

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 and UK Parliament and Government websites been redesigned, so that links published in back issues of MEMO may no longer work. To find archive material on these websites, copy details from MEMO into the relevant search facility.

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Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-09427 Alison Johnstone (Green): Health and Human Rights in Immigration Detention – That the Parliament recognises the British Medical Association's (BMA) report, *Locked up, locked out: health and human rights in immigration detention*, and its recommendation that detention policies should be revised to address the significant health effects indeterminate detention can have; acknowledges that the BMA believes immigration detention should be phased out; understands there are many challenges for doctors working in immigration detention centres, who must meet their patients' needs in an environment that militates against good health and wellbeing, and agrees that, as long as the practice of detention continues, detained people are entitled to the same range and quality of healthcare services as the general public received in the community and must be able to access high quality care, commensurate with their needs.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-09427>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.bma.org.uk/-/media/files/pdfs/collective%20voice/policy%20research/ethics/locked-up-locked-out-immigration-detention-report-bma-2017.pdf?la=en>

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Changes in Immigration Rules

The Minister for Immigration (Brandon Lewis) [HCWS327] The Secretary of State for the Home Department is today laying before the House a statement of changes in immigration rules ...

The offer the UK makes to highly skilled international leaders in science, research digital technology and the arts is being enhanced by doubling the number of tier 1 (exceptional talent) places to 2,000 visas per year.

As announced in the autumn Budget, and to support our ambitions on innovation and research and development, the changes also include provisions to enable internationally recognised global leaders in science, as well as those in digital technology, and the arts and creative sectors, endorsed under the tier 1 (exceptional talent) route, to apply for settlement after three years, amend tier 2 rules to allow for faster switching for tier 4 students below PhD level, while also making it easier to employ international researchers and members of established research teams by relaxing the labour market test under tier 2. The changes also provide for additional flexibility within our settlement rules to enable scientists and researchers who are called to assist with humanitarian and environmental crises to be absent from the UK for more than 180 days, if required.

The changes make other amendments to the settlement rules for work routes, for consistency. These relate to the 180-day absence provision, breaks in employment, time spent in the Crown dependencies, and the calculation of the qualifying period.

The rules for entrepreneurs are being simplified following customer feedback, to make them clearer and easier to follow (the requirements themselves are largely unchanged).

We continue to improve and modernise the UK's border and immigration system, which will now include moves toward further digitisation. These changes are required to facilitate the planned move toward introducing immigration permissions issued in electronic form. This will also allow trials to be undertaken that will test the operation of any new system. The rules are also being changed to permit holders of standard visit visas to transit the UK rather than having to get a different type of visa. This builds on the work, begun in April 2015, to simplify the immigration rules for visitors.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-12-07/debates/17120734000016/ChangesInImmigrationRules>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Immigration: EU Nationals

Edward Davey (Liberal Democrat) [116366] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many EU citizens currently have indefinite leave to remain, as opposed to permanent residency, broken down by nationality.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: Information on the total stock of those granted Indefinite Leave to Remain, by nationality, is not held by the Home Office. The figure will constantly evolve as some may have died, lost such status, or subsequently applied for and been granted UK citizenship.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116366/>

Immigration: EU Nationals

The following two questions both received the same answer

Edward Davey (Liberal Democrat) [116367] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether EU citizens who have indefinite leave to remain will be required to apply for settled status.

Edward Davey (Liberal Democrat) [116368] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether EU citizens who have historically been granted indefinite leave to

remain will retain the same rights after the UK leaves the EU.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: EU citizens with indefinite leave to remain (ILR) in the UK will not need to apply for settled status once the UK has left the European Union (EU). Their incumbent rights and privileges will not be affected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116367/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116368/>

Refugees

Michelle Donelan (Conservative) [116548] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to review the effectiveness of integration systems for refugees.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: We are working towards achieving more integrated communities and creating the conditions for everyone to live and work successfully alongside each other; and in the New Year the Government will publish an integration strategy.

