

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

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Contents

[Immigration and Asylum](#)

[Race Relations](#)

[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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The Scottish Parliament is in recess until 24 October 2011.

Immigration and Asylum

Westminster Ministerial Statements

Changes in Immigration Rules

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): The Government are today laying before the House a statement of changes in the immigration rules. The first change will allow the UK Border Agency to refuse entry or stay in the UK to those subject to immigration control with outstanding unpaid NHS charges of £1,000 or more. This change will be phased in from 1 November.

On 18 March 2011, I announced the Government's response to the 2010 consultation on refusing entry of stay to NHS debtors and signalled my intention to lay a new rules change in respect of outstanding NHS charges. This will deter overseas visitors from misusing the NHS and encourage overseas visitors to meet their obligations to pay for the NHS services that they use. The UK Border Agency will continue to work closely with the Department of Health on a range of measures to prevent health tourism.

I can also confirm that we are publishing the impact assessment for the changes in respect of outstanding NHS charges on the UK Border Agency website and I will arrange for a copy to be placed in the House Library.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Ministerial Statements (continued)

A minor technical change to the evidential requirements for settlement is also being made which will oblige economic migrants to provide supporting documents to show they are earning a minimum amount before they are granted settlement.

I am also making minor changes to rule 317 on parents, grandparents and other dependent relatives to improve the drafting and transparency of the rule. Consequential changes will be made to rule 319(v) which deals with the dependent relatives of refugees and those with humanitarian protection.

We are also making some technical corrections to the rules for other dependent relatives of a refugee or beneficiary of humanitarian protection. We are deleting a provision in the rules that requires an applicant to be refused if he or she has one or more unspent convictions within the meaning of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 when they apply for entry clearance or further leave to remain in this route. This provision was included in error, as Government policy is that indefinite leave to remain (ILR) should be refused to people with unspent convictions, but not that an application for entry clearance or limited leave to remain should be refused. We are also clarifying the existing rules to ensure that other family members who wish to switch into the further leave to remain or settlement route in this category can do so. The amendments will also affect the criteria for granting settlement as we are clarifying the need for an applicant to have valid leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom so that those who have overstayed do not qualify under the rules.

We are also making minor, technical changes to the immigration rules on students, including: to reflect that Education Scotland is the new name for Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Education; to amend the definition of UK-recognised body to confirm that this includes foundation programme offices for post-graduate doctors and dentists; to clarify the definition of who benefits from the streamlined application process for tier 4. A minor correction is being made to the rules laid on 6 April to make provision for spouses and civil partners of a British citizen or settled person in the United Kingdom in line with the policy intention relating to in-country switching.

Minor changes are also being made to the immigration rules relating to unmarried and same-sex partners of a British citizen or settled person in the United Kingdom to enable in-country switching into this route, reflecting the policy intention.

The last change relates to the Olympic and Paralympic games. The UK needs to manage effectively the entry and stay of persons accredited for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games such as athletes, umpires, technical staff and broadcasters and other individuals before, during and after the games in order to deliver a safe and secure games. Such persons are referred to as games family members.

In order to do this, and fulfil contractual and agreements reached with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG), it is necessary to make two sets of changes to the UK's immigration rules.

The first change amends appendix 1 to the immigration rules by exempting certain holders of the Olympic Identity and Accreditation Card (OIAC) and Paralympic Identity and Accreditation Card (PIAC) from visa requirements during the accreditation period of the games, which runs from 30 March 2012 to 8 November 2012, providing the card is presented with a valid national passport or other document satisfactorily establishing nationality and identity, and providing the requirements set out in the statement of changes to the immigration rules have been met.

The second change amends the visitor category of the immigration rules by creating two new categories of visitor—an "Olympic or Paralympic games family member visitor" and an "Olympic or Paralympic games family member child visitor". Leave in these two visitor categories will only be available during the accreditation period of the games to games family members who meet the requirements of the immigration rules. Individuals granted

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Ministerial Statements (continued)

leave to enter or remain as an Olympic or Paralympic games family member visitor and Olympic or Paralympic games family member child visitor, during the period of 30 March 2012 to 8 May 2012, will be admitted for up to six months, while those who are granted leave to enter or remain during the period of 9 May 2012 to 8 November 2012 will be admitted up until, and including, 8 November 2012. In both cases conditions prohibiting recourse to public funds and restricting employment to employment only related to Olympic and Paralympic games, will be attached to the leave.

These changes to the immigration rules will help the UK facilitate the entry and stay of games family members in the UK during the games while also allowing the UK Border Agency to maintain a robust immigration control.

We previously informed Parliament, in the explanatory memoranda accompanying the Immigration (Provision of Physical Data) (Amendment) Regulations 2011 and the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 (Amendment) Order 2011 and during their debate in the House of Commons and House of Lords, that we would be amending the Channel Tunnel (International Arrangements) Order 1993 and Channel Tunnel (Miscellaneous Provisions) Order 1994 to enable the collection of fingerprints and facial images from visa nationals accredited for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games at the UK's train juxtaposed controls in France and Belgium. The aforementioned 2011 regulations enable biometric information to be taken from persons accredited for the Olympic and Paralympic games who would usually be required to apply for a visa and therefore have their biometric information taken as visa nationals but as part of the host city contract Her Majesty's Government gave a commitment that in specified circumstances there would be no requirement for certain holders of an accreditation card to apply for a visa before travelling to the UK. The amendments to the channel tunnel orders are no longer considered necessary as the 2011 regulations, when read with the provisions of the channel tunnel orders, provide us with the legal power to make the collection at the UK's train juxtaposed controls in France and Belgium.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/wmstext/111010m0001.htm#1110102000009>

Asylum Procedures and Reception Conditions Directives

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): The Government have decided not to opt in to the European Commission's amended proposals for asylum procedures and reception conditions directives.

The Government have grave concerns about the way in which the provisions in the amended reception conditions directive would allow asylum seekers to work after six months if a decision at first instance has not been reached and would place stringent restrictions on member states' ability to detain asylum seekers in exceptional circumstances. These restrictions are unnecessary in a system such as ours where detainees have the right to apply to the courts for release on bail, or to bring a legal challenge against their detention.

The amended procedures directive would place restrictions on accelerated procedures, and on the making of asylum appeals non-suspensive (where a right of appeal can be exercised out of country only), which would endanger a number of systems that the UK operates to manage straightforward asylum claims effectively—in particular our detained fast track which provides speedy but fair decisions for any asylum seekers whose claims are capable of being decided quickly.

