

## Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

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

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## Immigration and Asylum

### Holyrood Parliamentary Motion

**S4M-05647 Christina McKelvie: Stop Destitution**—That the Parliament notes the recent Stop Destitution campaign, which was organised by the Scottish Refugee Council and Refugee Survival Trust; is concerned at the vulnerability of those who have been refused asylum in the UK but cannot return to their homeland due to war, torture or persecution and are left without the right to work and lacking the most basic essentials; believes that this is an unacceptable situation, and urges the UK Government to legislate to ensure that there is a better system for asylum claimants and that all those who need it receive proper support and have the right to work.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4M-05647&ResultsPerPage=10>

## Immigration and Asylum (continued)

### Westminster Parliamentary Questions

#### Immigration Controls

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) on how many sponsor licence applications decisions are outstanding; and how many sponsor licence applications lodged before (a) January 2012, (b) March 2012, (c) June 2012, (d) July 2012, (e) August 2012 and (f) September 2012 are awaiting a decision; [140390]  
(2) how many cases for sponsors licence applications are outstanding. [141051]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** The number of sponsor licence applications awaiting a decision is 585. Of the applications that are awaiting a decision, there are none that were lodged before March 2012. A breakdown by the months specified is shown in the following table:

<i>Applications received in month:</i>	<i>Applications</i>
March 2012	—
April 2012	20
May 2012	15
June 2012	20
July 2012	25
August 2012	30

*Notes:* 1. All figures quoted have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols. 2. Figures relate to sponsorship licence applications from organisations. 3. Figures relate to applications pending a decision as of 28 January 2013.

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for sponsor licences have taken over six months to decide in the last 10 years. [140391]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** The sponsor register opened on 29 February 2008, since that date 51,622 sponsor licence applications have been decided of which 1,543 applications took more than six months to decide (as at 28 January 2013). These applications were of a complex nature and required further investigation. This is internal management information. It is provisional and subject to change.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130214/text/130214w0001.htm#13021479000029>

#### British Nationality: Assessments

**Philip Davies:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her policy is on the number of times someone wanting to settle permanently in the UK can take a Life in the UK test. [142229]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** A new Life in the UK test will be introduced on 25 March 2013, eight weeks after publication of the new handbook, to allow candidates time to prepare. Unlike the current test which only has questions on selected chapters, the new test will include questions on all sections of the new handbook. There is no limit on the number of times a person can take the Life in the UK test.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130212/text/130212w0001.htm#13021260000012>

#### Entry Clearances

**Andrew Rosindell:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many visa applications were rejected in each of the last five years. [142388]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** Information on the total number of entry clearance visa applications and outcomes of entry clearance visas resolved (total decisions) is

## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

currently published annually. Corresponding information for 2012 is planned to be published on 28 February 2013, as part of the Home Office's quarterly Immigration Statistics release.

The figures for visas, provided in response to this question and appearing in the table provide the latest available published statistics (2007 to 2011) for refusals of entry clearance visa applications only.

The latest Home Office immigration statistics on entry clearance visas are published in the release Immigration Statistics July to September 2012, which is available from the Library of the House and on the Home Office Science website at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/immigration-q3-2012/>

<i>Entry clearance visa applications and resolutions( 1), 2007 to 2011</i>					
	<i>Applications</i>	<i>Resolved</i>	<i>Issued</i>	<i>Refused</i>	<i>Withdrawn or Lapsed</i>
2007	2,541,871	2,551,022	2,062,636	469,483	18,903
2008	2,440,371	2,402,496	1,954,610	428,619	19,267
2009	2,447,390	2,449,661	1,995,374	428,325	25,962
2010	2,529,964	2,553,896	2,144,642	379,584	29,670
2011	2,605,283	2,616,031	2,272,891	323,004	20,136

(1) The information provided relates to applications received and cases resolved in each calendar year, Some applications received may be resolved in a subsequent year to receipt of application. *Source:* Immigration Statistics, July to September 2012, Table be.01

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130212/text/130212w0001.htm#1302126000015>

### Migration

**Lord Roberts of Llandudno:** To ask Her Majesty's Government which European-wide restrictions on movement are currently in force in respect of migrants with a history of low-level criminal behaviour.[HL5265]

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach):** Under the Free Movement of Persons Directive 2004/38/EC, (the directive) an EEA national has the right to reside in any EU member state for up to three months without restrictions, provided that they do not become an unreasonable burden on the social assistance system of that state. Thereafter, they must be exercising treaty rights as a worker, student, self employed or self sufficient person, or be directly supported by a family member exercising such rights.

However, an EEA national may be refused admission to the UK, deported or excluded on public policy, public security or public health grounds where they represent a genuine, present and sufficiently serious threat affecting one of the fundamental interests of society. The person's age, state of health, family and economic situation, their length of residence in the United Kingdom, the person's social and cultural integration into the United Kingdom and the extent of the person's links with his country of origin must be considered in any such decision and the decision must be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the person concerned.