The Vulnerable Persons and Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Schemes are being evaluated through a programme of quantitative data work and qualitative research with refugees and key delivery partners. A key focus of this work is examining integration progress according to a range of key measures and what can be done to improve this.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116548/>

National Insurance: Refugees

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116384] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps his is taking to ensure that national insurance numbers are issued within 28 days for people who have been granted refugee status to avoid a gap between receiving asylum support and jobseeker's allowance or housing benefit.

Reply from Caroline Dinenage: For those granted leave to remain as a result of a successful asylum claim, a joint fast track NINo process operates between the Home Office (HO) and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Adult NINo Allocation. This system has been in place since 2005 and means that an application for a NINo is made by the HO on behalf of the individual.

We have introduced a new process for those refugees who come to the UK via either the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme or the Gateway Protection Programme. Our joint working with the HO enables DWP Adult NINo Allocation to utilise the refugee's identity and immigration status details provided by the HO immediately before the refugee arrives in the UK; enabling a NINo to be allocated and printed on their Biometric Residence cards (BRP) as soon as the individual enters the UK, helping to join up services between HO, DWP and Local Authorities.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116384/>

Jobseeker's Allowance: Refugees

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116385] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what steps he is taking to ensure that people granted refugee status receive jobseeker's allowance; and what steps his Department is taking to reduce the potential barriers to receiving jobseeker's allowance in respect of a refugee's difficulty (a) in opening a bank account without a permanent address and (b) gaining an address without a bank account.

Reply from Caroline Dinenage: People granted refugee status have the same entitlement to benefit as UK citizens. We are working closely with the Home Office to ensure that newly granted refugees are aware of this and receive support to make a claim to benefit where needed.

While bank accounts do remain DWP's preferred method of payment, it is recognised that some customers including refugees, may have difficulty accessing or opening an account before their first payment of benefit is due. In such cases DWP can make payments via alternative methods such as Post Office card accounts, Simple Payments or into a third party account. These payment methods are available to customers without a permanent address.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116385/>

Refugees: France

Douglas Chapman (SNP) [117144] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the Refugee Rights Data Project report Twelve Months On about the situation for displaced people in northern France; and what steps she is taking to fulfil her obligation to protect vulnerable child refugees.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: The Government has noted the recent report by the Refugee Rights Data Project. However, the primary responsibility for children in France lies with the French authorities. France has many of the same international obligations towards those on its territory as the UK, and the French Government has made clear its commitment to provide unaccompanied children with appropriate accommodation and support. It is vital that children who are in Calais claim asylum or otherwise seek support from the French authorities rather than risking their lives by attempting to enter the UK illegally.

We welcome the opening of four new 'Welcome Centres' in France, which were opened over three months ago, in Haut de France (the region covering Calais, Coquelles and Dunkirk ports). Those assessed or declared to be a child, can be transferred to the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children centres in Northern France: St Omer and Boulogne. However, the asylum application needs to be physically lodged in Lille. There is regular transportation to UASC centre in Boulogne.

We are fully committed to transferring the specified number of 480 unaccompanied children from Europe under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. A number of children have arrived from France under section 67 in recent weeks and transfers are ongoing. More eligible children will be transferred from Europe under the scheme in due course.

This is in addition to our commitments under the Dublin III Regulation which allows unaccompanied children who have claimed asylum in another Member State to be transferred here to have their asylum claim assessed if they have a qualifying family member legally present in the UK and transfer would be in their best interests. We continue to work closely with France, other EU Member States and partners to ensure the timely and efficient operation of the Dublin III Regulation, including through regular dialogue and meetings.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-12-04/117144/>

Asylum

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116875] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to increase the period for which refugees continue to receive asylum support after receiving a positive decision on their asylum application to 50 days on account of issues with gaining National Insurance numbers within the current 28 days.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: There are no plans to increase the period to 50

days.

If an asylum seeker receiving support from the Home Office is granted refugee status they are given notice that their support will stop 28 days later and provided with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). The BRP is the main document they need to prove their eligibility to take employment or apply for benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions. Additionally, under new arrangements the Home Office offers the refugee assistance to make a benefits claim by arranging an appointment with a local DWP office.