Unfortunately, rather than giving us the correct means by which to consider asylum claims effectively and to deter abuse, both directives subject member states' asylum systems to unjustified regulation and focus excessively on enhancing the rights of all asylum seekers whether their claims are valid or not. This would have significant cost implications for the UK.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Ministerial Statements (continued)

The Government will continue to approach forthcoming legislation in the area of justice and home affairs on a case-by-case basis, with a view to maximising our country's security, protecting Britain's civil liberties and enhancing our ability to control immigration.
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/wmstext/111013m0001.htm#11101330000007>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

UK Border Agency

Eilidh Whiteford: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the policy of the UK Border Agency is on responding to constituency cases raised by regional list members of the (a) Scottish Parliament, (b) Welsh Assembly and (c) Northern Ireland Assembly. [74259]

Reply from Damian Green: The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), takes the view that immigration is a matter reserved for the Westminster Parliament and therefore inquiries from Members of Devolved Legislatures (MDLs) on individual immigration cases do not receive a substantive reply. MDLs are informed that their constituent should raise their query through their Westminster MP.

However, substantive replies are given to all Ministers of devolved legislatures on individual immigration cases they raise in their ministerial capacity.

Inquiries from MDLs on matters of policy and general inquiries receive full, substantive, replies from the UK Border Agency.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/text/111013w0002.htm#11101360000019>

Immigration

Lord Tebbit: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether net immigration has fallen since they came into office. [HL11957]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Lord Henley): Provisional Office for National Statistics estimates of long-term international migration show that net migration fell from 242,000 in the year ending September 2010 to 239,000 in the year ending December 2010.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111011w0001.htm#11101172000336>

Entry Clearances

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals relating to visa applications under the asylum category have been (a) upheld and (b) refused in the last 12 months. [73055]

Reply from Damian Green: It has been assumed that the request is for figures on determinations of appeals on applications for asylum. In the last 12 months for which data are available (July 2010 to June 2011), there were 12,503 asylum appeals determined at the First-tier Tribunal of the Immigration and Asylum Chamber. Of these 12,503 appeal determinations, 3,364 appeals were allowed (upheld) and 8,474 appeals were dismissed (refused). The remaining 665 appeals were withdrawn.

These data were published in Table as.14.q of Immigration Statistics: April to June 2011. Further information on asylum is available from the immigration Statistics releases available in the Library of the House and the Home Office Science website: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/migration/migration-statistics1/>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many appeals for visa applications in the Family Migrant category have (a) been upheld and (b) failed in the last 12 months. [73435]

Reply from Damian Green: The number of appeals against visa applications allowed and dismissed for the settlement category in the year ending June 2011 (the latest date for which figures are available) were 6,610 allowed and 5,440 dismissed. The number of appeals against visa applications allowed and dismissed for the family visit category for the year ending June 2011 (the latest date for which figures are available) were 16,961 allowed and 18,421 dismissed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111012/text/111012w0001.htm#11101264000045>

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Matthew Offord: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether she plans to provide a transitional period to educational and language service providers to comply with new accreditation requirements. [72580]

Reply from Damian Green: The Government have adopted a phased approach to the implementation of the new educational oversight requirements. The Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), announced the new arrangements in Parliament on 22 March. On 31 March a Statement of Intent was published setting out the changes and implementation timetable in more detail.

On 13 June the Government announced that educational oversight of private sector providers would largely be carried out by the Quality Assurance Agency and the Independent Schools Inspectorate. The deadline for applications to these bodies was 9 September. All sponsors must have been satisfactorily inspected or reviewed by one of the approved review bodies by December 2012.

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the International Passenger Survey in measuring the number of student migrants in the UK. [71190]

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

Letter from Stephen Penneck, dated September 2011:

As Director General for the Office for National Statistics, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question concerning what assessment has been made of the effectiveness of the International Passenger Survey to measure the number of student migrants in the UK (71190).

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 continuous voluntary sample survey conducted by ONS. It covers the principal air, sea and Channel Tunnel routes between the UK and countries outside the British Isles.

The IPS provides a good measure of the numbers of students arriving into the UK for formal study. Our latest provisional figures for the year ending Dec 2010 show that 228,000 migrants arrived to the UK for formal study. This estimate has a standard error percentage of 3 per cent, which is considered to be a reliable estimate.

The current IPS questionnaire is not adequate for accurately identifying emigrants who originally migrated to the UK for study. The IPS records a passenger's main reason for migrating. Therefore a passenger's main reason for emigrating from the UK may bear no resemblance to the person's main activity while they have been resident in the UK. For example, a person who has been studying in the UK may

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

be emigrating to work abroad. This means that it is currently not possible to derive a net student migration figure.

ONS have addressed these limitations by developing a number of changes to the IPS, which will be effective from January 2012. These changes will identify emigrants who have been studying in the UK and thus will enable a net student migration figure to be estimated from the first quarter of 2012.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000029>

Asylum

Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will bring forward proposals to allow asylum seekers who have been (a) waiting for more than six months for their cases to be concluded and (b) refused asylum but temporarily cannot be returned home to be given permission to work until their cases are resolved; and if she will make a statement. [70651]

Reply from Damian Green: Currently, asylum seekers can apply for permission to work if they have not received an initial decision on their claim within 12 months. This is in line with the requirements of the European Union (EU) directive on the reception of asylum seekers. The Government have no plans to reduce this time period to six months, nor to extend access to the labour market to all asylum seekers who have been refused asylum, but who face a temporary barrier to their return. Extending the permission to work policy in this way risks abuse of the asylum system by economic migrants and detracts from the aim of encouraging those whose claim has failed to return home voluntarily. Our focus, through the Asylum Improvement Project, is on implementing new ways to speed up the processing of applications, while also improving the quality of decision making. Overall, performance has improved in the last year. In particular, we are making decisions more quickly—consistently deciding over 50% of asylum cases within 30 days—without sacrificing quality.

Hilary Benn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many legacy asylum cases remain to be dealt with by the UK Border Agency (UKBA); how many of these relate to people living in Leeds Central constituency; and when the UKBA expects all legacy cases to be cleared. [71071]

Reply from Damian Green: As reported to the Home Affairs Select Committee, the UK Border Agency completed its review of all cases in the legacy cohort at the end of March 2011. A total of 500,500 cases were reviewed as part of the programme and the majority (455,000) had been fully concluded. The agency has also issued 3,000 grants which are subject to information from the applicant in order to complete a final security check. The agency is now actively managing around 18,000 cases which have been caseworked to the furthest possible point but barriers to their removal remain, such as ongoing litigation, impending prosecution, incomplete legal or criminal proceedings, non-compliance or because they are from difficult to remove countries. These cases are being actively caseworked and will be concluded when those barriers have been lifted.

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the cost of training a new asylum casework team to deal with legacy cases which were not concluded by the previous legacy team. [72823]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency has advised that the staff allocated to the Case Assurance and Audit Unit, previously worked in the Case Resolution Directorate. The staff are fully versed in all aspects of asylum casework. Training costs will therefore be nil.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000006>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Asylum

Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to the public purse was of supporting asylum seekers who were not able to work in each of the last five years; and if she will make a statement. [70722]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency provides support to everyone who claims asylum and who would otherwise be destitute, until they have exhausted their appeal rights. Support is also provided to failed asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute and who face a legitimate barrier to return. Asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers are not permitted to work while the case is being considered other than in exceptional circumstances where there has been a delay of more than 12 months in deciding their case.

