

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

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

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Note that some weblinks, particularly of newspaper articles, are only valid for a short period of time, usually around a month, and that the Scottish Parliament website has recently been redesigned, so that links published in previous issues of MEMO may no longer work. To find archive material on the Scottish Parliament website, copy the details from MEMO into the search facility at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/help/searchadvanced.aspx>.

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Immigration and Asylum

Westminster Debates

Welfare Benefits (EU Citizens)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130605/halltext/130605h0002.htm#13060567000001>

Student Visas

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/debtext/130606-0002.htm#13060646000002>

Global Migration and Mobility (EUC Report)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130606-0002.htm#13060650000797>

Immigration and Asylum (continued)

Westminster Ministerial Statement

Asylum Support (Rates)

The Minister for Immigration (Mark Harper): The Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 enables the Home Office to support asylum seekers while their application to remain in the UK is determined, and some failed asylum seekers who temporarily are unable to return home. Under these arrangements we provide the claimant and any family members with free fully furnished and equipped housing with no bills to pay, as well as modest rates of financial support to meet their essential day to day living needs.

I have carefully considered whether those rates of financial support are adequate for the purpose set by Parliament, which is to meet the essential living needs of those asylum seekers and their dependants who would otherwise be destitute. I have concluded that they are, and so I am announcing today that the rates will be frozen for the current year.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/wmstext/130606m0001.htm#13060640000006>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Visas

Lord Laird: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many entry visas excluding tourist visas were issued in 2012 to non-European Union nationals for family, study work and intra-company transfer, and in what categories; and how many (1) migrants from European Union countries, (2) illegal immigrants, and (3) asylum seekers they estimate to have entered the United Kingdom in 2012, and what was the estimated total figure for inward entry, excluding tourists and visitors.[HL208]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): The available information for entry clearance visas excluding tourist visas, providing totals and data for family, work, study, and by detailed category, is given in the table below. Please note some individuals issued visas in 2012 may not have entered the UK (or entered the UK in 2013).

Some non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals (known as non-visa nationals) may be admitted to the UK for periods up to six months without requiring a visa. Further details are available at the web page: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/general-info/non-visa-nationals/>

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) estimated that 157,000 citizens from the European Union (EU) (excluding British) migrated to the UK in the year ending June 2012, similar to the estimate of 175,000 in the year ending June 2011. The data are given in the table below. The data uses the UN definition of a long-term international migrant being someone who moves from their country of previous residence for a period of at least a year.

Information is not available on the number of illegal immigrants entering the UK.

There were 27,486 asylum applicants in 2012 of which 23,901 asylum applications were made in-country. The data are given in the table below. Information as to how many of the 23,901 also entered the UK in 2012 is not available. Figures on how many of the 27,486 asylum applicants were issued with entry clearance visas in 2012 are also not available.

The ONS estimated that 515,000 people immigrated to the UK in the year ending June 2012, which is significantly lower than the 589,000 who migrated in the year to June 2011. The data are given in the table below. The data uses the United Nations (UN) definition of a long-term international migrant being someone who moves from their country of previous residence for a period of at least a year.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

To read the lengthy tables see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0002.htm#1306037001127>

The latest Home Office immigration statistics on entry clearance visas and asylum applications are published in the release Immigration Statistics October-December 2012, which is available from the Library of the House and on the department's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2012/immigration-statistics-october-to-december-2012>

Lord Laird: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 10 April (WA 341), whether they maintain a record of how many immigrants are sponsored annually by each of the current sponsoring employers registered under tiers 2 and 5 of the points-based system; and whether there is any statutory reason why such a record cannot be published.[HL451]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: The number of migrants sponsored by each of the registered sponsoring employers for tiers 2 and 5 is recorded on the sponsorship management system. There is no statutory reason why such a record cannot be published. However, the costs associated with quality-assuring this volume of data prior to publication would be disproportionate.

Lord Laird: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 10 April (WA 341), what assessment they have made of why the number of applications from within the United Kingdom for extensions of stay for work using certificates of sponsorship from employers increased from 18,065 in 2011 to 28,212 in 2012; and what assessment they have made of the impact of applications from within and outside the United Kingdom for entry clearance visas for work using such certificates in 2012 on their policy of reducing migration by the end of the Parliament. [HL452]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: The rise in extensions of stay is likely to be due in part to the reduction of the maximum grant of initial leave for skilled workers from five years to three years at the end of 2008. This will have resulted in an increase in extension applications in 2012, as the 2009 cohort applied to extend their stay. Some displacement from closed tier 1 routes was also anticipated.

The Government do not expect the increase in extensions to affect our target of reducing net migration. We continue to monitor the volume of entry clearance and extension applications, and net migration continues to fall. We have also tightened the requirements to be satisfied before a migrant on a work visa may settle in the UK at the end of a five-year period.

The latest Home Office immigration statistics are published in the release Immigration Statistics January-March 2013, which is available from the Library of the House and on the department's website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/home-office/series-statistics-quarterly-release>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0002.htm#1306037001127>

Landlords: Immigration Controls

Hilary Benn: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government what criteria he proposes to use to identify high-risk areas where landlords will be required to check on the immigration status of prospective tenants; and whether the proportion of ethnic minorities living in an area will form part of those criteria. [158386]

Reply from Mark Prisk: The Government is taking action to stop rogue landlords

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who cash in from housing illegal immigrants. These measures will send out a strong signal and help reduce unsustainable immigration.

We will avoid burdening the private rented sector with unnecessary red tape and any changes will not adversely affect UK nationals looking to rent.

More information on the proposals will be published for consultation in due course, and the reforms will be subject to scrutiny by Parliament.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/text/130606w0001.htm#13060670000009>

Immigration

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many slots are available each day at the public enquiry office at Lunar House for indefinite leave to remain applications through UK visas and immigration. [156332]

Reply from Mark Harper: Appointments at Lunar House Public Enquiry Office are released for booking on a first come, first served basis irrespective of application type. As the booking system makes no distinction between application routes for reporting purposes, this information is not available.

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions her Department has had on the likely number of Romanian and Bulgarian nationals who might migrate to the UK over the next three years; and what assessment she has made of the potential effects on her Department. [156768]

Reply from Mark Harper: The Home Office regularly monitors and analyses overall migration data to help inform policy decisions. However, we have not prepared forecasts of likely inflows from Romania and Bulgaria once restrictions are lifted. The Government accepts the view of the independent Migration Advisory Committee that to produce such estimates “would not be sensible, or helpful to policymakers”.