The Home Office also issues the refugee with a national insurance number (NINO). Possession of a NINO at this stage is not essential to make a benefits application as the DWP can provide one as part of the benefits claim process. We have, however, been working to ensure that the NINO is issued at the same time as the BRP and plan to implement a new process in the new year whereby the number is printed on the BRP.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-30/116875/>

Asylum

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116876] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of the level of asylum support on the physical and mental well-being of people seeking asylum who have been waiting on a decision for more than six months.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: The Home Office ensure that asylum seekers are not left destitute by providing accommodation and a weekly cash allowance. The level of the allowance is reviewed each year to ensure that it is sufficient to cover their essential living needs. The Court of Appeal has rejected a legal challenge to the methodology used to assess the adequacy of the cash allowance.

Asylum seekers also have full access to the NHS, including mental health services if they are needed.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-30/116876/>

Asylum

Thelma Walker (Labour) [116891] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to take steps to increase the period of time refugees continue to receive support after receiving a positive decision on their asylum application to 50 days.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: There are no plans to increase the period to 50 days.

If an asylum seeker receiving support from the Home Office is granted refugee status they are given notice that their support will stop 28 days later and provided with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). The BRP is the main document they need to prove their eligibility to take employment or apply for benefits from the Department of Work and Pensions. Additionally, under new arrangements the Home Office offers the refugee assistance to make a benefits claim by arranging an appointment with a local DWP office.

The Home Office also issues the refugee with a national insurance number (NINO). Possession of a NINO at this stage is not essential to make a benefits application as the DWP can provide one as part of the benefits claim process. We have, however, been working to ensure that the NINO is issued at the same time as the BRP and plan to implement a new process in the new year whereby the number is printed on the BRP.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-30/116891/>

Asylum: Employment

The following two questions both received the same answer

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116873] To ask the Home Secretary, if she will make it her Department's policy to grant asylum applicants who have been waiting for longer than six months for a decision on their application permission to work without the Shortage Occupation restrictions list.

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [116874] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applicants have been granted permission to work in the last 12 months.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: Asylum seekers are not allowed to work in the UK unless their claim has been outstanding for at least 12 months through no fault of their own. Those who are granted permission to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List. The policy is designed to protect the resident labour market so that access to employment is prioritised for British citizens and lawful residents, including those granted refugees status. We have no plans to change this policy.

The data requested on the number of asylum seekers granted permission to work is only held on paper case files or within the notes sections of the Home Office's databases. This data is not aggregated in national reporting systems, so information on the number of asylum seekers allowed to work could only be obtained through a manual case search at disproportionate cost.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-30/116873/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-30/116874/>

Asylum: Sanitary Protection

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [116362] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the ability to afford sanitary products of people who are seeking asylum pending the outcome of their application; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute are provided with accommodation and a cash allowance to cover their essential living needs.

The level of the allowance is reviewed each year and the review takes account of the cost of sanitary products.

A report of the most recent review can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/report-on-review-of-cash-allowance-paid-to-asylum-seekers>

The assessment of the cost of sanitary products can be found at Annex A to the report.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116362/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Andrew Mitchell (Conservative) [116508] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of people released from Immigration Removal Centres in the detention estate were released into the UK in the past 12 months.

Reply from Brandon Lewis: Reasons for leaving detention by quarter may be found in table dt_06_q of the detention tables in the latest releases of 'Immigration Statistics, July to September 2017', available from the Home Office website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662536/detention-jul-sep-2017-tables.ods

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-29/116508/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Refugees: Children

The following three questions all received the same answer

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3677] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children under the age of 18 have been resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to date, broken down by (1) region, and (2) local authority.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3678] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of those children resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to date are currently accessing education.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3679] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time from arrival in the UK to starting full-time education for children resettled under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Latest statistics published on 30 November 2017 confirmed that a total of 9,394 vulnerable people have been resettled since the start of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) across various local authorities. Around half of those resettled under the VPRS were children.

The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The statistics are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

The Home Office does not hold data in relation to the number of children resettled through this scheme who are currently accessing education or the average waiting time for children to start full-time education.

We continue to work with local authorities to make sure that every child has a school place.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3677/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3678/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3679/>

Refugees: Children

The following three questions all received the same answer

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3680] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children under the age of 18 have been resettled under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme to date, broken down by (1) region, and (2) local authority.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3681] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of those children resettled under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme to date are currently accessing education.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3682] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time from arrival in the UK to starting full-time education for children resettled under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Latest statistics published on 30 November 2017 confirmed that a total of 412 vulnerable people have been resettled under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS) across various local authorities. Around half of those resettled under the VCRS were children.

