However, it is not always applied as it is, in some cases, concluded that it would be reasonable for the applicant to meet the requirement.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90311w0001.htm#09031182000267>

Lord Hylton [HL1891]: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether persons with refugee status or enjoying long-term humanitarian protection will be able to start their qualifying periods for naturalisation from the date of their entry into the United Kingdom, provided that they have complied with the conditions in Article 31 of the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees.

Reply from Lord West of Spithead: The qualifying period of residence for naturalisation may begin as soon as the refugee presents him/herself to the authorities. There is an additional requirement for naturalisation that the applicant should not have been in breach of immigration law during the qualifying period. However, those who present themselves to the authorities immediately upon arrival in the United Kingdom will not be considered to be in breach of immigration law during the period in which their asylum claim is under consideration.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90311w0001.htm#09031182000267>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Lord Stoddart of Swindon [HL1618]: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will oppose any proposal from the European Commission to establish a European Union asylum support office.

Reply from Lord West of Spithead: The proposal to which the noble Lord refers will only apply to the UK if we opt in to it. We have until 20 May to decide whether to do this and are currently considering our options.

The proposed European asylum support office would have no powers to determine asylum cases. Sixteen percent of asylum claims in the EU are multiple claims made in more than one member state.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90310w0002.htm#090310120000592>

Mike Penning: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health on the effect of the maximum length of student visas on foreign students studying medicine in the UK. [260566]

Reply from Phil Woolas: Tier 4 of the Points Based System is due to be launched at the end of this month, and under the terms of the Tier, as published in the Tier 4 Statement of Intent (SoI), General Student visas were to have been limited to a maximum period of four years. This period would have covered the duration of the majority of degree courses, but students on longer courses would have had to apply for extensions of stay to complete their courses.

However, in the light of concerns expressed since the publication of the SoI about the position of medical students and others on longer degree courses, I have decided, and recently announced, that degree students may be issued with visas for the full duration of their courses in the United Kingdom, rather than their visas being limited to a maximum of four years.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090309/text/90309w0014.htm#09030930000021>

Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the average length of time taken by her Department to comply with judgments of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal after a decision has been taken by her Department not to appeal. [260546]

Reply from Phil Woolas: Information on the average length of time taken to comply with an Asylum and Immigration Tribunal judgment following a hearing is not available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

However, the UK Border Agency has recently undertaken a piece of work to review the processes involved in granting status following an allowed appeal. The review has identified potential process amendments to make the system more timely and a workshop to consider how changes could be implemented has recently taken place. One of these amendments includes looking into the possibility of introducing targets for the implementation of status following an allowed appeal.

Arrangements have been made to monitor progress in this area.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090309/text/90309w0015.htm#09030930000025>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Chris Huhne [241792]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of people-trafficking-related (a) investigations, (b) trials and (c) convictions have been brought about as a result of the activity of the Metropolitan police human trafficking unit in each year since its inception.

Reply from Jacqui Smith: The data provided by the UK Human Trafficking Centre indicates that of the 92 convictions secured for human trafficking offences 28 have been as a result of operations by the police in the Metropolitan Police Service area. It is not possible to break down the number solely related to the work of the Met's trafficking unit as operations against this crime often involve officers from the boroughs, the Clubs and Vice Unit, as well as from the joint operations involving UKBA staff.

The number of convictions by year is follows:

	<i>Number</i>
2004	1
2005	10
2006	10
2007	1
2008	6

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090309/text/90309w0015.htm#09030930000024>

Westminster Early Day Motion

Neil Gerrard (1046) **Voucher system for asylum seekers** – That this House notes that people seeking asylum whose claims have been refused and who are unable to return home receive section 4 support in the form of supermarket vouchers; welcomes the Refugee Council's recent report, More Token Gestures, which reveals that this voucher system fails to meet the needs of this vulnerable group of people, exacerbates the hardships they face and leaves them open to hostility and abuse; further notes that vouchers are costly to administer and damaging to community relations; and therefore calls on the Government to abandon the inhumane voucher system without delay and to allow people on section 4 support to receive support in cash rather than vouchers and to have the entitlement to work to support themselves.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=38144&SESSION=899>