Rather than produce speculative forecasts, the Government's priority is to cut out abuse of free movement and address pull factors such as access to benefits and public services. The Home Office is working closely with other Government Departments on these issues.

Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the longest recorded delay in providing an applicant with their travel documents once a decision has been taken on granting their right to indefinite leave to remain has been to date. [156899]

Reply from Mark Harper: Persons granted indefinite leave to remain (ILR) are not automatically issued with travel documents when ILR is granted. All travel documents have to be applied for separately using application form TD112 (BRP). Where the applicant is a refugee or stateless person the application will be considered in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 and 1954 UN conventions—respectively refugees and stateless persons. Where the person has humanitarian protection or discretionary leave to remain following refusal of asylum or ILR, and has been formally and unreasonably refused a passport by their national authorities, we may issue certificates of travel (COT) in line with the guidance published on our website.

There are 26 cases that have been identified as being outstanding from before 2011. These are broken down by reason:

Security reasons: one

Applicant on remand: one

Applicant wanted by the police: one

Status under review following criminal conviction: eight

Ongoing investigations into possible criminal activity: five

Applicant suspected of being an impostor/ status obtained by deception: seven

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On going deportation case: three.

Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she is taking to reduce the time taken to provide applicants with their travel documents once a decision has been taken to grant them indefinite leave to remain. [156901]

Reply from Mark Harper: Persons granted Indefinite leave to remain (ILR) are not automatically issued with travel documents when ILR is granted. All travel documents have to be applied for separately using application form TD112 (BRP). It is possible that a person granted ILR may decide to wait years before applying for a travel document.

Where the applicant is a refugee or stateless person the application will be considered in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 and 1954 UN Conventions respectively—refugees and stateless persons. Where the person has humanitarian protection or discretionary leave to remain following refusal of asylum, or ILR and has been formally and unreasonably refused a passport by their national authorities, we may issue certificates of travel (COT) in line with the guidance published on our website.

We are aware that there are delays in the processing of travel document applications and are exploring ways of improving the process. We are looking at introducing aspects of I-Apply to screen out non-compliant applications, and outsource document production by sharing IT processes with HM Passport Office. In the interim we are looking to increase staff levels.

Jim Murphy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons it is not possible to make a simultaneous application to the UK Border Force for indefinite leave to remain and travel documents. [156902]

Reply from Mark Harper: Travel documents are issued by the Home Office to facilitate travel by those wishing to travel who are unable to obtain a national passport.

Applications for indefinite leave to remain (ILR) and travel documents are completely separate. A person applying for ILR must show that they qualify under the appropriate immigration rules under which the application is being made, and pay the fee agreed by Parliament and published in the Fees Regulations. Depending on what type of travel document is being sought a travel document applicant will need to show that they qualify under the 1951 UN Convention on the status of Refugees, the 1954 UN Convention on Stateless Persons, or under the published guidance on certificates of travel (COT). Certificates of Travel are issued at the discretion of the Secretary of State.

The fee for documents issued under the 1951 or 1954 Conventions is tied by the Conventions to that for a national passport. The fee for a COT is agreed by Parliament in the Fees Regulations.

Since February 2012 all travel document applicants have been required to have or to simultaneously apply for a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) which confirms their current immigration status. Where the applicant has been previously been granted ILR and they do not have a valid BRP they have been able, and in fact are required, to make a simultaneous application for a BRP to confirm that there is no time limit on their stay.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130603/text/130603w0005.htm#13060415000088>

Immigration

Lord Laird: To ask Her Majesty's Government what checks are performed when European Union nationals bring spouses and families without a European Union nationality into the United Kingdom; whether any minimum income is required for such

Immigration and Asylum

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individuals; how many such spouses and family members entered the United Kingdom in each of the last three years; and how the restrictions applying to such spouses and families compare to those applying to the foreign spouses and family members of United Kingdom nationals.[HL421]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): The rights of European Union nationals to live and work in other member states, and to be accompanied by their family members who do not hold European Union nationality, are set out in the Free Movement Directive (2004/38/EC).

Under the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2006, which implement the Free Movement Directive, the European Economic Area (EEA) family permit regime allows EU nationals to bring their non-EU family members to the UK.

Applicants for an EEA family permit are checked against criminality and immigration databases and must submit proof of identity and nationality, proof that their family member is an EU national, and proof of a qualifying family relationship. There is no minimum income requirement but non-EU family members can remain in the UK for longer than three months only if their EU relative is exercising treaty rights in the UK, as a worker, jobseeker, student, self-employed or self-sufficient person, and both the EU national and their family member meet the other qualifying criteria.

An EEA family permit, instead of a visa, is required whenever a non-EU national wishes to accompany their EU national spouse, parent or other family member to the UK, including for holidays, family visits and business trips. The Home Office issued 20,746 EEA family permits in 2010, 19,885 in 2011 and 19,242 in 2012.

The Free Movement Directive does not cover the rights of EU citizens living in their country of nationality, so it does not apply to British citizens living in the UK, who must meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules, including the minimum income threshold of £18,600, to sponsor a non-EEA national spouse to settle here.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0001.htm#1306037001102>

Immigration

Philip Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had on the likely number of Romanian and Bulgarian nationals who might migrate to the UK over the next three years; and what assessment he has made of the potential effects on his Department. [156769]

Reply from Anna Soubry: Neither the Department, nor wider Government has forecast figures for the numbers of migrants that could arrive from Romania and Bulgaria over the next three years. It is not credible to accurately forecast likely inflows from Romania and Bulgaria once restrictions on free movement for workers are lifted, because they are dependent on too many uncertainties to draw robust conclusions.

European Economic Area nationals working, and paying taxes here, are entitled to free national health service hospital treatment.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130604/text/130604w0001.htm#13060486000023>

Immigration

Stella Creasy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of settlement applications made in the third quarter of 2012 was from (a) women and

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(b) men; and what the average length of time to process such applications was in each case. [157144]

Reply from Mark Harper: 31,899 in-country applications for settlement in the United Kingdom were received in the third quarter of 2012, of which 50% were from women and 50% from men. The average processing time for decided settlement applications received in that period was 155 days.

Notes:

1. The 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 main applicants only.
3. Figures relate to postal and premium (PEO) applications.
4. Figures relate to settlement applications raised (received) between 1 July and 30 September 2012.
5. Processing time is based on the average number of calendar days between raised and despatched date.