The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. The statistics are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

The Home Office does not hold data in relation to the number of children resettled through this scheme who are currently accessing education or the average waiting time for children to start full-time education.

We continue to work with local authorities to make sure that every child has a school place.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3680/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3681/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-28/HL3682/>

Asylum: Children in Care

The following four questions all received the same answer

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3744] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many unaccompanied minors have been transferred through the National Transfer Scheme to date, broken down by receiving local authority.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3745] To ask Her Majesty's Government which local authorities have agreed to take part in the National Transfer Scheme for unaccompanied minors.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3746] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many unaccompanied minors are currently waiting to be transferred through the National Transfer Scheme.

Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Labour) [HL3747] To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average waiting time between the request for transfer of an unaccompanied minor under the National Transfer Scheme and the new local authority receiving that child.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: We are grateful to the local authorities who continue to support to unaccompanied asylum seeking children, including those who have participated in the National Transfer Scheme (NTS).

Data on the NTS can be found at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/663577/UKVI Asylum Transparency data Q3 2017.ods](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/663577/UKVI_Asylum_Transparency_data_Q3_2017.ods)

The average waiting time to transfer unaccompanied children through the NTS varies according to the individual circumstances involved.

The number of unaccompanied children awaiting transfer through the scheme is fluid, depending on asylum intake, the number of transfer requests by local authorities and the number of transfers completed.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-29/HL3744/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-29/HL3745/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-29/HL3746/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-29/HL3747/>

Immigrants: Detainees

The following two questions both received the same answer

Baroness Hamwee (Liberal Democrat) [HL3822] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many detainees in Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) have committed suicide in the last 12 months; and what was (1) the name and nationality of the person committing suicide, and (2) the IRC where they were detained, in each case.

Baroness Hamwee (Liberal Democrat) [HL3823] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many detainees in Immigration Removal Centres (IRCs) have unsuccessfully attempted to commit suicide in the last 12 months; and what was (1) the nationality of the person attempting suicide, and (2) the IRC where they were detained, in each case.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Any death in immigration detention is subject to investigation by the police, the coroner (or Procurator Fiscal in Scotland) and the independent Prisons and Probation Ombudsman.

In the period 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2017 there have been no deaths in immigration removal centres, or shortly after release, where a coroner has yet determined the cause of death to be self inflicted.

Staff at all immigration removal centres are trained to identify those at risk of self harm so that action can be taken to minimise the risk. All incidents of self harm are treated very seriously and every step is taken to prevent incidents of this nature. Formal risk assessments on initial detention and systems for raising concerns at any subsequent point feed into established self harm procedures in every IRC, which are in turn underpinned by the Home Office Operating Standard on the prevention of self-harm and Detention Services Order 06/2008 Assessment Care in Detention Teamwork (ACDT).

Information on incidents of self harm where the intent of the self harm attempt is suicide is not readily available from central statistical records and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-12-04/HL3822/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-12-04/HL3823/>

Deportation: EU Nationals

Lord Beecham (Labour) [HL3808] To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last published figures relating to the number of homeless EU citizens deported from the UK; if more than one year ago, why those figures have not been updated; and how many such persons have been deported from the UK in 2017 to date.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not specifically record the number of homeless EU citizens deported from the UK. EU citizens and their family members retain the right to enter and live in the UK, and are subject to conditions attached to lawful residence. Any individuals encountered not exercising treaty rights can be served removal papers to allow their return to their country of origin.