The cost of asylum support in the last five years was as follows:

	£ million
2006-07	524
2007-08	485
2008-09	511
2009-10	524
2010-11	401

Asylum support costs have been reduced by over £100 million in the last year, a 20% reduction, and we expect to bring costs down again this year.

In the last year the proportion of asylum seekers removed within one year of their application have nearly doubled and around 60% of applicants now receive a decision within one month. Our vision is an asylum system with swifter case conclusions and no backlogs, delivered at significantly lower cost to the taxpayer.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111011/text/111011w0001.htm#11101197000009>

Asylum

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much section 4 asylum support was granted in the 12 months to 1 September 2011. [73056]

Reply from Damian Green: Expenditure on Section 4 asylum support incurred by UK Border Agency in the 12 months to 1 September 2011 was £38.2 million. This figure has been taken from the financial records of the UK Border Agency and is unaudited and subject to possible future amendment and revision.

Dominic Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for asylum were granted in (a) 2009 and (b) 2010. [73624]

Reply from Damian Green: The number of asylum applications that were granted in the UK in 2009 and 2010 were 4,188 and 3,488 respectively. A further 2,554 in 2009 and 1,707 in 2010 were also granted discretionary leave and humanitarian protection. Further information on asylum is available from the Immigration Statistics release available in the Library of the House and the Home Office Science website at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/science-research/research-statistics/migration/migration-statistics1/>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111012/text/111012w0001.htm#11101264000041>

Asylum

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many outstanding asylum cases under the legacy programme there were as of 1 September 2011. [72077]

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Damian Green: The agency completed its review of all cases in the legacy cohort at the end of March 2011. A total of 500,500 cases were reviewed as part of the programme and as Jonathan Sedgwick reported to the Home Affairs Committee on 12 September, the majority (479,000) have been fully concluded.

The UK Border Agency is actively managing around 18,000 cases which have been progressed to the furthest possible point but barriers to their removal remain, such as ongoing litigation, impending prosecution, incomplete legal or criminal proceedings, non-compliance or because they are from difficult to remove countries. These cases are being actively progressed and will be concluded when those barriers have been lifted.

The UK Border Agency will also continue to monitor and complete checks on 98,000 cases which were placed in the Controlled Archive because the individuals could not be traced. The agency will reactivate cases where new information comes to light that allows cases to be progressed and concluded.

The Agency completed its review of all cases in the legacy cohort at the end of March 2011. A total of 500,500 cases were reviewed as part of the programme and the majority (455,000) have been fully concluded.

The UK Border Agency established the Case Assurance and Audit Unit (CAAU) to actively manage those 23,000 cases which had been reviewed but had barriers to conclusion. All these cases have been decided and communicated to the applicants.

The CAAU has now fully concluded 1,500 of those cases. They have also issued around 3,000 grants which are subject to information from the applicant in order to complete a final security check.

The UK Border Agency is actively managing around 18,000 cases which have been caseworked to the furthest possible point but barriers to their removal remain, such as ongoing litigation, impending prosecution, incomplete legal or criminal proceedings, non-compliance or because they are from difficult to remove countries. These cases are being actively caseworked and will be concluded when those barriers have been lifted. *Note:* All figures rounded to the nearest 500.

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent progress has been made on the implementation of the new asylum processing system. [73057]

Reply from Damian Green: The Asylum Improvement Project was set up to explore new ways to speed up the processing of asylum applications. We have already seen improvement outcomes from this project which include:

replacing the old PSA target with a new performance framework to ensure that the whole system remains in balance;

introducing better, shorter guidance for case owners on sensitive issues, including gender;

revision of our policies for dealing with applications from lesbian and gay asylum seekers.

The improvements that we have made to our processes have already had a positive impact on performance:

Eurostat statistics show that in June 2010 there were nearly 7,720 asylum seekers waiting for a decision on their application. In July 2011 that had reduced to 5,670 and this is despite an increase in applications.

We are making decisions more quickly. On average 59% of applications now receive a decision within 30 days.

Our internal audit process shows that the quality of our decisions has remained high.

The cost of the asylum support system has been reduced by over £100 million in the last year.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Removals are getting faster. 19% of asylum seekers are now removed within 12 months.

We continue to pursue an ongoing programme of innovation and reform to ensure that the asylum system delivers swifter, higher quality case conclusions, delivered at significantly lower cost to the taxpayer.

Further information on the Asylum Improvement Project can be found in its one-year-on progress report published in May 2011. The report can be found on the UK Border Agency website at:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/reports/asylum-improvement-project/

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/text/111013w0002.htm#11101360000003>

Asylum Seekers

Baroness Bakewell: To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the number of asylum decisions overturned on appeal, in particular among female asylum seekers, what steps they are taking to ensure that women fleeing gender-based persecution receive fair asylum decisions.

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, the Government recognise that women can face particular forms of persecution that are quite often different from those faced by men, and are committed to ensuring that women's claims for asylum are dealt with as fairly and sensitively as possible. The UK Border Agency is working closely with a range of key corporate partners in developing improvements to the asylum system. This will increase gender awareness throughout the asylum process.

Baroness Bakewell: I thank the Minister for his reply, and for implying that there is still space for improvement. Perhaps he knows the case of the playwright Lydia Besong, who sought asylum here in 2006 having been imprisoned and raped in Cameroon for being a member of the Southern Cameroons National Council. She has been refused asylum and is under threat of removal. Does the Minister agree that women such as Lydia—and there are several—who suffer gender-related persecution should be protected rather than sent back to face further risk, and that early access to legal representation for appeal would reduce the costs of the asylum process?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, Miss Besong is a failed asylum seeker, having had her appeal and further submissions dismissed by the courts, not by UKBA. She became appeal rights exhausted this year and therefore subject to enforced removal action if she refuses to leave the UK voluntarily. On the noble Baroness's second point, about leaving it to appeal, it is open to legal and other advisers to introduce new evidence to the UKBA at any point between the original decision and the appeal hearing. Asylum could then be granted before the appeal is heard. It is not clear to me why this does not happen more often.

Lord Avebury: Does the noble Lord accept that at the asylum stakeholders' meeting on 4 August the UKBA said that it had not released any victim of gender-based violence from the detained fast-track and did not consider it a reason for releasing a person? Is this not a breach of the undertaking that was given to the High Commissioner for Human Rights at the Council of Europe that:

"Particularly vulnerable applicants including ... victims of trafficking or sexual violence ... are not dealt with within the DFT process as a matter of policy"?

Does my noble friend accept that as the success rate of appeals by women against refusal of asylum is running at 50 per cent, it is clear that the improvements in procedures for dealing with gender-based violence in the criminal justice system have not read across to the UKBA?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I think I have already explained why there can

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

be very good reasons for the overturn rate at appeal. As regards the noble Lord's question about detained fast-track, I am confident that legal protections for the detainee must be in place, but I shall write to the noble Lord on that point.