Stella Creasy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of those in-country immigration applications which had not been processed in the third quarter of 2012 were made by women. [157577]

Reply from Mark Harper: The Home Office is not able to report on historical work in progress cases by applicants' sex. While a current snapshot of work in progress data can be generated, it is not possible to disaggregate by main applicants and dependants. Consequently it would not be possible to provide the requested data on in-country applications made by women without incurring disproportionate costs.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130605/text/130605w0001.htm#13060585000008>

Immigration: Children

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children have arrived unaccompanied on flights, without family or accommodation in the UK, in 2010, 2011 and 2012, by country of origin. [156375]

Reply from Mark Harper: We do not hold data on the number of unaccompanied children arriving on flights in the United Kingdom in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with which countries outside the EU the UK has bilateral agreements on returning unaccompanied children. [156376]

Reply from Mark Harper: The United Kingdom does not currently have any bilateral agreements specifically relating to returning unaccompanied children to countries outside of the European Union. Unaccompanied children are returned under general returns arrangements, but only where safe and adequate reception arrangements are in place in the country to which the child is to be returned.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unaccompanied children have arrived on UK flights and been returned to their country of origin in 2010, 2011 and 2012. [156377]

Reply from Mark Harper: We do not hold data on the number of unaccompanied children arriving on flights in the United Kingdom in 2010, 2011 and 2012. We do know the number of non-British citizen children who were subject to further examination at airports, however determining how many were unescorted and were subsequently returned to their country of origin, could be obtained only at a disproportionate cost.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many

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unaccompanied children have applied for temporary leave to remain in the UK in 2010, 2011 and 2012, broken down by country of origin. [156378]

Reply from Mark Harper: Information on how many unaccompanied children have applied for temporary leave to remain in the UK is only held at the level of coordinated paper case files or within the notes section of the Home Office Case Information Database (CiD). Such data is not aggregated in national reporting systems, which would mean this question could only be answered through a disproportionately expensive manual case search to collate the data.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130603/text/130603w0005.htm#13060415000090>

Immigration: Interpreters

Lord Avebury: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many hearings of the second tier immigration tribunal have been cancelled on the grounds that (1) interpreters failed to attend, or (2) interpreters attending did not speak the correct language, since Applied Language Solutions began operating as the Ministry of Justice's sole contractor for language services in February 2012.[HL71]

Reply from the Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord McNally): Statistics published by the Ministry of Justice in March covering the first year of the language services contract break down requests by tribunal type. Tables 5 and 6 cover data from both the first tier tribunal and Upper Tier Tribunal of the Immigration and Asylum Tribunal, and contains information on bookings which were cancelled and the bookings where an interpreter did not attend. The data are available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/177042/statistical-tables-jan12-jan13.xls.

These show that there has been a dramatic improvement in the interpreter contract since the start of last year, with the vast majority of bookings now being completed and a major reduction in complaints. Our changes saved taxpayers £15 million this year. Hearings where an interpreter does not attend may exceptionally continue with the hearing to consider any "error of law" issues which can be dealt with in the absence of an interpreter. A failure to attend may not lead necessarily to a cancellation.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0001.htm#1306037001103>

Asylum: Self-employed

Richard Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration she has given to allowing failed asylum seekers who are unable to return to their home country to take up work on a self-employed basis. [157702]

Reply from Mark Harper: Asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers are not permitted access to self-employment to avoid asylum being used as a route to circumvent controls on economic migration, and to protect the resident labour market.

Richard Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what consideration she has given to allowing asylum seekers to take on work on a self-employed basis while they are waiting for a decision on their case. [157703]

Reply from Mark Harper: Asylum seekers and failed asylum seekers are not permitted access to self-employment to avoid asylum being used as a route to circumvent controls on economic migration, and to protect the resident labour market.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/text/130606w0001.htm#13060668000004>

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Asylum: Voluntary Work

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will review her Department's guidelines to make it clear that asylum seekers are entitled to volunteer for work with public sector organisations. [158322]

Reply from Mark Harper: We are currently reviewing whether to extend access to volunteering for asylum seekers beyond registered charities and voluntary organisations. If any changes to guidance are necessary they will be made in due course.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/text/130606w0001.htm#13060668000005>

Asylum

Stella Creasy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications from (a) men and (b) women for section 95 support and section 4 support have been (i) received and (ii) accepted in the last five years for which figures are available. [156977]

Reply from Mark Harper: The information requested is shown in the following tables. The figures are taken from management information and have not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols.

<i>Section 95 applications</i>						
	<i>Female applications</i>		<i>Male applications</i>		<i>Total</i>	
<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>
2008-09	5,963	5,133	10,740	9,341	16,703	14,474
2009-10	4,899	4,197	8,375	7,183	13,274	11,380
2010-11	3,886	3,462	7,726	6,817	11,612	10,279
2011-12	3,762	3,368	7,745	6,921	11,507	10,289
2012-13	4,269	3,841	7,600	6,762	11,869	10,603
<i>Section 4 applications</i>						
	<i>Female applications</i>		<i>Male applications</i>		<i>Total</i>	
<i>Financial year</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>	<i>Received</i>	<i>Accepted</i>
2008-09	3,077	2,393	10,322	8,302	15,792	10,695
2009-10	2,990	1,901	10,352	6,851	15,243	8,752
2010-11	2,180	1,027	11,390	5,362	14,597	6,389
2011-12	1,287	609	5,529	2,892	7,425	3,501
2012-13	1,230	783	6,128	4,579	8,141	5,362

Stella Creasy: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of decisions on (a) asylum cases waiting more than six months for a decision in the year to September 2012, (b) asylum cases concluded within a year in the third quarter of 2012, (c) settlement applications made by asylum seekers in the third quarter of 2012, (d) asylum cases being worked on in the third quarter of 2012 and (e) asylum cases awaiting an initial decision at the end of 2012 were applications made by women. [157290]

Reply from Mark Harper: The information is as follows:

(a) Of the asylum cases waiting more than six months for an initial decision at the end of September 2012, 28% of those applications had been made by women.

(b) From a cohort of asylum applications made in 2011 Q3, of the applications concluded within one year (i.e. concluded by the end of 2012 Q3), 25% had been made by women.

(c) In response to point c, there were a total of 2,650 decisions on settlement applications made by asylum seekers between July and September 2012. Of these, 1,017 applications (38%) were made by women.

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(d) Of the asylum cases being worked on (pending an initial decision or pending further review) at the end of the third quarter of 2012, 29% of those asylum applications had been made by women.

(e) Of the asylum cases awaiting an initial decision at the end of 2012, 30% of those asylum applications had been made by women.

Figures for (a),(b),(d) and (e) refer to main applicants only, and exclude dependants.

Figures for (c) refer to main applicants and dependants.