Press Releases

Changes to the points-based system

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/changestothepbs>

New arrangements for partners

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsfragments/Newarrangementsforpartners>

New publication

Migrants Rights News

<http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/enews/2009/march.htm>

Immigration and Asylum (continued) News

'Big rise' in illegal immigrants

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7928880.stm>

UK to become major migrant destination

http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/other/display.var.2494894.0.UK_to_become_major_migrant_destination.php

Calais migrant film sparks national debate

http://www.sundayherald.com/international/shinternational/display.var.2495523.0.calais_migrant_film_sparks_national_debate.php

'Migrant tax' to be introduced

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/uk/article5908542.ece>

Immigration: Passage to Britain

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article5908264.ece>

Seven million immigrants can't be good for Britain

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/4992172/Seven-million-immigrants-cant-be-good-for-Britain.html>

[TOP](#)

Equality

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Lyn Brown [261694]: Whether the proposed new equality duty will apply to equality of opportunity in respect of religion and belief.

Reply from Vera Baird: Yes, the new single public sector equality duty will require public authorities to advance equality of opportunity for people of different religions or beliefs and for those of none. As part of being committed to creating a fair society with fair chances for everyone, we will tackle the discrimination and disadvantage that people can face because of their religion or belief or because they hold no belief, as well as the barriers that they can face when accessing public services such as health care. Extending the duty to cover religion or belief will also end the discrepancy whereby Sikhs and Jews are covered by the duties, but atheists, Muslims and Christians, for instance, are not.

Lyn Brown: I thank my hon. and learned Friend for that answer. The issue has been raised with me by constituents who are a little concerned, so can she emphatically tell the House that it is not about promoting any particular religion, but about protecting those who suffer adverse discrimination because they practise their religion?

Reply from Vera Baird: Yes, I can. That is an important distinction to make. We are interested in getting public authorities to think about those individuals who, as a result of their religious belief, or the manifestation of that belief, face discrimination or disadvantage, so the duty should act as a spur to public authorities to take action to address the under-representation of Muslim women, for instance, or to tackle the health barriers that disadvantage some people because of a religious limitation on from whom they are prepared to take health advice. That is an important distinction to draw. It is about making sure that no one suffers when there is evidence of need.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/debtext/90310-0003.htm#09031097000024>

Equality

Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Evan Harris [261695]: What safeguards she plans to include in the equality Bill to protect employees and service users against discrimination by religious organisations providing public services.

Reply from Vera Baird: Existing legislation already protects employees and service users against discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, disability, sex, gender reassignment, and religion or belief; it also protects employees on the ground of age. The equality Bill will maintain all that and extend protection on the ground of age to the provision of goods and services. Religious organisations providing public services are subject to the requirements of discrimination law in the same way as other organisations, save for very limited exceptions designed to ensure that people's rights to hold or manifest a belief are not interfered with. Religious organisations carrying out public functions will be fully subject to the new equality duty.

Dr. Harris: I am grateful to the Minister for her answer. Does she accept, however, that there is concern among people in the lesbian and gay community, for example, that as employees of organisations that are tendered out to religious organisations—as the Government propose, not unreasonably—they might be the victims of discrimination? Is she at least willing to meet people from that community—and, indeed, from religious organisations—in an attempt to reassure them that the legislation that she describes will have an impact and prevent this kind of discrimination?

Reply from Vera Baird: Yes, of course. I will be very happy to meet anyone with concerns about what we are proposing to do. The hon. Gentleman will recall that we have already spent an extra period of time consulting on this particular provision. In July, we announced that we were unsure whether to proceed with the requirement that we should fully implement the entire duty in favour of religious organisations. We then consulted 11 religious and non-religious organisations and re-consulted 20-odd public authorities. We also took in the views of four lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups and women's groups. There was more or less a clear consensus that the provision should progress in the way that I have set out, and that there were no major problems with it, but if, despite that, there are still concerns, of course I will see people again.