Current UKBA guidance states that an EEA national who commits an offence in the UK will be considered for deportation under the Immigration (EEA) Regulations 2006 if they receive a custodial sentence of 12 months or more for an offence involving drugs, violence or sexual crimes or a custodial sentence of 24 months or more for any offence. Persistent offenders falling below these criteria will also be

## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

considered for deportation.

Non-EEA nationals who do not fall to be considered under the regulations may still be liable to deportation under the Immigration Rules. These were revised in December 2012 to establish a new criminality framework and to strengthen rules relating to deportation, and can be found at:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/policyandlaw/immigrationlaw/immigrationrules/>  
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldhansrd/text/130214w0001.htm#13021464000153>

### UK Immigration (Bulgaria and Romania)

**Andrew Bridgen:** What steps [the Secretary of State for the Home Department] has taken to control immigration from Bulgaria and Romania. [142176]

**Philip Hollobone:** What steps [the Secretary of State for the Home Department] plans to take to control the entry of Romanian and Bulgarian nationals to the UK from 1 January 2014. [142178]

**John Baron:** What estimate [the Secretary of State for the Home Department] has made of the potential level of immigration from Bulgaria and Romania after the expiry of transitional controls. [142180]

**James Wharton:** What steps [the Secretary of State for the Home Department] has taken to control immigration from Bulgaria and Romania. [142181]

**Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Mr Mark Harper):** Speculative projections about future inflows cannot be made with any degree of accuracy and are, therefore, not particularly helpful. That is why the Government are focused on dealing with the abuse of free movement rights and reducing the pull factors for migration, and so I am chairing a cross-Government group of Ministers to examine controls on immigrants' access to public services and benefits.

**Andrew Bridgen:** It has been estimated that some 250,000 Romanians and Bulgarians are currently resident in Germany, and an internal paper produced by the German Association of Cities has noted that that level of immigration creates social dangers. Will any lessons be learned from the German experience?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** My hon. Friend is right to say that it is helpful for us to look at the experience of other European countries. We want to make sure that when people look at the access to our benefits and our public services nobody thinks we are a soft touch in this country, and the Government are taking action to ensure that people will not think that.

**Philip Hollobone:** My constituents think it is madness to open our borders to 29 million people when we have absolutely no idea how many are going to come to this country. Will the Minister at least introduce a new requirement that European Union nationals seeking to reside here for more than three months have to apply for a residency card? Will he insist that the Romanian and Bulgarian Governments share with the Home Office details of any criminal records of those who come to this country?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** My hon. Friend's first point about a residency card is something I will listen to and take away with me. On his second point, he may be interested to know that the Metropolitan police and the UK Border Agency been working closely together over the past few months on Operation Nexus, and have removed about 200 very serious and high-harm criminals. That has been very effective, and I hope it will be rolled out across the country in due course.

**John Baron:** Given that the Government cannot produce or are not producing an estimate, and given that the national minimum wage is five to six times higher in this country than it is in Bulgaria or Romania, how confident are the Government that our public services can cope with any surge in immigration, particularly as we got our estimates so badly wrong in 2004?



## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

**Reply from Mark Harper:** My hon. Friend makes a good point. However, it is worth reminding people that even during the whole period of the previous Government, when, as even they have acknowledged, they had no transitional controls for eastern European migration and a significant number came here, four fifths of the net migration was from outside the EU. It is therefore worth seeing things in that context. I go back to the answer I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for North West Leicestershire (Andrew Bridgen) in saying that the Government are looking at how our public services work and how our benefits system works to make sure that we are not a soft touch in this country. I hope that reassures my hon. Friend.

**James Wharton:** It is, of course, thanks to the Labour party that the UK was the only European economy that did not have transitional controls in 2004. Will the Minister confirm that as of 31 December every European economy will be open to the free movement of labour from Romania and Bulgaria, and not just ours this time?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** My hon. Friend makes a good point. It is worth remembering that eight other European countries, including France and Germany, currently have transitional controls, as we do. They will have to remove those controls at the end of the year, which is partly why making a forecast is so difficult and why the Migration Advisory Committee advised against it.

**Keith Vaz:** There is a Bulgarian word for the position in which the Government find themselves—oburkvane: confused. The Prime Minister is a champion of enlargement, which means the free movement of people, yet the Home Office was considering putting advertisements in the Romanian and Bulgarian press advising people not to come here. There is a simple way of dealing with this matter. First, by working with the Romanian and Bulgarian Governments to find out the cause for people to move here. Secondly, by commissioning research so that we have proper predictions as to how many people will come here.