The figures for (a), (d) and (e) are an unpublished subset of published National Statistics asylum applications pending information available in Table as.0l.q (Asylum data tables Volume 1) of Immigration Statistics. Figures relate to the number of cases pending at the end of the reference period. The latest release Immigration Statistics October to December 2012 is available in the Library of the House and from the Home Office Science website at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/science-research-statistics/research-statistics/immigration-asylum-research/immigration-q4-2012/>

The figure for (b) is calculated from the "Percentage of asylum applications concluded in one year" (management information) figures, published on the former UKBA website on:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/percentage-of-asylum-application/>

Figures for (c) are from unpublished management information and relate to settlement applications raised (i.e. received) between 1 July and 30 September 2012.

Figures from management information have not been quality assured to the same level as National Statistics.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130603/text/130603w0004.htm#13060415000070>

Asylum: Finance

Richard Graham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to the public purse has been of Section 4 support in each of the last five years. [157701]

Reply from Mark Harper: Expenditure on Section 4 support for the last five years for which audited accounts are available is shown in the following table.

	<i>£ million</i>
2007-08	73
2008-09	91
2009-10	102
2010-11	56
2011-12	22

Audited accounts for the UK Border Agency for 2012-13 will be available in July and a copy will be placed in the Library of the House.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130604/text/130604w0001.htm#13060486000029>

Asylum Seekers

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 22 April (WA 350–1), how many caseworkers are now employed to interview and process asylum applicants; how that compares with the number 12 months ago; and what emphasis they place on the quality of decisions as opposed to speed.[HL24]

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Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): The information required on caseworker numbers in the now former agency, henceforth referred to as the Home Office, is not at this time held in a format compatible with the request, in that obtaining specific information on caseworker numbers held at local level would be excessively costly. However, the Home Office does publish data against 15 key performance measures. Specifically:

asylum intake; work in progress (WiP) cases; intake; asylum support costs; productivity; asylum unit cost; initial decisions in 30 days; cases concluded in six months; cases concluded in 12 months; cases concluded in 35 months; cases removed in 12 months; decision quality; appeal representation rate; appeal win rate; asylum grant rate.

Our most recent published statistics on speed and quality of decisions are in the link below:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/further-key-data/asylum-performance1.xls?view=Binary>

The statistics show an asylum system which is performing steadily on quality and speed. On speed, although performance on initial decisions within 30 days fell slightly in FY11/12, conclusions overall are performing well:

asylum cases concluded within 12 months (up from 56% in FY 10/11 to 63% in FY 11/12); asylum cases concluded within 36 months (up from 63%, in FY 10/11 to 70% in FY 11/12); asylum cases concluded within six months steady at 53% in FYs 2010/11 and 2011/12.

Decision quality also rose from 88% in financial year 2010/11 to 89% in FY 2011/12.

To build on this, and further improve performance, the Home Office is implementing a new asylum operating model over the next 18 months. This will see caseworkers concentrated in a smaller number of casework “hubs” with greater co-ordination and specialisation. Ahead of this, the Asylum Casework Directorate has initiated a national performance drive across all regional offices, which is expected to show further improved performance in the next set of figures to be published.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty’s Government why they opted out of the revised European Union Directive on Reception Conditions which laid down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers; and whether they plan to revise their position in future. [HL315]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: The Government chose not to opt in to the recast directive on reception conditions for asylum seekers, because we considered it would have a negative impact on our ability to operate our asylum system; nor did we believe the proposals struck the right balance between the rights of asylum seekers and the needs of member states.

We were particularly concerned that the proposals based on enhancing the rights of all asylum seekers, genuine or not, would act as a pull factor for fraudulent claimants to the detriment of genuine refugees as such claims divert precious resources, erode public support for the asylum system and encourage individuals to undertake dangerous journeys to the EU.

We are committed to working with our EU partners on asylum issues in order to address the challenges we all face in preserving the integrity of our asylum systems and helping those who are genuinely in need. However, at present we have no plans to adopt the recast reception conditions directive in the future because we do not judge that adoption of the directive would be in Britain’s best interests.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to allow failed asylum seekers who have made fresh submissions for asylum which have been pending for 12 months or more to apply for permission to work, in the light of the judgment of the Supreme Court in July 2010 on the application of Article 11 of the European Union Reception Conditions Directive.[HL316]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: The policy on permission to work was amended in line with the judgment of the Supreme Court in July 2010. As such, failed asylum seekers who have made further submissions for asylum that have been pending for 12 months or more are allowed to apply for permission to work for jobs on the shortage occupation list, in the same way as asylum seekers who have initial claims that have been pending for 12 months or more.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government what legal and advice services they provide to prospective asylum seekers throughout the asylum process.[HL317]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: Legal aid, subject to the normal merits test, is available to help asylum seekers prepare their asylum claims and to provide representation if they wish to appeal against the refusal of the claim. The Home Office also funds voluntary sector organisations to provide advice and assistance on other aspects of the asylum system, including procedures for entering the support system, which are available to destitute asylum seekers. This advice is provided through "one-stop services" located across the United Kingdom.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many failed asylum seekers' children were separated from their parents before deportation in each of the last five years.[HL318]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: Information on how many failed asylum seekers' children were separated from their parents before deportation is held only at the level of co-ordinated paper case files or within the notes section of the Home Office Case Information Database (CID). Such data are not aggregated in national reporting systems, which would mean that this question could be answered only through a disproportionately expensive manual case search to collate the data.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0001.htm#1306037001057>

Immigrants: Detainees

Sarah Teather: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for bail were made by people held in immigration detention in each of the last five years. [156774]

Reply from Mark Harper: We are only able to provide data on the number of applications for bail made by people held in immigration detention between January 2010 and December 2012. This data is shown in the following table. To provide data prior to January 2010 would incur disproportionate cost.

	<i>Total</i>
2010	3,087
2011	3,210
2012	3,526

Notes: 1. All figures quoted are management information which has been subject to internal quality checks. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols. 2. Figures relate to cases where the bail application was made in the same period of detention. 3. Data relate to main applicants and dependants.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130605/text/130605w0001.htm#13060585000007>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Human Trafficking

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the proportion of victims of human trafficking who entered the country by (a) legal means and (b) illegal means; and if she will make a statement. [156451]

Reply from Mark Harper: As of 16 May 2013, of the 1,186 trafficking cases referred into the National Referral Mechanism in 2012, 429 have been conclusively identified as victims. Of these 60% are UK or EEA nationals who have freedom of movement and less than 1% are nationals of countries that do not require a visa for general visitor purposes. Assessments of non-EEA entry routes are continuing; however, it is understood that 10% are thought to have entered on a UK visa and in most of the remaining cases the person is suspected of using an alias, entering clandestinely concealed in a commercial or private vehicle or entering on forged or counterfeit identity or travel document.