Ms Sally Keeble: Is my hon. and learned Friend aware that the women working in the Church—particularly women clergy; I have had a case in my constituency—do not have the same safeguards against discrimination and harassment in the Church? Will she therefore work with the Church Commissioners and the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform, which has a working party on this subject, to ensure that women clergy and vicars are protected against discrimination and harassment at work?

Reply from Vera Baird: Yes. I suppose that this question deals primarily with religious organisations delivering public services, and, in that situation, they will be entirely subject to the whole of the law. But, of course, if there are workers who are entitled to bring discrimination and harassment claims against Churches, we must ensure that they are adequately protected against that kind of unacceptable treatment.

Nicholas Winterton: Will the Minister accept that there must be a sensible balance in this debate? There are many religious organisations that provide valuable public services, but they have long-standing, genuine, sincere beliefs and philosophies. It would be a great shame if, for whatever reason, they had to stop providing those public services. There is always an alternative organisation to help those people who feel that they might be discriminated against. Should there not be a balance in a sensible country?

Equality

Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Vera Baird: In a sense, there is a balance, in that if it is a genuine occupational requirement that someone should, for instance, adhere to a particular religion—a vicar in the case of Christianity—an exception is made for such a thing, but it is really not conceivable that we can allow public functions to be delivered in a discriminatory way.

David Burrowes: Does the Minister share my concern that equality legislation is in danger of being brought into disrepute by cases such as that of nurse Caroline Petrie, who was disciplined for offering to pray for her patients. Do we not need to tackle the concern of many with religious beliefs, and of Christians in particular, who themselves say that they are facing increased discrimination?

Reply from Vera Baird: I do not think that that question was about the equality legislation that we are bringing into force. Clearly, everybody has to behave in a balanced and sensible way, and the whole point of the legislation is to promote good cultural relations and good relations among people of all kinds and all faiths. We will drive on with that purpose.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090310/debtext/90310-0003.htm#09031097000025>

Lord Ouseley [HL1611]: To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend to respond to the recent report Race at the Top published by Business in the Community, which stated that, since 2000, government-led race equality measures have had minimal impact in increasing top-level opportunities for black and minority ethnic managers.

Reply from Baroness Andrews: Increasing race equality is a government priority. On 24 February, we launched a wide-reaching consultation on improving opportunities for Black, Asian and minority ethnic people. Our discussion document, Tackling Race Inequalities, invites views on what the Government's future approach to promoting race equality should be. The document explicitly acknowledged the findings in the Race to the Top report that many Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups are under-represented in senior management positions. The discussion document can be found at

www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1155456.pdf.

The progress achieved in recent years against the Government's strategy for race equality and community cohesion, Improving Opportunity, Strengthening Society, is described in the three published progress reports, the most recent of which was also published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 24 February. This can be found at

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/raceequalitythirdreport

Copies of the discussion document and the progress report have been placed in the Library of the House.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90310w0001.htm#090310120000583>

New publication

Equality issues in Wales: a research review

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/publicationsandresources/Documents/Equalities/Equality%20issues%20in%20Wales%20-%20a%20research%20review.pdf>

[TOP](#)

Racism and Religious Hatred

Westminster Debate

Race Equality

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090312/halltext/90312h0001.htm#09031252000001>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Baroness Warsi [HL1569]: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many racially motivated crimes in England and Wales in each of the past five years (a) were recorded by the police, (b) resulted in a police caution, and (c) were prosecuted, broken down by police force.

Reply from Lord West of Spithead: The available information relates all racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by the police. It is not possible separately to identify racially motivated offences from the recorded crime data collected by the Home Office.