Lord Martin of Springburn: My Lords, there were more asylum seekers in my previous constituency of Glasgow North East than in any other part of Scotland, with 90 per cent of the cases at my surgery being asylum seekers. They were made most welcome by some of the poorest communities in the United Kingdom, but should there not always be monitoring in these communities to ensure that enough resources are going in to help where there is strain on local health services, schools and housing departments?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, the noble Lord makes an important point about the need for care. One reason why you see concentrations of certain nationalities in certain places is that communities tend to become established, and it is natural for asylum seekers to go and join their own community in the UK.

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws: My Lords, perhaps I may return to the issue of gender. The running rate of 50 per cent of women succeeding in appeals, which is almost double that of men, is suggestive that there is poor decision-making and a culture of disbelief at the first instance in relation to women. Is that therefore not a signal, first, that there is poor training and, secondly, that there should be legal representation when the women are first interrogated and questioned because they are having to deal with sensitive matters such as sexual violence?

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I largely agree with the noble Baroness. The problem is that the matters that the applicant has to explain to the UKBA officers are extremely sensitive and the applicant has not yet acquired confidence in the machinery of our state because the machinery of their home state has totally failed.

Baroness Kennedy of The Shaws: Should there not be lawyers present?

Baroness King of Bow: My Lords, following on from the noble Baroness's point, is the Minister aware of Asylum Aid research which stated that there was a "striking failure" of understanding what was happening to these women on the part of those making the decisions? Would the Minister be prepared to meet me and other interested Peers to discuss how the UKBA training could be improved? Women deserve better than they are currently getting.

Reply from Earl Attlee: My Lords, I entirely agree that women deserve better, and we are working at improving our performance. We are not saying that we are perfect but often new evidence is introduced at a later stage when the applicant becomes more confident or has better legal advice. I shall of course be delighted to have a meeting with all noble Lords who are interested in this matter and I shall take steps to make sure that that happens.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111011-0002.htm#11101177000642>

Asylum: English Language

Dominic Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many successful applicants for asylum had the ability to speak English to A1 standard in (a) 2009 and (b) 2010. [73622]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency does not collect data on how many successful asylum seekers speak English.

Dominic Raab: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what English language training her Department provides to successful applicants for asylum; what the budget for such training was in (a) 2009-10 and (b) 2010-11; and what the budget for such training will be in each financial year to 2014-15. [73623]

Reply from Damian Green: The Home Office does not provide English language

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

training for refugees or hold a budget for such training. Refugees are able to apply for ESOL classes subject to meeting certain eligibility criteria.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/text/111013w0002.htm#11101360000004>

Illegal Immigrants: Employment

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many businesses had been issued with penalties for employing illegal immigrants in the 12 month period to 1 September 2011 and each of the previous five 12 month periods. [71915]

Reply from Damian Green: A total of 6,346 businesses have been served with a civil penalty for illegally employing migrant workers since the start of the regime on 29 February 2008.

The following table shows the number of businesses that have been served with a penalty under section 15 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, in each year to 1 September 2011

	<i>Number of businesses served with penalties</i>
29 February 2008 to 1 September 2008	616
2 September 2008 to 1 September 2009	1,962
2 September 2009 to 1 September 2010	2,283
2 September 2010 to 1 September 2011	1,485
Total	6,346

Note: Any data provided within this written answer is sourced from internal databases. The Civil Penalty database utilised by the Civil Penalty Compliance Team (CPCT) is a management information tool and data from it is not quality assured under National Statistics protocols and is subject to change due to internal data quality checking.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000037>

Immigrants: Detainees

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent estimate she has made of the average cost per night of holding a detainee awaiting removal at (a) Brook House, (b) Campsfield, (c) Colnbrook, (d) Dover, (e) Dungavel, (f) Harmondsworth, (g) Haslar, (h) Lindholme, (i) Morton Hall, (j) Tinsley House and (k) Yarl's Wood. [72276]

Reply from Damian Green: We do not distinguish our detention costs between those held for removal from the UK and those held for further examination for entry into UK. To do so would require an examination of every person detained over the last 12 months which would be at a disproportionate cost.

The average cost of holding a person per night in a detention centre is currently £102.

Julian Huppert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were detained as adults under immigration powers but were later found to be children under 18 in (a) 2008-09, (b) 2009-10 and (c) 2010-11. [72548]

Reply from Damian Green: In May 2010, the Government announced a review into the ending of the detention of children in the UK for immigration purposes and announced the conclusions in December 2010. We are now publishing an unprecedented amount of information on detention both in relation to adults but

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

also data on children entering detention. This can be found at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/immigration-q2-2011/>

We are unable to provide the complete dataset for the period requested. However, the agency does produce management information on the number of asylum age dispute cases in detention and these are released quarterly to selected corporate partners. These figures are provided in the following table:

<i>Period</i>	<i>Number of individuals detained as adults but later released due to doubts over their age</i>
<i>2009-10</i>	
Quarter 3 (October to December)	3
Quarter 4 (January to March)	6
<i>2010-11</i>	
Quarter 1 (April to June)	3
Quarter 2 (July to September)	0
Quarter 3 (October to December)	7
Quarter 4 (January to March)	5

These figures are based on management information and are not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics.

Julian Huppert: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many individuals were detained as adults under the detained fast track procedure but were later found to be children under 18 in (a) 2008-09, (b) 2009-10 and (c) 2010-11. [72549]

Reply from Damian Green: Detailed records of age dispute cases within the detained fast track processes have been kept since July 2009.

In 2009-10 three asylum applicants were released and later assessed as being under the age of 18.

In 2010-11 no asylum applicants were released and later assessed as being under the age of 18.

The figures are based on management information and are not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000038>

Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what procedures are in place to monitor the level of service delivery by GEO Ltd in managing Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre; [70258]

(2) what recent representations she has received on the awarding of the contact to run Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre to GEO Ltd; and if she will make a statement. [70259]

Reply from Damian Green: All immigration removal centres operated by the private sector, including Dungavel, have their contracts managed by a central commercial team. The UK Border Agency has a team of staff based in each centre to monitor day to day contract delivery and compliance. Meetings take place with the centre manager at an operational level on a weekly basis and on a commercial level on a quarterly basis.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Very recently, a letter addressed to the Secretary of State for the Home Department has been received about the GEO Group's overseas operations. A reply is being prepared.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000027>

Deportation: Suicide

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information her Department holds on the number of attempted suicides by (a) adults and (b) children awaiting deportation in 2011 to date. [72293]

Reply from Damian Green: I have assumed that the question relates to persons being held by the UK Border Agency pending removal or deportation. The data provided do not therefore include persons in the community who will be removed from the country in the future.