These data are based on Home Office and Serious Organised Crime Agency management information and as such have not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols. They are therefore provisional and subject to change.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/text/130606w0001.htm#13060668000008>

Human Trafficking

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital bed spaces for persons who have undergone human trafficking have been available in each of the last 10 years; and what the projected number of such beds is in each of the next three years. [156947]

Reply from Anna Soubry: The Department recognises that the impact of human trafficking on victims is significant for both mental health and physical health. Information on the number of hospital bed spaces available for individuals under criteria such as 'for persons who have undergone human trafficking' is not collected in the national health service.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130606/text/130606w0002.htm#13060672000039>

Human Trafficking

Baroness Doocey: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the children referred by the UK Border Agency or Border Force in 2012 to the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking first arrived in the United Kingdom through (1) the port of Folkestone, and (2) the port of Dover.[HL265]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): There were 98 potential child-trafficking cases referred to the national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking by Border Force and the UK Border Agency in 2012. Folkestone itself has no seaport.

With regard to the Channel Tunnel operation at Folkestone/Cheriton and the port of Dover, it is not possible to provide the information requested as information on the individual's initial point of entry into the UK was not collated centrally during the period in question. The Home Office is working to ensure that this information is collected going forward but the cost of providing this information for 2012, which would require detailed interrogation of 98 individual case files, would involve disproportionate cost.

Baroness Doocey: To ask Her Majesty's Government when was the last meeting of the UK Border Force with French authorities to discuss the trafficking of children into and out of the United Kingdom through the Channel Tunnel.[HL267]

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: Border Force regularly meets with the French border control authorities, at various levels of management, to discuss matters of border security, including child trafficking issues. Most recently, the Border Force Director for South East and Europe met on 16 May 2013 with the Préfet of the Pas-de-Calais Département, senior members of the Police aux Frontières (PAF) and the Chief Constable of Kent to discuss current cross-border crime issues and opportunities for enhanced collaborative working.

Baroness Docey: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many coach companies arriving in or departing from the United Kingdom at Victoria coach station have provided information to the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Human Trafficking.[HL268]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: No coach companies arriving or departing from the UK at Victoria coach station have provided information to the Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on Human Trafficking and modern slavery. However, as part of its oversight and co-ordination functions, the group regularly receives information from the police and other law enforcement agencies on the methods, routes and means by which traffickers seek to transport potential victims into and out of the UK.

Baroness Docey: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Operation Newbridge, an initiative for detecting potentially trafficked children at Gatwick airport; and whether there are plans to extend that model to other United Kingdom ports.[HL269]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: Child trafficking is an abhorrent form of child abuse and the Government are committed to combating this crime in all its forms.

The Government's human trafficking strategy, which includes a specific focus on children, makes a commitment to work with partners and to build on the success of child safeguarding approaches such as Operation Newbridge.

Work is ongoing to understand the key success factors of such multiagency approaches at the border, which includes an examination of the Operation Newbridge model to ensure that potentially trafficked children are identified and protected at our ports. Meetings have taken place between partners including the Home Office, the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre, the UK Human Trafficking Centre and the Association of Chief Police Officers, to review the model and consider how established good practice can be developed and delivered more widely.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603w0001.htm#1306037001101>

Human Trafficking

Baroness Docey: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children have been identified as being trafficked for labour exploitation, including domestic servitude, since 2007; and what action they are taking to implement the International Labour Organisation Convention 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, ratified by the United Kingdom in 2000.[HL508]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach): The National Referral Mechanism (NRM), established in 2009, and managed by the UK Human Trafficking Centre, collects data on potential victims of trafficking, including a breakdown of child referrals by type of exploitation. Data prior to the establishment of the NRM in April 2009 were not centrally collected.

Published data for the period April 2009 to December 2012 show a total of 318 child referrals for labour exploitation and 143 child referrals for domestic servitude.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

NRM statistics are published on the SOCA website: www.soca.gov.uk/about-soca/about-the-ukhtc/national-referral-mechanism/statistics

Implementation of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labour is covered by a range of government actions delivered by a number of departments, including Home Office, Department for Education and the Department for International Development. As required by ratification, the Government reports, on a biennial basis, to the ILO on significant changes to legislation and practice related to the articles in the convention.

Baroness Doocey: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre will include the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation as one of its key priority threat areas when it becomes part of the National Crime Agency in October.[HL510]

Reply from Lord Taylor of Holbeach: The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre has published its centre plan for 2013-14, which sets out its work to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse both online and offline as part of the National Crime Agency. The plan can be found here: http://www.ceop.police.uk/Documents/ceopdocs/CEOP_Annual_Review2011-2012_and_Centre_Plan2012-2013.pdf

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130605w0001.htm#13060566000141>

Human Trafficking

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the adequacy of the (a) legal support, (b) medical aid, (c) counselling and (d) education and training made available to those who have undergone human trafficking. [156945]

Reply from Helen Grant: Since 1 July 2011, The Salvation Army has been contracted to oversee and co-ordinate the provision of support to adult victims of trafficking who have been referred through the National Referral Mechanism.

I am satisfied that The Salvation Army, as prime contractor, is successfully delivering tailored support to victims, taking into account their individual needs. This has made a real difference in helping them re-build their lives after their terrible ordeal at the hands of their traffickers. Where required, the support includes access to the services to which the honourable member refers.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what assessment he has made of the (a) physical and (b) mental health of persons who have undergone human trafficking at the end of the stipulated period of rest and reflection. [156948]

Reply from Helen Grant: Since 1 July 2011, The Salvation Army has been contracted to oversee and co-ordinate the provision of support to adult victims of trafficking who have been referred through the National Referral Mechanism.

Based on the victim's individual needs, The Salvation Army will ensure that an individual is provided with the appropriate health services to aid their immediate recovery from the trauma of being trafficked. Services offered to victims under the contract include facilitating access to mental health services, emergency medical treatment, housing, substance misuse and sexual health services. The Salvation Army will also ensure that victims are able to continue access these support services once they have received a positive Conclusive Grounds decision.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130605/text/130605w0001.htm#13060585000024>

Human Trafficking: Compensation

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what (a) written and (b) oral advice his Department gives to those who have experienced human trafficking on the right to compensation. [157026]

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Helen Grant: Since 1 July 2011, The Salvation Army has been contracted to oversee and co-ordinate the provision of support and assistance to adult victims of trafficking who have been referred through the National Referral Mechanism.