The police data are based on the number of offences recorded in each financial year. Cautions and prosecutions data have been provided by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform and are based on the number of offenders. These data are published on a calendar year basis and are counts of persons by their principal offence. For these reasons the two datasets are not directly comparable.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90310w0001.htm#090310120000579>

David Amess [263286]: To ask the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills what steps his Department is taking to reduce levels of anti-Semitism in universities; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from David Lammy: This Government deplore acts of racial or religious intolerance and we are committed to tackling anti-Semitism and any form of racial intolerance. Higher education institutions have the primary responsibility for ensuring that their students are not subject to threatening or abusive behaviour on campus and addressing any complaints received.

We are committed to encouraging higher education institutions to ensure that discrimination has no place in any of their policies or practices and to act swiftly when incidents or complaints are brought to their attention. The Department is currently in the process of establishing a dedicated sub-group to the Cross Government Working Group against anti-Semitism to facilitate discussions between the Jewish community and higher education stakeholders.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090311/text/90311w0032.htm#09031193000152>

Racism and Religious Hatred Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

David Amess [261522]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what account her Department takes of published anti-Semitic views of individuals seeking to enter the United Kingdom in deciding whether to grant entry; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Where there is clear, reliable evidence that a non British citizen has engaged in one or more of a list of unacceptable behaviours, and has not clearly and publicly repudiated their previous extremist views or actions, there will be a presumption towards exclusion from the UK. The list includes behaviour likely to incite racial or religious hatred. Each case will be considered carefully to determine whether the evidence provided demonstrates that the person's actions or activities constitute unacceptable behaviour and therefore justify exclusion from the UK.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090311/text/90311w0012.htm#09031193000009>

News

Scots warned to beware the rise of credit crunch racists

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/latestnews/Scots-warned-to-beware-the.5050583.jp>

BT shuts down 'anti-Semitic' Catholic website

http://www.sundayherald.com/news/heraldnews/display.var.2495567.0.bt_shuts_down_a_antisemitic_catholic_website.php

[TOP](#)

Other Holyrood

News

New writing on the wall at Holyrood?

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/nmCentre/news/news-09/pa09-005.htm>

[TOP](#)

Other Westminster

Parliamentary Question

Lord Laird [HL1907]: To ask Her Majesty's Government what part the International Convention on Human Rights of 1948 plays in the development of their foreign policy.

Reply from Lord Malloch-Brown: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights last December. We are determined to continue to ensure that this landmark document is as powerful in practice as it is in aspiration.

The promotion of democracy and human rights is integral to what the FCO does. They are essential to the delivery of our strategic goals whether in combating the global scourge of terrorism and its causes; preventing conflict and fostering its resolution; promoting a high-growth, low-carbon global economy; or strengthening

Other Westminster

Westminster Parliamentary Question (continued)

institutions such as the UN, EU and the Commonwealth, through which the international community can most effectively come together to make a difference in the world.

Integrating human rights in our overall foreign policy goals sends a powerful message that human rights and democracy are fundamental to progress in tackling today's global challenges.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/90311w0002.htm#09031182000280>

Press Release

Muslim women to be trained for public office

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1168345>

[TOP](#)

New Publication

Improving the Outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Pupils

<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/DCSF-RR077.pdf>

[TOP](#)

Other News

Children with ethnic backgrounds do best in Scots schools

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/2009/03/10/children-with-ethnic-backgrounds-do-best-in-scots-schools-86908-21187445/>

Private faith schools 'failing to prepare pupils for British life', claims Ed Balls

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/4963696/Private-faith-schools-failing-to-prepare-pupils-for-British-life-claims-Ed-Balls.html>

Europe's Roma - stuck in a "vicious circle" of despair

http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/story_page/016-51268-068-03-11-902-20090309STO51242-2009-09-03-2009/default_en.htm

[TOP](#)

Bills in Progress

** New or updated this week

Holyrood

Arbitration Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/19-Arbitration/index.htm>