The UK Border Agency keeps records of the number of incidents across its detention estate of self-harm where a person required some form of medical attention. Such attention may involve an examination by a nurse, or in more serious cases, treatment at a hospital. The data do not break down to show the type of treatment required, nor whether they were as a result of suicide attempts, given it is not always clear whether a person intended to take the more serious step of taking their own life.

There were 119 incidents of self-harm across the Agency's immigration removal centres which required medical attention between 1 January and 31 August 2011. The figure above does not include foreign national prisoners who will be deported at the end of their sentence or detainees being held in prisons or those held in the Agency's short-term holding facilities.

Children are only now held in very limited circumstances and for short periods, primarily when they have been intercepted at the border with their family or where they are being returned under the ensured return route. There have been no recorded instances in the same period where children being held attempted to harm themselves.

The safety of those in the care of the UK Border Agency is taken very seriously, and there are well established systems and policies entitled Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork (ACDT) to identify and support those who are at risk of suicide or self harm.

The data provided are normally used for management information only and are not subject to the detailed checks that apply for National Statistics publications. It is provisional and subject to change.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000024>

Deportation

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will bring forward proposals to establish an independent body to monitor all enforced removals from the UK. [72275]

Reply from Damian Green: There are no plans to establish an independent body to monitor all enforced removals from the UK.

All detention and escorting services provided by private sector companies are subject to internal and external oversight. Staff are vetted carefully by the Home Office as part of their accreditation to work as detention custody officers or escorts, undergoing thorough security checks and extensive training before they are certified.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Escorting services are subject to scrutiny by not only a team of UK Border Agency contract monitors, but also a programme of unannounced inspections by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons and specifically, at Heathrow airport, an independent monitoring board. Both of these bodies publish their reports on their websites.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000022>

Restraint Techniques

Shabana Mahmood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the safety of (a) nose control and (b) other restraint techniques used by private security companies undertaking enforced removals; and what consideration she has given to phasing out the use of such techniques. [73937]

Reply from Damian Green: We would prefer that individuals who have no right to remain in the UK left voluntarily. However, where they refuse to do so, it may be necessary to enforce their removal.

Escort officers will only ever use restraint as an absolute last resort when every effort to secure compliance during a removal has failed and where it is necessary to prevent self-harm or to protect others and property.

In order to exercise any use of restraint, officers must be certified by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, my right hon. Friend the Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), a condition of which is that they have undergone training to a high standard of techniques approved by the National Offender Management Service.

The 'nose control' technique was withdrawn in October 2010 and is no longer part of the training syllabus.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111013/text/111013w0002.htm#1110136000017>

Human Trafficking

Justin Tomlinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in what ways she expects the UK Border Agency to contribute to (a) reducing the number of and (b) identifying victims of human trafficking. [70779]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency has a vital role to play in disrupting trafficking attempts abroad and detecting trafficking both at the border and within the UK. Border staff are trained in child protection issues and to spot human trafficking; multi-agency child safeguarding and investigation teams are in place at the UK's major ports; overseas border controls stop criminals and illegal immigrants before they get to the UK; people's identities are fixed using biometrics; and alerts and intelligence tools are used to give officers the information they need to intervene. The UK Border Agency also supports the Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) in pursuing organised criminals involved in trafficking.

The UK Border Agency is one of the key agencies involved in the national referral mechanism (NRM), the UK's framework for identifying and supporting trafficking victims. Together with other front line agencies such as the police, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations, the NRM shares information and expertise that can be used to confirm victim status and ensure appropriate care is provided.

Further details of the UK Border Agency's contribution can be found in the Government's strategy on human trafficking, published on 19 July 2011, available at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/human-trafficking-strategy

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111010/text/111010w0003.htm#1110114000034>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Human Trafficking

Lisa Nandy: What recent discussions [the Attorney General] has had with the Director of Public Prosecutions on the prosecution of cases involving allegations of human trafficking or slavery. [72849]

Michael Connarty: What plans [the Attorney General] has to increase prosecutions of those involved in human trafficking. [72851]

Reply from the Attorney-General: I have had no recent discussions with the Director of Public Prosecutions on the prosecution of cases involving human trafficking or slavery. However, the Crown Prosecution Service is working with law enforcement agencies and others, both in the UK and in source countries, to improve the investigation and prosecution of those involved in human trafficking. The CPS is also encouraging victims of human trafficking to support criminal proceedings.

Lisa Nandy: Having worked with the remarkable children caught up in this appalling trade over many years, I can tell the Minister that the most effective way to increase the number of prosecutions is to provide support for victims. Will he mark anti-slavery day by announcing a formal system of child guardianship, so that we no longer have the appalling spectacle of children as young as five having to instruct their own lawyers, simply because there is no one else to do so?

Reply from the Attorney-General: The specific matter that the hon. Lady raises is, I am afraid, outside my immediate remit in terms of my responsibilities for the CPS. As she will be aware, the Government announced the decision to opt in to the EU directive on human trafficking in March 2011. We are now working closely with the Commission on its implementation, which includes the review of our domestic legislation to ensure that it complies with the provisions, and that it does not inhibit our ability to bring successful prosecutions. The Government, the CPS and I will continue to give human trafficking a high priority. For those reasons, I hope that the hon. Lady's point will be given consideration at the same time.

Michael Connarty: I read with interest the CPS report on prosecuting human trafficking cases, and I cannot understand how the Minister can say that the matter is not within his remit, because it quite clearly talks about vulnerable children, the need for adequate support and safeguarding? It is difficult to get prosecutions if those children flee, and we do not know how many are in care or how many are missing. Surely the obvious thing to do would be to have a scheme of guardianship, in which the children are looked after individually. They could then be supported through the process of going to court, so that we can get prosecutions for this heinous crime.

Reply from the Attorney-General: I appreciate the hon. Gentleman's point, and for the reasons that I gave in answer to the hon. Member for Wigan (Lisa Nandy), I can see that it has considerable force, but I do not think that it is the specific responsibility of the CPS to deliver on this. It would require work with other agencies to achieve it and, for those reasons, it is something that I am happy to see taken forward, but it is not something that the CPS on its own can deliver.

Peter Bone: The Attorney-General is right that the issue of guardianship is for other parts of the Government. However, he is responsible for sentencing. The Government, in their human trafficking strategy, promised a review by December. Will he update us on how that review is going and congratulate the Prime Minister on marking anti-slavery day by having a reception in Downing street on 19 October?

Reply from the Attorney-General: I join my hon. Friend in congratulating the Prime Minister on properly commemorating anti-slavery day. I am afraid, however, that I am not in a position to give my hon. Friend an update. There is a timetable for this report to come out. If I have any further information on the matter, I shall write to him.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Keith Vaz: Human trafficking is a crime that crosses borders. What discussions have been held with Europol and Eurojust to try and catch the real perpetrators of this terrible crime?