When they enter the service provided by The Salvation Army, victims will be informed in a language they understand of their right to submit an application for an award under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. They may also be advised of their right to pursue a claim for damages in the civil courts.

The Government has recently issued a leaflet which offers help and advice for people who think they may be victims of trafficking. The document explains to victims that they can obtain advice from their legal adviser or from a Citizen's Advice Bureau about any compensation they may be able to claim.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130605/text/130605w0001.htm#13060585000025>

Press Releases

Tier 4 student interviews

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2013/june/08-student>

The government sets record straight on students and net migration

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-government-sets-record-straight-on-students-and-net-migration>

New Publications

Student visitors

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/205318/horr71.pdf

Homeless in Europe

http://feantsa.org/spip.php?action=acceder_document&arg=1582&cle=4a42054ede9c05e2bdf253ec8295a46ea27d5ed&file=pdf%2Fhomeless_in_europe_spring_2013.pdf

News

Immigration opposition falls when told about benefits, survey shows

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jun/08/immigration-opposition-falls-benefits-survey>

Immigration policy is 'at odds with EU law'

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/political-news/immigration-policy-is-at-odds-with-eu-law.21245752>

Crackdown on benefit migrants

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/political-news/crackdown-on-benefit-migrants.21292564>

Speaker under fire for remarks

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/political-news/speaker-under-fire-for-remarks.21270248>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

John Bercow criticised for saying eastern Europeans are harder workers

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2013/jun/05/speaker-john-bercow-eastern-europeans-nigel-farage>

House of Commons Speaker John Bercow under fire over migrant comments

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/house-of-commons-speaker-john-bercow-under-fire-over-migrant-comments-8645043.html>

UK is first choice of young Romanians

http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/news/uk_news/National/article1271560.ece

Met crackdown on foreign suspects raises fears justice will be denied

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jun/06/metropolitan-police-foreign-nationals-deportation>

Tighter rules for student visas could cost UK £2.4bn in a decade – study

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jun/05/visa-restrictions-overseas-students-costing-uk>

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Race Relations

Holyrood Parliamentary Motion

S4M-06917 Marco Biagi: Edinburgh Central Mosque—That the Parliament welcomes Edinburgh Central Mosque's open doors policy, which, it understands, encourages people from all faiths and backgrounds to interact and build relationships; congratulates the mosque on what it considers to be its extensive work in fostering a strong sense of cohesion between Edinburgh's diverse communities; believes that promoting inter-faith and inter-community dialogue and understanding is important everywhere across the country, and welcomes the message of tolerance and friendship preached by imams and pastors in mosques around Scotland.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4M-06917&ResultsPerPage=10>

New Publication

British Sikh Report 2013

<http://www.britishsikhreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/BSR-2013.pdf>

News

British Sikh Report finds majority 'proud of Britain'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-22782524>

British Sikhs 'Proud To Be British' Despite Most Experiencing Racism

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/06/british-sikh-report-finds_n_3397036.html

Race Relations

News (continued)

Between tradition and exclusion: struggling for the right to pitch a trailer

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

Muslims and Sikhs feel more British than Christians and Jews, university study finds

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2336210/Muslims-Sikhs-feel-British-Christians-Jews-university-study-finds.html>

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Equality

Press Release

Commission helps police be fairer and more efficient in their use of stop and search

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/news/2013/june/commission-helps-police-be-fairer-and-more-efficient-in-their-use-of-stop-and-search/>

New Publications

Stop and think again

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/raceinbritain/stop_and_think_again.pdf

Equality and Human Rights Commission Corporate Plan 2013-14

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/aboutus/corporate_plan_2013-14_final.pdf

News

Met plans one ethnic recruit for each white: Force bids to change the law to boost number of applicants from minorities

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2335500/Met-plans-ethnic-recruit-white-Force-bids-change-law-boost-number-applicants-minorities.html>

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Racism and Religious Hatred

Holyrood Parliamentary Questions

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications Act 2012

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, how many of the convictions were for (a) violent and (b) non-violent offences. (S4W-14647)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: A conviction for “offensive behaviour at regulated football matches”, under section 1 of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012, may be for threatening behaviour as well as hateful or other offensive behaviour which may incite public disorder. A conviction may therefore include violent behaviour but if violent behaviour was involved then a person may be charged with other offences.

Racism and Religious Hatred Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

The information provided in response to S4O-02044 on convictions under the Act is derived from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's live operational case management system, which is specifically designed to receive criminal reports from the police and other specialist reporting agencies and to manage these cases for prosecution purposes. The information held on the system is structured for these operational needs, rather than for statistical reporting or research purposes, and it is not possible from the case management system to provide the information requested as convictions are not split up or recorded in such a way.

The Government will publish this month the first annual statistics and analysis of offences committed under the Act from its coming into force until 31 March 2013.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14647&ResultsPerPage=10>

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, how many of the convictions were for the use of language deemed (a) sectarian or (b) otherwise offensive. (S4W-14648)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: A conviction for "offensive behaviour at regulated football matches", under section 1 of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012, may be for threatening, hateful or other offensive behaviour which may incite public disorder. Hateful behaviour includes expressing hatred of, or stirring up hatred against, individuals or groups of persons based on their actual or presumed religion, nationality and ethnic or national origins.

The information provided in response to S4O-02044 on convictions under the Act is derived from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's live operational case management system, which is specifically designed to receive criminal reports from the police and other specialist reporting agencies and to manage these cases for prosecution purposes. The information held on the system is structured for these operational needs, rather than for statistical reporting or research purposes, and it is not possible from the case management system to provide the information requested as charges are not split up or recorded in such a way.

The government will publish this month the first annual statistics and analysis of offences committed under the Act from its coming into force until 31 March 2013.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14648&ResultsPerPage=10>

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, how many of the people charged were subsequently tried and what the conviction rate was. (S4W-14649)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: The latest available statistics on convictions under the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 remain those reported in response to S4O-02044. However, the Government will publish this month the first annual statistics and analysis of offences committed under the Act from its coming into force until 31 March 2013.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14649&ResultsPerPage=10>

Racism and Religious Hatred Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S40-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, how many of the people convicted could not have been charged under legislation in place prior to the commencement of the Offensive Behaviour and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012. (S4W-14650)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: This information is not, and never has been, held centrally for this or other legislation. Under Scots law, the choice of the appropriate charges to bring forward in each case is a matter for the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, in accordance with the Lord Advocate's guidelines on prosecution. The guidelines can be found at:

http://www.crownoffice.gov.uk/images/Documents/Prosecution_Policy_Guidance/Lord_Advocates_Guidelines/Lord%20Advocates%20Guidelines%20-%20The%20Offensive%20Behaviour%20at%20Football%20and%20Threatening%20Communications%20Scotland%20Act%202012.PDF