**Reply from Mark Harper:** On the first part of the right hon. Gentleman's question, he has been in this House long enough to know not to believe everything he reads in newspapers when they talk about what the Government might or might not do. He may even occasionally have been the author of some such stories himself. *[Interruption.]* No, I am not. On his second question about working with our European partners, we will of course work with the Romanian and Bulgarian Governments, as we do on a number of important and serious issues. For example, we work closely with the Bulgarians on combating terrorism. We will continue to take that approach and we will look at ways of making sure that this country is not a soft touch when it comes to benefits and access to public services. The MAC advised against trying to forecast the numbers, because it said that that simply would not be helpful to policy makers.

**Steve McCabe:** Is the Minister satisfied that the fines levied on employers who do not pay the minimum wage are sufficient to deter such employers from employing on the cheap the very Bulgarian and Romanian workers his hon. Friends are asking about?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** The hon. Gentleman makes a good point. If anyone takes on people who do not have the right to work in the country, we fine them up to £10,000. I will take away the point that he has made. One thing we are looking at is the regulation of the labour market in general. A number of bodies are involved—HMRC for the minimum wage, the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and the UK Border Agency. It is sensible to consider whether those organisations are all working as closely together as they should be. That is something that the group I am chairing will indeed be looking at. I hope that is helpful to him.

**Andrew Gwynne:** But poor housing from rogue landlords, where they sometimes cram 20 to 30 people into some pretty shabby conditions, is also a major problem and a driver

## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

of immigration, particularly from places such as Romania, Bulgaria and other eastern European EU states, so will the Government commit to introducing a statutory national register of private landlords so that we can drive up housing standards in the private sector and drive out some of those crummy conditions?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** I am grateful to the hon. Gentleman for his question. Last Thursday morning, at an unearthly hour, the Minister for Housing and I accompanied UK Border Agency officers and housing officials from the London borough of Ealing on a raid to deal with exactly such landlords with houses in multiple occupation. It was a successful operation and we detained a number of people who had no right to be in the country. Such partnership working between the London borough of Ealing and central Government is working well, and it is the kind of activity that we will continue.

**Chris Bryant:** I am delighted that the Minister is tackling that one element, which has already been referred to, but last week the Attorney-General admitted that in 2011 and 2012 there was not a single prosecution of those breaching the national minimum wage. Would it not be a good idea, first, to impose the national minimum wage—enforce it properly—so that unscrupulous landlords could not turn people into virtual slaves in this country and, secondly, to double the fine?

**Reply from Mark Harper:** I am not quite sure what landlords have to do with the national minimum wage, but I think I answered the other part of the hon. Gentleman's question in responding to one of his colleagues. The hon. Gentleman needs to explain why all those problems were singularly not dealt with when Labour was in power. Labour made mistakes on immigration and failed to apologise. Until it does, no one will take it seriously.

**David Ruffley:** Are the Government considering taking new powers to curb benefit tourism undertaken by Romanians and Bulgarians—welfare tourism that can only add to British public spending, not reduce it? [142199]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** My hon. Friend makes a good point. The committee that I am chairing will indeed consider how our benefit rules work. We want to ensure that we offer what we need to under the treaties, but no more. If we think that there is abuse of free movement rights, we will continue, as my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary has already started to do, to work with our European partners to drive out that abuse, which is what the people of this country want.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130211/debtext/130211-0001.htm#1302112000013>

### Work Permits

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average wait is for Romanian and Bulgarian nationals to receive work permits as of January 2013. [140645]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** The latest period for which figures are available is July to September 2012. The average time taken to process decided Romanian and Bulgarian worker card applications in this period was 66 calendar days.

- (1) The figure quoted has been derived from management information and is therefore provisional and subject to change.
- (2) Figure relates to main applicants only.
- (3) Figure relates to applications despatched in the period from 1 July to 30 September 2012.
- (4) Processing time based on average number of calendar days between application raised (received) and despatch date.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130214/text/130214w0001.htm#13021479000036>

## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

### Migrant Workers

**Lord Roberts of Llandudno:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to co-ordinate policies with their partners in the European Union to enable migrants to access social support within the United Kingdom.[HL5266]

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud):** The EU has a system of social security co-ordination that provides protection of social security rights for migrant workers. We are in regular dialogue with other member states to ensure that this system is applied correctly for those who have worked and contributed, and that any policy proposals to amend the relevant regulations are focused on entitlements acquired through work and contribution.

We are also working with other member states to define principles for sustainable social security co-ordination in the future which support free movement of workers, but prevent access to welfare by economically inactive migrants.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldhansrd/text/130213w0001.htm#13021370000456>

### Immigration: Children

**Keith Vaz:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 21 January 2013, *Official Report*, column 140W, on immigration: children, for what reasons her Department does not hold information on how many children living in the UK without immigration status were abandoned in the UK by their parents, by country of origin. [140552]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** A child without immigration status is unlikely to have been previously encountered by the UK Border Agency. Therefore the UK Border Agency is not able to collect data on the number of children living in the UK without immigration status.