Reply from the Attorney-General: I know that there are frequent discussions between police services and the CPS and its counterparts about co-operation. As the right hon. Gentleman will be aware, the EU directive on human trafficking is designed to provide a measure of co-ordination in this area. I have to say again to him that I would be happy to arrange a briefing for him from either the police or the CPS, if that would be of assistance to him in understanding the details of how that work is carried out. However, I am confident from what I know of the work being done that a high level of co-operation is achieved with our partner countries.

Fiona Mactaggart: The original question was about how the Attorney-General will increase the number of prosecutions. According to an answer that I received not long ago, there have been only six prosecutions for holding someone in slavery since the introduction of that specific offence 17 months ago. What will he do to increase the number of successful prosecutions for holding people in servitude?

Reply from the Attorney-General: There has been at least one reference by my office to the Court of Appeal of an unduly lenient sentence in which that sentence has been increased. In addition, I think that the CPS acknowledges that trafficking for forced labour is a particularly difficult area in which to get people to come forward and give evidence. The CPS will therefore continue to work with other agencies, including the police, to try to provide an environment in which that can better happen.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111011/debtext/111011-0001.htm#11101174000030>

Press Releases

Prime Minister sets out plans for immigration reform

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/pm-immigration-reform/>

UK will not opt in to EU asylum directives

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/EU-asylum>

'Health tourists' will pay the price for their NHS debts

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2011/october/19health-tourists-nhs>

Supreme Court Judgment: Whether the ban on the entry for settlement of foreign spouses or civil partners unless both parties are aged 21 or over, contained in paragraph 277 of the Immigration Rules, was a lawful way of deterring or preventing forced marriages

http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/docs/UKSC_2011_0022_ps.pdf

(the full judgment can be read at

http://www.supremecourt.gov.uk/docs/UKSC_2011_0022_Judgment.pdf)

More efficient and secure visa system goes live

<http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/11/1169&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>

Immigration and Asylum (continued)

New Publications

Migrants in an irregular situation: access to healthcare in 10 European Union Member States

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/FRA-2011-fundamental-rights-for-irregular-migrants-healthcare_EN.pdf

Thinking Behind the Numbers: Understanding Public Opinion on Immigration in Britain

<http://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/migobs/Report%20-%20Public%20Opinion.pdf>

Forced labour and UK immigration policy: status matters?

http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/forced-labour-immigration-status-full_0.pdf

News

Shop illegal immigrants, says PM

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/news/Shop-illegal-immigrants-says-PM.6850983.jp>

Immigrants must pass test on British history, says David Cameron

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/8818650/Immigrants-must-pass-test-on-British-history-says-David-Cameron.html>

Immigrants will be tested on British history, says David Cameron

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/immigrants-will-be-tested-on-british-history-says-david-cameron-2368616.html>

David Cameron launches immigration crackdown

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/oct/10/david-cameron-immigration-crackdown>

If you want your foreign spouse to live here, earn more, says David Cameron

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/if-you-want-your-foreign-spouse-to-live-here-earn-more-says-david-cameron-2368116.html>

Supreme Court overturns non-EU young spouses ban

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15272121>

The Supreme Court's ruling on forced marriages makes its contempt for democracy clear

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/columnists/aldasair-palmer/8828571/The-Supreme-Courts-ruling-on-forced-marriages-makes-its-contempt-for-democracy-clear.html>

Government attacks judges for rejecting marriage visa ban

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2011/oct/12/visa-ban-spouses-human-rights>

Oxford University's Migration Observatory Research Finds Britons Want Immigration Reduced

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2011/10/16/oxford-universitys-migrat_n_1013512.html

Politicians 'can do little on migration fears'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15324754>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

What Have Immigrants Ever Done For Us?

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/milena-popova/what-have-immigrants-ever_b_1000372.html?ref=uk-diary

Immigration survey reveals flood of low skilled workers is chief among concerns

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/8829029/Immigration-survey-reveals-flood-of-low-skilled-workers-is-chief-among-concerns.html>

Foreign language driving tests to be banned

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/8828254/Foreign-language-driving-tests-to-be-banned.html>

Foreign language driving tests to be banned after soaring accident rates by motorists who can't read road signs

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2049463/Foreign-language-driving-tests-banned-soaring-accident-rates-motorists-read-signs.html>

Sadly I don't know enough about life in Britain to be allowed to remain here

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/14/ian-jack-what-is-britishness-citizenship-test>

International Migrants Day to be celebrated on 18 December

<http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/news/2011/news-radio1812-international-migrants-day-be-celebrated-18-december>

[TOP](#)

Race Relations

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Multiculturalism

Lord Harries of Pentregarth: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of multiculturalism and what is their policy towards it.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Baroness Hanham): My Lords, the Government do not have any particular definition of multiculturalism. They welcome the strength that the people of many nations, religions and cultures who live in this country derive from their common heritage. By sharing and understanding these differences in our communities, we can draw on the full range of their talents and find those things that unite us. Segregation for any reason is contrary to the need for all communities to integrate and live together in harmony.

Lord Harries of Pentregarth: I thank the Minister for her reply, but would she not agree that it is very important to have a clear definition? In an important speech in Munich earlier in the year, the Prime Minister mentioned multiculturalism in a key paragraph but gave no definition of it. However, he implied by the end that it encouraged separate development. Multiculturalism is what philosophers used to call a "boo word", or "hurrah word", so would it not be helpful for everybody if the Government had a very clear definition and made clear what they approved of and what they did not approve of?

Reply from Baroness Hanham: My Lords, in talking about people living together

Race Relations

Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

and communities coming together, it is very hard to say what one approves of and what one does not approve of. It is absolutely essential that we all understand that in this country we have an enormous number of different nationalities and cultures. The one way we can be sure that we will live together is by understanding the nature of those cultures. When I say there is no definition, there is no definition but, in thinking about it even faintly, one would say that multiculturalism is the coming together of communities and the recognition of those differences.

Lord Popat: My Lords, does my noble friend agree that, while cultural diversity and tolerance towards other cultures and religions is a good thing, the Government's position as set out by the Prime Minister -in Berlin, not Munich-of supporting an overriding and unifying national identity and not appeasing or supporting extremist organisations who undermine British culture and values, is the right approach?

Reply from Baroness Hanham: My Lords, I think that is what I have been trying to say in my two previous answers. The Government are fully aware of the tensions that there can be between communities; they are extremely anxious to see that those tensions are lessened and will use whatever methods they can to make sure that integration comes about and that people are content to live together in this country which, on the whole, has been blessed with fewer tensions than elsewhere.

The Lord Bishop of Blackburn: My Lords, my own responsibility includes Burnley which, some 10 years ago, had its own local disturbances. Therefore, I welcome all moves towards greater multicultural working, especially through the near neighbours scheme that has recently been introduced. Could the Minister confirm that, subject to satisfactory assessment when the three-year trial period for the near neighbours scheme has expired, the scheme will continue?