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14650&ResultsPerPage=10>

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S40-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, whether the conviction under section 6 was for the use of language deemed (a) sectarian or (b) otherwise offensive. (S4W-14651)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: A conviction for the offence of "threatening communications", under section 6 of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012, may be for the communication of material which threatens serious violence or threatening material intended to stir up hatred on religious grounds. The conviction referred to related to a threat of serious violence.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14651&ResultsPerPage=10>

Patrick Harvie: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4W-14226 by Roseanna Cunningham on 3 May 2013, whether it will provide the information that was requested and confirm whether it will bring forward a report before the completion of the review period; whether the legislation forbids it from producing such a report, and what its position is on how offences under section (a) 1 and (b) 6 of the Act are being dealt with. (S4W-14668)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: Section 11 of the Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Scotland) Act 2012 contained an express provision requiring the government to report to Parliament on the operation of the legislation after two full football seasons. Work on the evidence necessary to inform the report to Parliament has already begun.

The legislation does not prevent the production of an earlier report but the government remains of the view that the original legislative provision as agreed by Parliament is the most appropriate review mechanism.

The way in which the offences under sections 1 and 6 are being dealt with is primarily an operational matter for the police, but the Government will publish this month the first annual statistics and analysis of the offences committed under the Act over the first year of its operation.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14668&ResultsPerPage=10>

Racism and Religious Hatred Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, what percentage of convictions was for (a) religiously aggravated offending and (b) violent crime carried out at football grounds in (i) 2010-11 and (ii) 2011-12. (S4W-14811)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: The information provided in response to S4O-02044 on convictions under the Act was derived from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's (COPFS's) live operational case management system, which is specifically designed to receive criminal reports from the police and other specialist reporting agencies and to manage these cases for prosecution purposes. The information held on the system is structured for these operational needs, rather than for statistical reporting or research purposes.

For the time period requested in the question, the official source of information on convictions of religiously aggravated offences in Scotland is the Scottish Government Criminal Proceedings database. The information held in this database is published as National Statistics on an annual basis with the next publication currently due to be published in November 2013. The current publication, providing information up to end March 2012, can be found here: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubCriminalProceedings>.

It should be noted that the Act came into force on 1 March 2012. As such, from the Scottish Government Criminal Proceedings database, there were no convictions under the Act during 2010-11. There were only two convictions during 2011-12, in the one month of the Act coming into force. Neither of the convictions in 2011-12 were religiously aggravated.

In response to part (b) and as noted in the answer to question S4W-14647 on 7 June 2013, it is not possible to break down the number of convictions that included violent crimes carried out at football grounds. All answers to written parliamentary questions are available on the Parliament's website, the search facility for which can be found at:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx>.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14811&ResultsPerPage=10>

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government whether the activities of the Football Co-ordination Unit Scotland are limited to (a) football stadia or (b) locations in close proximity to football stadia. (S4W-14812)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: The remit of the Football Co-ordination Unit for Scotland is to promote and coordinate a consistent and effective approach to the policing of football across Scotland to tackle football related violence and disorder. Its responsibilities include supporting post match investigations into football related violence and disorder and supporting investigations into football related hate crime, including on the internet. Its activities are not confined to football stadia and nearby locations.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14812&ResultsPerPage=10>

Siobhan McMahon: To ask the Scottish Government, further to the answer to question S4O-02044 by Roseanna Cunningham on 25 April 2013, whether there is an up-to-date database of religiously aggravated offences. (S4W-14813)

Reply from Roseanna Cunningham: The information provided in response to S4O-02044 on convictions under the Act was derived from the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service's live operational case management system, which

Racism and Religious Hatred Holyrood Parliamentary Questions (continued)

is specifically designed to receive criminal reports from the police and other specialist reporting agencies and to manage these cases for prosecution purposes. The information held on the system is structured for these operational needs, rather than for statistical reporting or research purposes.

The official source of information on convictions of religiously aggravated offences in Scotland is the Scottish Government Criminal Proceedings database. The information held in this database is published as National Statistics on an annual basis with the next publication currently due to be published in November 2013. The current publication, providing information up to end March 2012, can be found here: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Crime-Justice/PubCriminalProceedings>

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S4W-14813&ResultsPerPage=10>

News

Al-Rahma Islamic Centre destroyed in 'hate crime' fire

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-22785074>

Terror police probe London Islamic centre blaze

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/scotland/terror-police-probe-london-islamic-centre-blaze-1-2956606>

Islamophobic hate crime: is it getting worse?

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2013/jun/05/islamophobic-hate-crime-getting-worse>

UK mosques urged to install panic alarms and safe rooms

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2013/jun/08/uk-mosques-panic-alarms-safe-rooms>

'Muslims don't feel safe anymore'

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsvideo/10101074/London-Islamic-centre-destroyed-by-fire.html>

Answer to extremism is not more of the same

<http://www.scotsman.com/the-scotsman/opinion/comment/leaders-answer-to-extremism-is-not-more-of-the-same-1-2956638>

Anti-Muslim Incidents On Twitter And Facebook Are Not Minor Attacks, Tell Mama Says

http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/06/03/tell-mama-anti-muslim-twitter-facebook-islamophobic_n_3376843.html

Pupils withdrawn from trip to Edinburgh mosque

<http://www.scotsman.com/edinburgh-evening-news/latest-news/pupils-withdrawn-from-trip-to-edinburgh-mosque-1-2954768>

The real hurts of law enforcement violence and racism

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jun/08/law-enforcement-violence-racism>

The Met should change its heart, not its face, to represent multiracial London

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jun/03/met-multiracial-london-racially-diverse>

Racism and Religious Hatred

News (continued)

Stop and search reduction has led to fairer policing, says equality group

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2013/jun/06/stop-search-fairer-policing-equality-commission>

Police stop and search has had a toxic effect on Britain's ethnic minorities

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jun/06/police-stop-search-ethnic-minorities>

SFA to vote on tough sectarianism, racism rules

<http://www.scotsman.com/scotland-on-sunday/sport/football/sfa-to-vote-on-tough-sectarianism-racism-rules-1-2960421>

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Other Holyrood

Press Releases

Better communication vital for victims and witnesses, says Justice Committee

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/newsandmediacentre/63996.aspx>

FOI scrutiny extended

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2013/06/foi-scrutiny>

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Other Westminster

Parliamentary Questions

Religious Hatred

David Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government whether he plans to continue support for the Tell Mama national project to support victims of anti-Muslim prejudice beyond October 2013. [157478]

Reply from Don Foster: We have given the Tell Mama project £374,564 of funding to establish itself as a sustainable community organisation. I have been very impressed by the progress they have made in their first year of operation to monitor anti-Muslim hatred, increase reporting and ensure victims receive support. I am confident that they will be able to build on the financial foundation we provided and continue to provide this service to the community.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm130603/text/130603w0002.htm#13060413000021>

Violent Extremism

Lord Pearson of Rannoch: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will encourage an international conference of Muslim leaders to address the issue of violent extremism within that religion.