When the UK Border Agency becomes aware of a child in this situation, steps will immediately be taken to address the child's immigration status and to refer the case to the relevant local authority to ensure that the child is safeguarded.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130214/text/130214w0001.htm#13021479000030>

### Asylum Seekers

**Lord Hylton:** To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the recent all-party report on asylum support, whether they will end the system of voucher cards and instead provide cash support for asylum applicants; and whether they will enable applicants to take up employment after their cases have been pending for a reasonable number of months.[HL5226]

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach):** Destitute asylum applicants already receive a weekly cash allowance to meet their essential living needs. The Government will consider the findings of the all-party report as part of their ongoing review of asylum support but there are currently no plans to end the system of voucher cards for failed asylum seekers.

Asylum seekers who have a claim outstanding for at least 12 months may apply for permission to work. This is in line with our obligations under the EU reception conditions directive.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldhansrd/text/130212w0001.htm#13021256000210>

## Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

### Asylum: Finance

**Sarah Teather:** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applicants receiving support under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 have been receiving support for more than (a) two years, (b) four years and (c) six years; and if she will make a statement. [128014]

**Reply from Mark Harper:** Section 4 support is only provided to a limited group of failed asylum seekers who have chosen not to leave the United Kingdom. These include cases where the person is applying for a passport from their national embassy to facilitate their return to their country of origin and cases where the person has made further representations to be allowed to stay in the United Kingdom (despite already having received a negative decision).

The data requested are set out in the following table. The data are taken from Management Information systems and are not held in a format compatible with National Statistics protocols; it would be hard to reconcile this data precisely to other published numbers.

<i>Duration</i>	<i>Cases</i>
0 to 2 years	1,335
2 to 4 years	883
4 to 6 years	382
6+years	127
Total	2,727

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130212/text/130212w0001.htm#1302126000011>

## Westminster Early Day Motion

**Margaret Ritchie (1058) Human Trafficking** – That this House recognises that human trafficking represents a form of modern-day slavery and that many victims are held under conditions of enforced or bonded servitude whilst being exploited for their labour; urges the Government fully to implement the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Trafficking, including appointing an independent rapporteur or ombudsperson and to work closely with other EU member states to adopt an effective regime to combat this appalling practice; notes that, as well as sustaining the criminal economy, human trafficking infiltrates the mainstream economy and the high street; further recognises that many innocent consumers buy products and use services that have been in some way produced or sustained by human trafficking or modern-day slavery; and calls on the Government to introduce a framework for UK companies to audit their supply chain in order to eradicate any trace of human trafficking or modern-day slavery from their goods and services.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/1058>

## Press Release

**MAC report: Revised shortage occupation list to cover a smaller proportion of labour market**

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2013/february/33-mac-report>



## Immigration and Asylum (continued) New Publication

### **The Migrant Journey**

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/horr69/horr69-report?view=Binary>

## News

### **Scots universities criticise UK immigration laws**

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/education/scots-universities-criticise-uk-immigration-laws-1-2784867>

### **UK 'must not be soft touch' for migrants from Romania and Bulgaria**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21416257>

### **Immigration Of Bulgarians And Romanians To UK Can't Be Restricted Says Europe**

[http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/02/14/immigration-unlimited-uk\\_n\\_2686688.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/02/14/immigration-unlimited-uk_n_2686688.html)

### **Estimates of possible Romania and Bulgaria influx may never be published, minister signals**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/immigration/9863532/Estimates-of-possible-Romania-and-Bulgaria-influx-may-never-be-published-minister-signals.html>

### **Ukip candidate: halt immigration to prevent Romanian crime**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/feb/12/ukip-candidate-immigration-romanian-crime>

### **The truth about Romania's gypsies: Not coming over here, not stealing our jobs**

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/the-truth-about-romanias-gypsies-not-coming-over-here-not-stealing-our-jobs-8489097.html?origin=internalSearch>

### **Planning minister 'nervous' about impact of east European immigration**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/feb/12/nick-boles-immigration-impact-housing>

### **Wedding day arrests by UK Border Agency rise sharply**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-south-scotland-21441822>

### **David Cameron: Foreigners' access to UK benefits under review**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21442046>

### **Immigrants too often taking advantage of UK public services, says Cameron**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/feb/14/immigrants-taking-advantage-cameron>

### **David Cameron: Justice for all – unless you're an immigrant**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2013/feb/13/justice-immigrant-david-cameron>

### **Asylum seeker's restraint appeal**

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/asylum-seekers-restraint-appeal.20238118>

### **'We don't feel welcome' - why aspiring students are thinking twice about the UK**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21461669>