Reply from Baroness Hanham: My Lords, it is a three-year scheme, so at this stage I cannot absolutely confirm that it will continue, but I can confirm that we attach enormous importance to it and are extremely grateful for the church's involvement in that fund. We will certainly want to assess its results. Following its successful launch this summer, we are going to scale up the scheme next year to give up to 30,000 16 year-olds the chance to meet with young people from different backgrounds. The church is providing a very strong lead on this.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick: My Lords, would the noble Baroness agree, having wisely ducked the request to define multiculturalism, that it might really be better if everyone including Ministers-and including the Prime Minister-stopped talking about this as an "ism" at all? It is utterly misleading to do so. It would surely be better, as I think the noble Baroness has started to do in her replies, to address the issues, in a society that is necessarily, and will continue to be, multicultural.

Reply from Baroness Hanham: My Lords, "ism" or not, the word is in the vernacular one way or another. I do not think it matters whether it is an "ism"; it matters what we mean about trying to ensure that people are supported in their own cultures so that, by definition, they are made-not made, but supported-to integrate into this community. We are perhaps still, despite what has happened recently, one of the most tolerant societies. We have one of the largest numbers of nationalities living here and, however one defines it or whatever one says-multicultural or multiculturalism-we know what we mean and understand that what we mean is trying to provide a homogeneous community.

Lord Knight of Weymouth: What is the Government's policy towards multiculturalism in schools? Given the current concerns about the curriculum being squeezed out by the EBacc, is the noble Baroness in conversation with Ministers in the Department for Education about making sure that there is room in the curriculum for citizenship and that

Race Relations

Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

schools are continuing to promote community cohesion, as is their statutory duty?

Reply from Baroness Hanham: Schools have a statutory duty to support cohesion, and I think most schools do that. One of the most important aspects of bringing up children in this community is that they should speak English. There is a very strong commitment to ensuring that children are given English lessons at an early stage to ensure that they can not only participate in school but understand where their friends who are living here are coming from.

The Department for Education will answer for itself about citizenship, but I can say that we will continue to fund classes that encourage English. In general, we think that one of the biggest strengths that comes from multiculturalism is speaking English, which is the common language. We should bear in mind that people will want to continue to support their own ethnic languages, but they must do that in a way that ensures that their children and, where possible, the elders all speak English.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/111011-0002.htm#11101177000641>

News

Black Britons may be the last defenders of the union

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/12/black-britons-union-uk>

Let mixed-race Britons find their own way

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/oct/10/mixed-race-britons>

[TOP](#)

Racism and Religious Hatred

Press Releases

Fighting extremism for the sake of human rights

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/SRReportOnExtremistMovements.aspx>

OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities warns against rise of anti-Roma violence and extreme nationalism in Europe

<http://www.osce.org/hcnm/83804>

News

Chairman of Celtic warns of hate law dangers

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/chairman-of-celtic-warns-of-hate-law-dangers-1.1129402>

Pupils join battle to beat the bigots

<http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/news/pupils-join-battle-to-beat-the-bigots-1.1128942>

BNP leader banned from university

<http://www.belfasttelegraph.co.uk/news/local-national/republic-of-ireland/bnp-leader-banned-from-university-16064046.html>

Racism and Religious hatred

News (continued)

No Wonder Christians Feel Discriminated Against in British Society, a Disturbing Trend is now Emerging

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/tom-j-wilson/no-wonder-christians-feel_b_1002157.html

[TOP](#)

Other Holyrood

New Publications

Scottish Government Stakeholder Survey 2010

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/351470/0117878.pdf>

Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2010: Core Module - Attitudes to Government, the Economy and Public Services in Scotland

Report <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/352862/0118733.pdf>

Summary <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/360049/0121690.pdf>

[TOP](#)

Other Westminster

Parliamentary Question

Polygamy

Philip Hollobone: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many polygamous households exist in the UK; and what steps are being taken to reduce the number of such households. [73633]

Reply from Jonathan Djanogly: Polygamous marriages can not be legally formed in the UK. Nor is it possible for anyone domiciled in the United Kingdom to enter into a polygamous marriage abroad. Where a polygamous marriage is contracted outside the United Kingdom between parties, neither of whom is domiciled in the United Kingdom, it will be recognised.

The Office for National Statistics produces estimates of the population by marital status. These estimates cover single (never married), married, widowed and divorced statuses. No assessment is made of the number of polygamous households.

There is some anecdotal evidence of people entering into polygamous marriage in the UK through religious ceremonies that are not registered by the state and are not recognised under UK law. Due to the fact that these marriages are not legally recognised there is no indication of how many such polygamous relationships exist. Any parties to such relationships do not share the same rights as a legally married couple, such as access to financial remedies available on divorce or inheritance rights on the death of one of the spouses, and are treated as cohabitants. The Government have carried out some work with the Muslim community to encourage mosques to undertake the civil aspects of marriage and to raise awareness of the need for marriages to be legally recognised.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm111012/text/111012w001.htm#11101264000099>

Other Westminster (continued) Ministerial Letter

Letter from Theresa Villiers regarding trial of alternative procedures for screening of religious/cultural headgear.

<http://www.parliament.uk/deposits/depositedpapers/2011/DEP2011-1603.pdf>

Early Day Motion

Valerie Vaz (2229) Female genital mutilation and the Working in Partnership conference September 2011 – That this House notes that an estimated 80,000 women and girls in the UK are at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM), 24,000 of whom are girls under the age of 15 years; further notes that these procedures have no health benefits and are recognised internationally as a violation of human rights; acknowledges FGM as an important public interest issue, as it physically and mentally damages young women; further acknowledges there can be serious complications with pregnancy and childbirth if a woman has undergone FGM; welcomes the work of the Female Genital Mutilation National Clinical Group which organised the Working in Partnership conference in Birmingham on 21 September 2011; commends its encouragement of healthcare professionals (including midwives, obstetricians, nurses, and public health professionals), community workers, policy makers, police and others to work together to identify women and girls who are at risk, to support those who have already suffered and to prevent the practice of FGM; further welcomes the new legal guidance issued by the Crown Prosecution Service; looks forward to an increase from zero of the number of prosecutions brought for offences relating to FGM; and calls for politicians, professionals and communities to work in partnership to bring an end to the practice of female genital mutilation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2010-12/2229>

[TOP](#)

New Publication

Philanthropy and social media

<http://instituteofphilanthropy.org/cms/pages/documents/Philanthropy%20and%20Social%20Media.pdf>

[TOP](#)

Other News

David Cameron to revisit forced marriage crime plans

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-15235649>

Issue of forced marriages put under the spotlight

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/News/National/article/17964/issue-of-forced-marriages-put-under-the-spotlight.html>

How I gave up on a modern Muslim marriage

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2011/oct/13/muslim-marriage-contract>

[TOP](#)

Bills in Progress

** new or updated this week

Holyrood

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s4/bills/01-offbehfoot/index.htm>