Reply from the Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi):

... My Lords, this country is resolute in its stand against violent extremism. As the Prime Minister has made clear, there is no religious justification for these acts, and he has stressed that al-Qaeda-inspired terrorism has taken more Muslim lives

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

than any others. We are working with international partners and religious leaders worldwide to combat violent extremism.

Lord Pearson of Rannoch: ... I would have thought that, as a Muslim, she is well placed to lead such an initiative. As we think of Drummer Rigby, I ask if the Government are aware that there have been many thousands of fatal Islamist attacks worldwide since 9/11, and that most of the victims have been Muslims? I will put the evidence for that in the Library. Secondly, if Islam is a religion of peace, could not a gathering of grand muftis and others agree to issue a fatwa against the jihadists, so that they are cast out of Islam and are no longer Muslim?

Reply from Baroness Warsi: My Lords, I take the noble Lord's point that more Muslims than members of any other community have died at the hands of violent extremism. However, I take issue with some of the noble Lord's views. I am familiar with his views on Islam and Muslims. He premised the question by saying, "If Islam is a peaceful religion"; the Prime Minister made it abundantly clear that Islam is a religion of peace. ...

I can speak as someone who led the community response to the tragic killing of Drummer Rigby, when Muslims in this country came out vociferously and with a single voice said, "This was not done in the name of our faith. This was not done in our name".

Baroness Hussein-Ece: My Lords, is it not the case that people of all faiths and backgrounds have deplored the barbaric murder of Lee Rigby on the streets of Woolwich? Is there not a risk of demonising Muslims, including the 3 million Muslims in the UK, which is not the answer? Does the Minister think that it is appropriate for decent voices of moderation to be drowned out by radicals such as Anjem Choudary—discredited people—who are given a media platform on the BBC and Channel 4? Drowning out other voices does more harm than good. Does the Minister agree with the Deputy Prime Minister, who said at a cross-party interfaith event last week, "Terrorism has no religion"?

Reply from Baroness Warsi: I absolutely add my voice to the words of the Deputy Prime Minister. I agree with my noble friend that one of the positives to come out of this tragedy is the way in which communities of all faiths have stood united and said that we will not be divided by the extremists who conduct these horrific acts in the way that they have.

Lord Lea of Crondall: Does the Minister recognise the importance of encouraging Christian-Islamic dialogue at all possible levels, nationally and globally? Is it not the case that the justification of jihad in the Koran could be paralleled by similar blood-curdling references in the Bible if one wanted to interpret them in that way? Therefore, dialogue should be on the basis that both sides have issues to discuss with each other.

Reply from Baroness Warsi: ... I made a speech on this. It was on unpicking the arguments between religion and reason. I absolutely agree that a literal interpretation of any faith can lead to perverse results. However, I can also assure the noble Lord that, both domestically and internationally, we are engaged in a whole series of interfaith projects, which bring people from different religions, and indeed people of no religion, together to create the space and the dialogue that create better understanding.

The Lord Bishop of Derby: ... Until recently, I was co-chair of the Inter Faith Network for the UK. My fellow co-chair was a very distinguished Muslim scholar and leader. I ask the Minister two things. First, as we have heard, violent religious extremism is not simply an issue for Muslims. In the Inter Faith Network we were constantly reminded, through other faiths across the world, that millions of people suffer from violent extremism, often for political purposes and not religious ones. Secondly, does the Minister agree that, while there is of course a responsibility on those of us who lead religious and political

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

organisations, there are other factors, such as how foreign policy is perceived, that send signals and triggers to people that it is very difficult for leadership on its own to deal with? Therefore, there has to be a partnership between religious and political leaders and those who form our culture for peacefulness and a common stand against violent extremism.

Reply from Baroness Warsi: I would draw a distinction between legitimate discussion of foreign policy and, on the other hand, what is clearly violent extremism. The latter cannot be justified in any way in terms of the former. I completely agree with the right reverend Prelate's view that every religion has its extremists. I have colloquially referred to them as "nutters". Pastor Jones is no more representative of Christianity than Anjem Choudary is of Islam.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldhansrd/text/130603-0001.htm#13060312000361>

Press Release

The future of Islamic finance in a global economy

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-future-of-islamic-finance-in-a-global-economy>

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Other News

UK's first black children's laureate: new history curriculum could alienate pupils

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/2013/jun/04/first-black-childrens-laureate-malorie-blackman>

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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>

Children and Young People Bill

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

Scottish Independence Referendum Bill

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

**** Scottish Independence Referendum (Franchise) Bill**

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

Proposed amendments

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_Bills/Scottish%20Independence%20Referendum%200Franchise%20Bill/b24s4-stage2-ml.pdf

Bills in Progress

Holyrood (continued)

Referendum Committee: Stage 2 consideration of amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=8200&mode=pdf>

Bill as amended at Stage 2

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_Bills/Scottish%20Independence%20Referendum%20Franchise%20Bill/b24as4-amend.pdf

**** Victims and Witnesses Bill**

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

Stage 1 Report

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_JusticeCommittee/Reports/juR-13-07w.pdf

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

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

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

Scottish Independence Referendum Bill (closing date 6 June 2013)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Our Communities, Your Duties (no closing date given)

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

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Job Opportunities

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

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Events/Conferences/Training

** new or updated this week

Refugee Week

17-23 June 2013

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

Putting U Back into Community

20 June 2013 in Glasgow (6.00 – 8.00)

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

**** Womens Interfaith Dialogue**

24 June 2013 in Inverness (2.00 – 4.00)

Interfaith Scotland event to discuss "Values and Visions for the future of Scotland". For information contact Frances Hume frances@interfaithscotland.org

Mental Health and Ethnicity

30 October 2013 in Glasgow (9.30 – 4.00)

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

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Useful Links

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

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

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

Directgov (links to UK Government Departments)

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

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

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

Useful Links (continued)

Scottish Refugee Council www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

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

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

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

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

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

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

Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk

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

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

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

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

BBC Parliament online

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

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



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



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

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