## Immigration and Asylum

### News (continued)

#### **Migrants may have to register to use public services**

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/healthnews/9871467/Migrants-may-have-to-register-to-use-public-services.html>

#### **UK Border Agency defies MPs over deportation 'reserves'**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/feb/16/border-agency-deportation-reserves>

#### **Theresa May attacks judges over deportation rules**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/feb/17/theresa-may-attacks-judges-deportation>

#### **Theresa May criticises judges for 'ignoring' deportation law**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21489072>

#### **UK visa appointments 'sold for cash'**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21463492>

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## Race Relations

### Westminster Parliamentary Questions

#### **Equality**

**Chris Ruane:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities if she will assess the influence of tolerance towards minorities and overall levels of wellbeing in society. [142462]

**Reply from Helen Grant:** The Office for National Statistics is making progress in analysing wellbeing data while the cross-government Social Impacts Task Force is sharing wellbeing research and practice across Whitehall.

It is not yet possible to analyse the influence of tolerance towards minorities on overall levels of wellbeing in society, but this is something that may be possible in the future as wellbeing is added to new policy surveys.

**Chris Ruane:** To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities what assessment she has made of the long-term trends in tolerance towards (a) gay and lesbian, (b) ethnic minorities, (c) disabled and (d) religious minorities. [142463]

**Reply from Helen Grant:** No assessment exists at present of long term trends in tolerance towards the specific groups listed in the question; however, the Government Equalities Office has analysed the available data on changes in attitudes towards equality more generally. This work can be found at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/equalities/research/changing-attitudes>

Additionally, Chapter 3 of the Equality and Human Rights Commission's first triennial review, "How Fair is Britain" considers this issue in relation to some of the groups listed and can be found at:

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/how-fair-is-britain/full-report-and-evidence-downloads/>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130213/text/130213w0003.htm#1302142000109>

## Race Relations (continued) Press Release

PM recognises Britain's 'highly successful' Chinese community and celebrates UK-China relations at a Chinese New Year Downing Street reception

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/prime-ministers-speech-chinese-new-year-reception/>

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## Equality

### Westminster Parliamentary Questions

#### Unemployment: Ethnic Groups

**Stephen Timms:** To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what assessment he has made of the extent of unemployment in ethnic minority communities. [142650]

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

*Letter from Glen Watson, dated February 2013:*

... Unemployment levels and rates by ethnic group for the UK are published in Table A09 as part of the Labour Market Statistical bulletin, available here:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/publications/re-reference-tables.html?edition=tcm%3A77-222531>

The latest estimates are provided in the table. Data for other ethnic minority communities are not available.

October 2011 to September 2012		
	Unemployment	
	Level (thousands)	Rate (%)
Asian communities	267	12.4
Afro-Caribbean communities	201	13.4
UK (as a whole)	2,448	7.9

Source: Annual Population Survey

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130212/text/130212w0004.htm#13021285000092>

#### Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities

**Virendra Sharma:** What steps [the Minister for Women and Equalities] is taking to improve the position of black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in the workplace. [143140]

**Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Women and Equalities (Mrs Helen Grant):** Tackling unemployment is a priority for this Government, and our approach is to support people according to individual needs. There are 3 million ethnic minority people employed in this country—far more than ever before—and we are determined that this progress will continue.

**Virendra Sharma:** The all-party parliamentary group on race and community report on ethnic minority female employment found that Pakistani and Bangladeshi women are particularly affected by unemployment, with unemployment rates of 20.5% compared with 6.8% for white women. Is it not high time that the Government revisited their colour blind approach to unemployment and started to take specific steps to support BME communities to access the labour market?

**Reply from Helen Grant:** The Government have provided a wide range of targeted support through Jobcentre Plus, the Work programme, the Youth Contract and our “get Britain working” measures. As a result of the increased

## Equality

### Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

flexibility that we have given to providers, interventions can be tailored to specific needs.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130214/debtext/130214-0001.htm#13021465000037>

#### Religious Belief

**Anne McIntosh:** What [the Minister for Women and Equality's] plans are for equalities on the grounds of religious belief. [143143]

**Reply from the Minister for Women and Equalities (Maria Miller):** We will continue to support religious freedoms strongly. For example, the Government believe that people should be able to wear crosses openly at work, and we are pleased about the judgment of the European Court of Human Rights in the Eweida case. The right of people to manifest their religion or belief at work is a vital freedom.

**Anne McIntosh:** What weight is accorded to religious beliefs in draft legislation such as the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill? Should it not be equal, in the context of discrimination, to the weight accorded to gender?