The Government does publish Immigration Statistics which details the number of enforced returns of EU citizens to June 2017 and can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2017/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned#enforced-returns-of-eu-nationals>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-12-04/HL3808/>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Patrick Grady (651) Episcopal visit to support refugees and asylum seekers in Calais – That this House notes the visit of Bishop William Nolan, Bishop of Galloway and President of Justice and Peace Scotland and Bishop Paul McAleenan, Auxiliary Bishop of Westminster and Lead Bishop for Asylum and Migration to Calais on 28-29 November 2017 as guests of the Maria Skobtsova Catholic Worker House; understands that this charity supports vulnerable people including refugees in Calais; recognises that the destruction of the so-called Jungle camp has made many people, including unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, vulnerable to increasing hostility and restrictions from local authorities; understands that these restrictions include bans on food distribution, the provision of showers, and the confiscation of sleeping bags and tents; further understands that there have been reports of migrants being pepper-sprayed; commends the endeavours of those in Calais who continue to support all fleeing persecution and exploitation; hopes that, as the Advent season begins, people of all faiths and none will recognise the nativity crib image of a displaced family seeking sanctuary as representative of the importance of making welcome the stranger; considers the joint statement issued by Bishop Nolan and Bishop McAleenan which calls on the Government to embrace the true spirit of the Dubs Amendment and extend the provision beyond the original timeframe of March 2016, streamline the implementation of the Dublin III Regulations and establish facilities that will allow migrants to raise their asylum claims from Europe; and urges the UK and French Governments jointly to develop infrastructures to enable dignified living in Calais.

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2017-19/651>

Press Releases

Scheme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to be expanded

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/scheme-for-unaccompanied-asylum-seeking-children-to-be-expanded>

Court of Justice of the European Union: A decision may not be adopted to expel a third-country national who is a long-term resident for the sole reason that he or she has been sentenced to a term of imprisonment of more than one year

<https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2017-12/cp170134en.pdf>

Trafficking in human beings: Commission adopts a new communication and commits to a new set of priorities

https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/news/trafficking-human-beings-commission-adopts-new-communication-and-commits-new-set-priorities_en

New Publications

Collection of data on pupil nationality, country of birth and proficiency in English

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665127/Data_on_pupil_nationality_country_of_birth_and_proficiency.pdf

The new Controlling Migration Fund (England)

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7673/CBP-7673.pdf>

Locked up, locked out: Health and human rights in immigration detention

<https://www.bma.org.uk/-/media/files/pdfs/collective%20voice/policy%20research/ethics/locked-up-locked-out-immigration-detention-report-bma-2017.pdf?la=en>

News

I'm an MP, and I visited an immigration detention centre undercover – what I discovered was shocking

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/home-office-detention-centres-immigration-torture-abuse-deportation-risk-a8101036.html>

BMA doctors report says detention centres like Dungavel must be 'phased out'

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15700564.Doctors_say_detention_centres_like_Dungavel_must_be_phased_out/

Doctors tell Home Office to scrap immigration removal centres

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/04/bma-calls-for-home-office-to-phase-out-immigration-removal-centres>

Botanics chief hits out at Brexit uncertainty facing French wife

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/botanics-chief-hits-out-at-brexit-uncertainty-facing-french-wife-1-4629695>

'Brexit was the tipping point': EU nationals on why they left the UK

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/07/brexit-tipping-point-eu-nationals-left-uk>

Home Office threatens to deport Polish man seeking help after attack

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/dec/06/police-threaten-to-deport-polish-man-seeking-help-after-attack>

Government faces High Court challenge for collecting data on school pupils' nationality and country of birth

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/school-pupils-nationality-country-birth-data-information-high-court-challenge-government-education-a8094996.html>

Scandal-hit security firm G4S to keep lucrative contract to run an immigration detention centre despite abuse claims of drug use, violence and bullying

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/news/article-5163543/Security-firm-G4S-keeps-contract-run-detention-centre.html>

Immigration centre officer 'raped a vulnerable Roma migrant, 23, and another had an inappropriate sexual relationship with her at Yarl's Wood as she awaited deportation'

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5147063/Roma-asylum-seeker-23-raped-detention-officer.html>

Champion boxer who has lived half his life in England and represented his country six times faces being deported to Nigeria because he was brought here illegally when he was 14

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5159539/Champion-boxer-faces-deported-Nigeria.html>

Baby won't get to meet his grandparents this Christmas after his mother - who's been a British citizen for ten years - is denied a new passport over 'national security' concerns

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5143385/Baby-meet-grandparents-passport-issue.html>

The way that we treat migrants is a stain on our country

http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/columnists/15705121.Agenda_The_way_that_we_treat_migrants_is_a_stain_on_our_country/