Bills in Progress Westminster

Scotland Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/scotland.html>

[TOP](#)

Consultations

** new or updated this week

Reasonable accommodation of cultural diversity in the workplace

(no closing date given)

<http://www.esurveyspro.com/Survey.aspx?id=e80f85dd-1859-41b3-80b8-c1ffbccddc76>

Inquiry into reform of Parliamentary business: remodelling the Parliamentary week (31 October 2011)

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s4/committees/stanproc/documents/callforviews_inquiryintoreform.pdf

Reforming Police and Fire and Rescue Services in Scotland (2 November 2011)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/357525/0120778.pdf>

Do we need a UK Bill of Rights? (11 November 2011)

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/about/cbr/cbr-discussion-paper.pdf>

Public Sector Equality Duty (25 November 2011)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/357629/0120853.pdf>

Rights of Children and Young People Bill (1 December 2011)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/357438/0120726.pdf>

Aviation security: Consultation on a statutory authority to carry scheme

(6 December 2011)

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/authority-to-carry/>

The Registration of Civil Partnerships Same Sex Marriage (9 December 2011)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/254430/0120640.pdf>

**** Public Focus Strategy** (closes 23 December 2011)

http://www.oscr.org.uk/media/279989/public_focus_strategy.pdf

[TOP](#)

Job Opportunities

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

[TOP](#)

Funding Opportunities

The Strategic Legal Fund

<http://www.migrationwork.org/strategic-legal-fund>

[TOP](#)

Events/Conferences/Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

Black History Month

Events will be taking place throughout October. For information see

<http://crer.org.uk/attachments/article/65/CRER%20Black%20History%202011%20WEB-1.pdf>

**** this week!**

Teaching Islamic Studies in Scotland

21 October 2011 in Edinburgh

Islamic Studies Network and Alwaleed Bin Talal Centre workshop for those working in Islamic Studies and related disciplines at higher education institutions in Scotland. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/3k9c64y>

**** this week!**

Meet Your Mulsim Neighbour

22 October in Glasgow (11.00–5.00)

Al-Furqan Islamic Centre Exhibition and tour of the Islamic Centre. For information contact Haq Ghani haqq@msn.com or Javed Gill javed.gill@btinternet.com

**** this week!**

Children's Interfaith Event

23 October 2011 in Glasgow (2.00 – 5.00)

Maccabi Scotland event to bring together children aged 9-12 from different faith communities for an afternoon of activities. For information contact Sue Faber 0141 638 6177 / info@maccabigbscotland.org.

Scotland's People – Past, Present & Future

26 October 2011 in Edinburgh (9.30 – 4.00)

National Records of Scotland conference to discuss how population and household statistics are increasingly important to help inform policies and planning in central and local government, and the third sector. For information see http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/11x_nrs_conference.doc

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Human Rights Education and Active Citizenship: The Case for Scotland

27 October 2011 in Glasgow (9.00–4.15)

BEMIS conference to highlight responsibilities under the UN World Programme for Human Rights Education, and demonstrate how the statutory and voluntary sectors can work in partnership with government, education and training, and civil society. For information contact Tanveer Parnez 0141 548 8047 / conference@bemis.org.uk or see <http://www.bemis.org.uk/docs/HRE%20Conference%20Programme.pdf>. An application form is available at <http://www.bemis.org.uk/docs/HRE%20Conference%20Flyer.doc>

Protecting workplace equality

27 October 2011 in Glasgow (9.30 – 4.10)

Equality and Human Rights Commission Conference to re-enforce your knowledge of how to protect equality within the workplace. For information see http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/ads/11x_ehrc.pdf or contact David Reilly 0141 228 5967 / equalityactscotland@equalityhumanrights.com

Raising Refugee Women's Voices

3 November 2011 in Glasgow (9.00 – 4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Conference focusing on refugee women: their needs; the provision of support; and gender sensitivity in the asylum process. All refugee community organisations will be entitled to one free place at the conference. For information see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/news_and_events/events_calendar/1304_scottish_refugee_council_autumn_conference_raising_refugee_women_s_voices or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / events@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism

9 November 2011

In 1933, Jews in Germany were subjected to increasingly discriminatory treatment by the Nazis. On Nov 9 1938, the Nazis started a pogrom against the Jews. Synagogues were set on fire. Jewish shops had their windows smashed, which gave rise to the name "Kristallnacht", which freely translated means the Night of Broken Glass. Many Jews were physically attacked. The "Kristallnacht" pogrom is usually seen as the symbolic beginning of the Holocaust. On 9 November each year the UNITED network organises a European-wide campaign to commemorate the past and to protest against contemporary forms of fascism and antisemitism. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/6cl37dp>

An introduction to working with asylum seekers and refugees

18 November 2011 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council training to identify fundamental issues facing asylum seekers and refugees today, and highlighting current legislation and entitlements. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. Special offer - two delegate places for the cost of one on all Scottish Refugee Council training courses throughout September and October. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/64lypff> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

The needs and experiences of refugee women

25 November 2011 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council training to provide a thorough understanding of fundamental issues affecting women seeking asylum in Scotland. It is appropriate for those working in social work, housing, welfare, education, employment, health, community development or the justice system. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/4x62hfa> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Making Human Rights Happen

30 November 2011 in Glasgow (10.00 – 4.00)

1 Decemer 2011 in Dundee (10.00 – 4.00)

British Institute of Human Rights workshops to discuss the role of human rights in a period of cut backs to public services, the role of human rights in protecting the vulnerable, whether human rights offer an effective tool for people wishing to challenge the impact of service cuts or changes, and how to make sure one person's rights are balanced against the interests of society as a whole. For information see <http://www.bihar.org.uk/events/bihar-national-human-rights-tour-information-page>

Domestic Abuse and BME Women, Children & Young People

1 (9.30-4.30) and 2 (9.30-12.30) December 2011 in Edinburgh

Shakti training to increase awareness and understanding of issues facing Minority Ethnic women, children and young people affected by domestic abuse. For information contact Mridul, Lisa or Aleksandra 0131 475 2399 / info@shaktiedinburgh.co.uk.

Working with Interpreters

8 December 2011 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council training to provide an understanding of best practice when working with interpreters, learn about service providers' responsibilities, and how to develop or improve existing practice. Participants will also learn how to communicate effectively with their service-users when using interpreters. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/3qt2h8b> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

New Muslim Cool

22 March 2012 in Glasgow (all day)

Faith Matters event about the work of Hamza Perez a Muslim Hispanic American whose multi-faith work has seen Christians and Jews support him during difficult times post 9/11. For information contact pa@faith-matters.co.uk / 0207 554 8847 or see <http://faith-matters.org/images/stories/Faith%20Matters%20New%20Muslim%20Cool%20UK%20Tour%20March%202010.pdf>

[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

Useful Links (continued)

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

Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>
Scotland Helpline 0845 604 5510

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

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>

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 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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