Education (Additional Support for Learning) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/16-EdAddSup/index.htm>

Bills in Progress

Holyrood (continued)

**** Criminal Justice and Licensing Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/index.htm>

Bill as introduced

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/b24s3-introd.pdf>

Delegated Powers Memorandum

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/b24s3-introd-dpm.pdf>

Finance Committee consideration

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/finance/or-09/fi09-0702.htm#Col1009>

**** Health Boards (Membership and Elections) Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/13-HealthBoards/index.htm>

proposed amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/13-HealthBoards/b13s3-stage3-ml.pdf>

Subordinate Legislation Committee Report

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/subleg/reports-09/sur09-17.htm>

Stage 3 consideration of amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-09/sor0312-02.htm#Col15773>

Stage 3 debate

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-09/sor0312-02.htm#Col15803>

Bill as passed

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/officialReports/meetingsParliament/or-09/sor0312-02.htm#Col15803>

Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/09-AggPrej/index.htm>

**** Scottish Local Government (Elections) Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/21-SLGelections/index.htm>

Finance Committee evidence from the Scottish Government

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/finance/or-09/fi09-0702.htm#Col997>

**** Sexual Offences Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/11-sexualOffences/index.htm>

proposed amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-09/bb-03-11g.htm>

and

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-09/bb-03-12g.htm>

Bills in Progress (continued) **Westminster**

**** Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/borderscitizenshipandimmigration.html>

House of Lords Select Committee on the Constitution report

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldselect/ldconst/54/54.pdf>

proposed amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldbills/015/amend/ml015-iv.htm>

[TOP](#)

Consultations (closing date)

**** New or updated this week**

**** closes this week!**

Scottish Gypsy Traveller (Discrimination) Bill (21 March 2009)

<http://enf.org.uk/blog/?p=762>

Inquiry into Race in the Construction Industry (24 March 2009)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/policyresearch/usinglegalpowers/pages/raceandconstructionfi.aspx>

Forced Marriage: A Civil Remedy? (28 March 2009)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/248674/0071298.pdf>

Regulations to implement the Human Fertilisation & Embryology Act 2008

(30 March 2009)

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Consultations/Liveconsultations/DH_092465?IdcService=GET_FILE&dID=180685&Rendition=Web

Scottish Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan (31 March 2009)

http://scottishhumanrights.com/documents/SHRC_StrategicPlan.pdf

Call for submissions of practices and initiatives in education that aim to combat intolerance against Muslims (15 May 2009)

<http://tandis.odhr.pl/index.php?p=edu,mus,map>

[TOP](#)

Job Opportunities

[Click here](#) to find out about job opportunities advertised in **MEMO+ Recruitment**

[TOP](#)

Funding Opportunities

Community Chest (closing date 31 March 2009)

Small grant programme providing grants of up to £1,000 and free training to help small community groups in Scotland sustain and develop their activities. For information see <http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/grant-schemes/Comm>

Call for proposals: Fundamental rights and citizenship (closing date 22 April 2009)

The general objectives of the Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme are the following:

- a. to promote the development of a European society based on respect for fundamental rights as recognised in Article 6(2) of the Treaty on European Union, including rights derived from citizenship of the Union;
- b. to strengthen civil society and to encourage an open, transparent and regular dialogue with it in respect of fundamental rights;
- c. to fight against racism, xenophobia and anti-Semitism and to promote better interfaith and intercultural understanding and improved tolerance throughout the European Union;
- d. to improve contacts, exchange of information and networking between legal, judicial and administrative authorities and the legal professions, including by way of support to judicial training, with the aim of better mutual understanding among such authorities and professionals.