**Reply from Maria Miller:** My hon. Friend, who takes a keen interest in this issue, will know that religious freedom is guaranteed under article 9 of the European convention on human rights. However, just as it is right for people to be able to express their religious beliefs, people in this country have a right not to be discriminated against. The recent rulings in the European Court show that, in law, we have the balance about right.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130214/debtext/130214-0001.htm#13021465000040>

## Press Release

**Equality and Human Rights Commission launches guidance on managing religion or belief in the workplace**

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/news/2013/february/commission-launches-guidance-on-managing-religion-or-belief-in-the-workplace/>

## New Publications

**Religion or Belief in the workplace: a guide for employers following recent European Court of Human Rights judgments**

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded\\_files/RoB/religion\\_or\\_belief\\_in\\_the\\_workplace\\_a\\_guide\\_for\\_employers.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/RoB/religion_or_belief_in_the_workplace_a_guide_for_employers.pdf)

**Religion or Belief in the workplace: an explanation of recent European Court of Human Rights judgments**

[http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded\\_files/RoB/religion\\_or\\_belief\\_in\\_the\\_workplace\\_an\\_explanation\\_of\\_recent\\_judgments\\_final.pdf](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/RoB/religion_or_belief_in_the_workplace_an_explanation_of_recent_judgments_final.pdf)

## News

**Doreen Lawrence launches centre to boost minority students' prospects**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/feb/16/doreen-lawrence-minority-students-prospects>

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## Racism and Religious Hatred

### New Publication

#### **Racial Violence, Facing Reality**

<http://www.irr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/Racial-violence-facing-reality.pdf>

### News

#### **Scottish hate crime figures hit seven-year high**

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/scotland/scottish-hate-crime-figures-hit-seven-year-high-1-2786308>

#### **How do I deal with my daughter, 7, being told she is the 'wrong colour'?**

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/the-northerner/2013/feb/11/bradford-race-issues-school>

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## Other Westminster

### Ministerial Statement

#### **Press Regulation**

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130213/debtext/130213-0001.htm#13021368000004>

### Parliamentary Questions

#### **Female Genital Mutilation**

**Jane Ellison:** What recent steps [the Secretary of State for the Home Department] has taken to tackle female genital mutilation. [142175]

**Reply from the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mrs Theresa May):** Female genital mutilation is an abhorrent form of child abuse which this Government are committed to eradicating. Across Government we have taken a number of actions, including piloting the declaration against female genital mutilation, issuing guidelines to front-line practitioners and providing funding to support communities to tackle FGM themselves. These actions help raise awareness of the issue, change attitudes, strengthen the legal response and support victims.

**Jane Ellison:** I thank the Home Secretary for that answer. As she knows, most of the data we use in the UK are based on a 2007 study. The Dutch Government recently issued an up-to-date prevalence study, based on methodology developed at a workshop sponsored by the Home Office. When might we look to doing an up-to-date prevalence study here in the UK?

**Reply from Theresa May:** My hon. Friend raises an important point, and I would like to pay tribute to the work she has done on this issue, which is respected in all parts of the House. We are assessing a funding application for a prevalence study. The Home Office and the NSPCC co-hosted a recent round-table at which prevalence was discussed, and we are considering various ways in which we can collect the data to inform a more targeted approach to ending this practice. Indeed, the Department of Health is exploring the collection of FGM data in the NHS, including in the maternity and children's dataset.



## Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

**Pamela Nash:** One of the best actions we can take to tackle the attitudes that lead to FGM and gender-based violence is to ensure that all our children and young people receive age-appropriate and good-quality sex and relationship education. Has the Home Secretary discussed that with her colleagues in the Department for Education, and will the Government now support compulsory sex and relationship education?

**Reply from Theresa May:** The issue of education is discussed in the inter-ministerial group on violence against women and girls, which I chair. It meets regularly and brings Government Departments across the board, including the Department for Education, around the table. It is correct that education and information are very important aspects of dealing with FGM, which is why I am pleased to say that we have delivered 40,000 leaflets and posters to schools, health services, charities and community groups around the country, raising awareness of this issue.

**Stella Creasy:** ... The Home Secretary will be aware of the calls for action to improve awareness of FGM, and to support young people who are facing this threat in coming forward. Given this and her response to my hon. Friend the Member for Airdrie and Shotts (Pamela Nash), may I press her on the question of the level of violence against women and girls in Britain, and ask whether she will give her direct personal support to the One Billion Rising campaign and the vote in this place on Thursday to make sex and relationship education statutory for both boys and girls—yes or no?

**Reply from Theresa May:** ... As I said, the Government take this issue extremely seriously and we look across the board at what Government can do to deal with it. It is about helping communities themselves to eradicate this problem. Everyone in this Chamber will be concerned about the lack of prosecutions, and I am pleased that the Director of Public Prosecutions has issued a new action plan on FGM to the prosecutors, with the hope of getting prosecutions. We must recognise that education of a variety of sorts is important, which is why alerting people at various levels in the public services and in schools, and others, and helping girls to understand the threat themselves, is so important.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130211/debtext/130211-0001.htm#1302112000012>

### Female Genital Mutilation (Conviction Rates)

**Kerry McCarthy:** What recent discussions he has had with the Director of Public Prosecutions on increasing the Crown Prosecution Service's conviction rate for female genital mutilation. [142506]

**Reply from the Solicitor-General (Oliver Heald):** The Director of Public Prosecutions regularly briefs the Attorney-General and me on the issue of prosecuting for female genital mutilation and on the action plan that was developed following the Crown Prosecution Service round table on 28 September 2012.