Brexit supporter tells James O'Brien he voted to leave EU over lack of 'white faces' at his local hospital

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/brexit-supporter-vote-leave-eu-lack-white-faces-hospital-james-obrien-lbc-northwick-park-a8099561.html>

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Community Relations

Press Release

Gypsy/Travellers celebrated for World Human Rights Day

<http://www.parliament.scot/newsandmediacentre/107128.aspx>

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Equality

Scottish Parliament Equalities and Human Rights Committee

Evidence Session: Inquiry into Human Rights and the Scottish Parliament

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11241&i=102397#ScotParIOR>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Universal Credit: Ethnic Groups

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL3367] To ask Her Majesty's Government how they propose to handle specific problems arising from Universal Credit for Black and Ethnic Minority people arising from existing poverty, digital exclusion, language difficulties, or family size.

Reply from Baroness Buscombe: Work is the best way out of poverty and Universal Credit is strengthening incentives for people to move into and progress in work. Research shows that in Universal Credit, people are going into work faster and spending more time looking for work than under the old system.

The Black and Ethnic Minority employment rate is currently the highest since the series began (64.7%) but the Race Disparity Audit shows us there is more to be done. In response, we have identified key areas where we want to work in partnership with other public services and the voluntary sector to test out interventions to help overcome the barriers to employment faced by different ethnic groups.

We recognise that some people will need help with on-line claims and activity. People without digital skills will be offered support in jobcentres to make and manage their claims on-line, and also to acquire or improve core digital skills. Our work coaches have the flexibility to tailor support for individuals in difficult circumstances; they can adjust their work search requirements and conditionality to allow them to prioritise solutions to their issues. DWP has also rolled out the Universal Support initiative alongside the national roll out of Universal Credit, as part of which Local Authorities deliver both digital and budgeting support.

It is DWP policy to use an interpreter when we need to communicate with a customer who cannot communicate adequately in English (or, in Wales, Welsh) and would otherwise be unable to conduct business with them, and clear guidance on this is available to all staff. To allow us to communicate with

customers unable to speak English we can make use of a customer's own interpreter, a local community based interpreting service, telephone interpretation service or a contracted face to face interpretation service. In addition, where there is a need to do so, we are also able to translate correspondence into foreign languages. Work Coaches are also aware of the local and national provision in their area and will support the claimant to find suitable provision to work towards removing communicating in English as a barrier towards work.

In introducing the provision of support for a maximum of two children we recognise that some claimants are not able to make choices about the number of children in their family. That is why exceptions have been put in place to protect certain groups. We believe this policy strikes the right balance between protecting the vulnerable and encouraging families who receive benefits to make the same financial decisions as those families who support themselves solely through work. The Government has assessed the impact of the policy from an equality and human rights perspective throughout its development and in its implementation, thus meeting its obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty and ensuring compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and other international law obligations.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-20/HL3367/>

Press Releases

'Mainstream Human Rights in future budgets' urges Equalities and Human Rights Committee

<http://www.parliament.scot/newsandmediacentre/107158.aspx>

Commission reviews four years of public bodies performance on equality

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/commission-reviews-four-years-public-bodies-performance-equality>

Human Rights Day: UN to launch campaign for 70th anniversary of Universal Declaration

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58253#.Wi11PLT1WnY>

New Publications

Updated: Equality Evidence Finder

<http://www.gov.scot/topics/people/equality/equalities/datagrid>

Universal Periodic Review of human rights in the United Kingdom – December 2017: Scottish Government response to recommendations

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00528654.pdf>

Looking ahead to the Scottish Government's Draft Budget 2018-19: Making more of equalities and human rights levers

<https://tinyurl.com/y93ol734>

Public authorities' performance in meeting the Scottish Specific Equality Duties 2017: Measuring Up? Report 7

https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/m_u_7_formatted_final.pdf

The Young Review: Improving outcomes for young black and/or Muslim men in the Criminal Justice System

http://www.youngreview.org.uk/sites/default/files/clinks_young-review_report_dec2014.pdf

News

Diversity in publishing – still hideously middle-class and white?