For more information see <http://www.enar-eu.org/Page.asp?docid=20468&langue=EN>

[TOP](#)

Events/Conferences/Training

** New or updated this week

**** this week!**

Trustee Duties / Consents & Notifications

17 March 2009 in Nairn (10.30 – 12.30)

19 March 2009 in Wick (2.00 – 4.00)

Office of the Scottish charity Regulator video conference about charity trustee duties, including when to seek consent from, or notify, OSCR of proposed changes to a charity. For information contact Derek Galbraith 01382 346838 / communications@oscr.org.uk or see <http://www.oscr.org.uk/DocumentViewer.aspx?ID=b834981a-ff9c-46ab-98f4-61a8429be739>

**** this week!**

Equality and Human Rights Commission

18 March 2009 in Aberdeen

Opportunities for advice-giving and frontline representatives of voluntary, community, and educational organisations to meet the EHRC Legal Team and find out more about the Commission and how to work with it, and to let the EHRC know what issues are most significant to you and your service users. For information contact James Andrew 0141 228 5917 / David Reilly 0141 228 5967 / roadshow@equalityhumanrights.com

Promoting Equality, Dignity and Respect in the Workplace

25 March 2009 in Glasgow (10.30 – 3.00)

BEMIS / STUC conference to promote a better understanding and deployment of employment rights within the race equality agenda. For information contact Adnan Miyasar 0141 548 8047 / Adnan.miyasar@bemis.org.uk

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Refugee Integration: the interface between policy, research & practice

27 March 2009 in Glasgow (9.00 – 3.30)

Scottish Refugee Council, and Institute for Advanced Studies conference to inform delegates of the current policy-making agendas at EU, UK and Scottish levels; highlight the implications of changes to those working with refugees and asylum seekers; give delegates opportunities to feed their views into the development of research into refugee integration; highlight the work of service providers delivering refugee integration programmes and the experiences of refugees themselves; and provide networking opportunities to delegates from across different fields. For information see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/SRC_Spring_Conf or contact graeme.corbett@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

An Introduction to Working with Asylum Seekers & Refugees

2 April 2009 in Glasgow

9 June 2009 in Glasgow

20 August 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council seminar for people working with asylum seekers and refugees who need a comprehensive understanding of the core issues affecting those seeking sanctuary in Scotland. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=67>

Equality and Diversity

23 April 2009 in Aberdeen (9.30 – 4.30)

SCVO seminar exploring the myths and facts surrounding the six equality strands - race, gender, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation and age. For information contact Jane Baillie jane.baillie@scvo.org.uk / 0131 474 8019.

Working with interpreters

28 April 2009 in Glasgow

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 some of the key issues of working with interpreters. For information see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=72> or contact SRC 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Introduction to the Needs of Refugee Women

21 May 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course for people working with asylum seekers and refugees who need a comprehensive understanding of the core issues affecting women seeking sanctuary in Scotland. For information contact SRC 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=65>

Introduction to Working with Asylum Seekers & Refugees

9 June 2009 in Glasgow

20 August 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course to identify the issues and concerns participants have in relation to working with asylum seekers and refugees, provide information on legal, political, economic and historical factors in relation to people seeking asylum, share ideas for developing good practice, and to identify strategies and resources for work with refugees. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=73>

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

UKBA (formerly NASS) Asylum Support - The Essentials

3 September 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course covering the asylum process and the legal framework, support arrangements available to asylum seekers from the beginning to the end of the asylum process, and entitlements for refugees and unaccompanied or separated asylum-seeking children. For information contact SRC 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see

<http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=60>

[TOP](#)

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.eu.int/parliament/public.do?language=en>

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/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Scotland Helpline 0845 604 5510

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

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

Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk

Social Economy Scotland <http://www.socialeconomyscotland.info/content/index.asp>

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

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>

Useful Links (continued)

BBC Parliament online

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

[TOP](#)



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 Charity SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



BEMIS (the Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland) is the umbrella body for ethnic minority organisations in Scotland. It aims to strengthen the capacity of the ethnic minority voluntary sector; raise the profile and coordinate the voice of this sector; and take a lead on policy issues to ensure that issues of concern are raised with government and other relevant bodies. <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/>