**Kerry McCarthy:** I very much welcome the DPP's action plan, which is a positive step forward. May I urge the Solicitor-General to look at the work being done in Bristol with young women from affected communities? They have been really brave in speaking out—they have even developed a two-part storyline for "Casualty", which will be shown later this year. Does he agree that ensuring that such work is community-led as well as Crown Prosecution Service-led is an important way of dealing with the problem?

**Reply from the Solicitor-General:** I certainly agree with that. The inter-ministerial group on violence against women and girls, which is chaired by the Home Secretary, is taking a particular interest in those sorts of approaches, so I commend the hon. Lady on mentioning it in the House, and she is absolutely right. Finding the right evidence and having the support of the community — and,

## Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

therefore, support for the victim—is vital.

**John Cryer (Leyton and Wanstead) (Lab):** Further to that answer, has the Solicitor-General any measures in mind that would make it easier for people to report this dreadful crime? I am thinking in particular of the language barrier, which is often a factor in cases of this kind.

**Reply from the Solicitor-General:** The action plan that I have mentioned contains a number of proposals to improve the situation and to make it easier for people to come forward. The main obstacle is not so much the language barrier. I am sure that the hon. Gentleman can imagine that many of these cases involve young girls from particular communities, and that there are cultural and other taboos that make this very difficult for them. The real point is the approach mentioned by the hon. Member for Bristol East (Kerry McCarthy) involving getting community support. The hon. Gentleman makes an important point, however.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmhansrd/cm130212/debtext/130212-0001.htm#13021255000033>

## Press Releases

**Factual analysis promised as legal implications of Scottish independence made clear**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/factual-analysis-promised-as-legal-implications-of-scottish-independence-made-clear>

**Devolution and the implications of Scottish independence**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/devolution-and-the-implications-of-scottish-independence>

**New official statistics show resurgence in volunteering as millions more give their time to help others**

<http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/news/new-official-statistics-show-resurgence-volunteering-millions-more-give-their-time-help-others>

## New Publications

**Scotland analysis: Devolution and the implications of Scottish independence**

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/79417/Scotland\\_analysis\\_Devolution\\_and\\_the\\_implications\\_of\\_Scottish\\_Independan...\\_1\\_.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/79417/Scotland_analysis_Devolution_and_the_implications_of_Scottish_Independan..._1_.pdf)

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## Other News

**The Conservatives and ethnic minority voters**

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-21425592>

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## Bills in Progress

\*\* new or updated this week

### Holyrood

#### **Post-16 Education Bill**

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

#### **Scotland Act 1998 (Modification of Schedule 5) Order 2013**

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0040/00404790.pdf>

#### **\*\* Victims and Witnesses Bill**

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

Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) Results

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00414337.pdf>

### Bills in Progress

#### Westminster

#### **Draft Communications Data Bill**

Draft Bill as published

<http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm83/8359/8359.pdf>

#### **\*\* Crime and Courts Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/crimeandcourts.html>

Public Bill Committee, House of Lords

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmpublic/crimeandcourts/130212/am/130212s01.htm>

and

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmpublic/crimeandcourts/130212/pm/130212s01.htm>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2012-2013/0115/amend/psc1151202m.205-211.html>

Bill as amended in Public Bill Committee

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2012-2013/0137/2013137.pdf>

#### **\*\* Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/enterpriseandregulatoryreform.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/2012-2013/0083/amend/am083-d.htm>

#### **Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Further Provisions and Support for Victims) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2012-13/humantraffickingandexploitationfurtherprovisionsandsupportforvictims.html>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated this week

#### **Marriage and Civil Partnership Bill** (closing date 20 March 2013)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/0041/00410328.pdf>

## Consultations (continued)

**National Action Plan for Human Rights** (closing date 29 March 2013)

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/actionplan/participatesnap>

**All-Party Parliamentary Inquiry into electoral conduct in the UK**

(closing date 29 March 2013)

<http://www.antisemitism.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Call-For-Papers.pdf>

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## Job Opportunities

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

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## Events/Conferences/Training

\*\* new or updated this week

**\*\* this week!**

### **Beyond 2011**

19 February 2013 in Edinburgh

21 February 2013 in Edinburgh

26 February 2013 in Edinburgh (10.00 – 12.00)

5 March 2013 in Edinburgh (choice of 10.00 – 12.00 and 2.00 – 4.00)

8 March 2013 in Edinburgh (choice of 10.00 – 12.00 and 2.00 – 4.00)

11 March 2013 in Edinburgh (choice of 10.00 – 12.00 and 2.00 – 4.00)

National Records of Scotland events to look at alternative options to the traditional census.

For information see <http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/beyond-2011/background/index.html>

and to book see <http://beyond2011.eventbrite.co.uk> or contact Gemma Jackson 0131 314 4299 / [Beyond2011@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Beyond2011@gro-scotland.gsi.gov.uk).

More information about Beyond 2011 is available on the Knowledge Hub site <https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/web/scottishbeyond2011programmebeyond2011scotland/welcome>

**\*\* this week!**

### **SNAP! What Does it Mean for Race Equality?**

21 February 2013 in Glasgow (1.00 – 4.00)

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights seminar to explore the new Scottish National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP), its implications for race equality and the importance of involvement in the development of SNAP for Scotland's minority ethnic communities. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/a9h5srb> or contact Nadia 0141 418 6530 / [nadia@crer.org.uk](mailto:nadia@crer.org.uk).

### **Domestic Abuse and Minority Ethnic Women, Children & Young People**

25 February 2013 in Edinburgh (9.30 – 4.30) and 26 February 2013 (9.30 – 12.30)

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

## Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

### **Working with interpreters**

26 February 2013 in Glasgow (1.15 – 4.45)

Scottish Refugee Council course for those who work with non-English speaking service users, including asylum seekers and refugees, who need a comprehensive understanding of how to work with interpreters. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/9fs8ae5> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / [train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk).

### **Positive on Employment Conference**

26 February 2013 in Glasgow

Conference organised in partnership between BEMIS, the STUC, the Scottish Refugee Council, 'see me', Interfaith Scotland, and GRAMNet to discuss positive action on employment in relation to diversity, migrants and employment, mental health and wellbeing, and inclusive recruitment. For information see <http://bemis.org.uk/conference/poe/poe-conference-programme.pdf> or contact 0141 548 8047 / [conference@bemis.org.uk](mailto:conference@bemis.org.uk)

### **Mainstreaming Equalities**

27 February 2013 in Glasgow

20 March 2013 in Glasgow

*deadline for applications: 7 January 2013*

Institute of Leadership and Management training to support voluntary sector organisations to develop capacity on mainstreaming equality. For information see [http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/ads/13i-iii\\_equalities.pdf](http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/ads/13i-iii_equalities.pdf) or contact John Robertson 0141 332 2444 / [john.robertson@gcvs.org.uk](mailto:john.robertson@gcvs.org.uk).

### **The Gathering**

27-28 February 2013 in Glasgow

Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations networking event and exhibition. For information see <http://www.gatherscotland.org.uk/intro-text/what-is-the-gathering/>

### **The essentials of asylum**

1 March 2013 in Glasgow (1.15 – 4.45)

Scottish Refugee Council course for those who work with people seeking asylum and refugees to provide an introduction to core issues affecting those seeking sanctuary in Scotland. Reduced fees available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/bf86cuy> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / [train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk).

### **An introduction to working with asylum seekers and refugees**

14 March 2013 in Glasgow (9.15 – 4.30)

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. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/burro73> or contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / [train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](mailto:train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk).

### **Human Rights and Scotland's Constitutional Future: Where we are now? Human Rights and the Independence Debate**

18 March 2013 at the Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh (10.30 – 3.45)

Seminar to discuss how the independence debate may influence human rights protections; whether it will provide opportunities to further promote and protect, or threaten human rights, or whether it is an irrelevance. For information see <http://scffevent.eventbrite.com> or contact [aw.events@ed.ac.uk](mailto:aw.events@ed.ac.uk).



## Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

### Progressing Together?

28 March 2013 in Edinburgh (10.00 – 4.45)

CEMVO conference to explore the role of Community Empowerment in Mainstreaming of Race and Equalities across the Public Sector. For information contact Fiaz Khan 0141 248 4830 / [fiaz.khan@cemvoscotland.org.uk](mailto:fiaz.khan@cemvoscotland.org.uk) or see <http://tinyurl.com/d2eyumh>.

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## Useful Links

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

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

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

**Directgov (links to UK Government Departments)**

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/AToZOfCentralGovernment/fs/en?CONTENT\\_ID=10013528&chk=8b2gQw](http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/AToZOfCentralGovernment/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10013528&chk=8b2gQw)

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

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

**Scottish Refugee Council** [www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk](http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk)

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

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

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

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

**ACAS** [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

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

**Volunteer Development Scotland** [www.vds.org.uk](http://www.vds.org.uk)

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

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

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

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

**BBC Parliament online**

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/bbc\\_parliament/default.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/bbc_parliament/default.stm)

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



**BEMIS** is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>



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

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