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/dec/09/diversity-publishing-new-faces>

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Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Religious Hatred: Islam

Martyn Day (SNP) [114985] To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the conclusions of the Tell MAMA Annual Report for 2016 on Anti-Muslim Hatred on the gender of victims and the majority identity of perpetrators of such hatred.

Reply from Marcus Jones: We take hate crime in all its forms very seriously: the United Kingdom has some of the strongest hate crime legislation in the world. The statistical breakdowns provided by Tell MAMA give an invaluable insight into the extent and nature of the deplorable abuse which Muslim citizens are subjected to on account of their belief or appearance. It is notable that most reported offline incidents of anti-Muslim hatred involve male perpetrators and that the majority of victims of offline incidents are women, most of whom are visibly Muslim. The Government has committed funding of £100 million to counter violence against women and girls with prosecutions and convictions for such offences rising 63 per cent since 2007-08.

This Government has done more than any other to tackle anti-Muslim hatred. We set up the first ever cross-government working group on anti-Muslim hatred. We have funded Tell MAMA, the first service to record incidents, support victims and raise community awareness of how to report anti-Muslim hate incidents. We are also disaggregating religious hate crime data held by the police to reveal the true scale and nature of the problem. Funding has been made available for the security of mosques and other faith establishments.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-12-22/114985/>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/A-Constructed-Threat-Identity-Intolerance-and-the-Impact-of-Anti-Muslim-Hatred-Web.pdf>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Freedom of Speech: Hate Crime

Lord Vinson (Conservative): To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Vere of Norbiton on 20 November (HL2876), what assessment they have made of the impact on freedom of speech of the definition of hate crime recently adopted by the Crown Prosecution Service to facilitate the reporting of incidents which is wider than the legal definition of such crime under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Criminal Justice Act 2003.

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Lords, the CPS seeks to balance the right to freedom of speech and expression with the duty of the state to act proportionately against those who wish to deepen and extend divisions in the social fabric of our nation. The public statements and the guidance are clear. The CPS recognises the potential impact of overzealous prosecutions on rights under Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights. Currently, we feel that the balance is correct.

Lord Vinson: I thank the Minister for her understandably somewhat evasive reply; I hope she is really concerned at the continuous attrition of freedom of speech. She will be aware that the Crown Prosecution Service, by widening unilaterally the definition of racially aggravated crime, has made a bad situation worse. People are afraid to speak their mind, and even a remark can be a criminal offence. Does she agree that freedom of expression must come before bruised feelings? Will she please instruct the CPS to re-examine its instructions and thus protect our ancient liberties?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I thank my noble friend for his series of questions. The CPS legal guidance and public statements on all strands of hate crimes were revised and published in August 2017. However, the flagging definition of hate crime was not changed—indeed, it has been the same since 2007. Both the police and the CPS use this definition to flag potential hate crime. He also mentioned the attrition of freedom of speech. I am afraid once again to disappoint my noble friend, but I am not sure I can agree with him. I am an avid user of Twitter and think we could all agree that there is freedom of speech on a daily basis, and perhaps increased vociferousness, which I think is a good thing.

Lord Morris of Aberavon (Labour): My Lords, will the Government and the prosecuting authorities always remember that freedom of speech is one of our hard-fought-for liberties? Regrettably—and for very good reasons—inroads have had to be made, but there can be unintended consequences if one does not tread extremely carefully. When I was Attorney-General it was my statutory personal responsibility to authorise some prosecutions. One was of an old lady in her 80s who repeatedly published vile anti-Semitic literature and was repeatedly jailed for disobeying the court, and got immense publicity from so doing. When I eventually decided not to prosecute, no more was heard of her.

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I think almost all noble Lords would agree that freedom of speech is a fundamental right. I think the noble and learned Lord was referring there to the offence of stirring up hatred from his time as Attorney-General, and indeed it does need the Attorney-General's permission to prosecute those offences. In the last year there have just been four such prosecutions, all of which were successful.

Lord Marks of Henley-on-Thames: The Question from the noble Lord, Lord Vinson, makes the distinction between the perception of the victim and the hostile motivation of the accused, which has to be proved in court. I suggest that that is a very arid distinction in the context of decisions to investigate and prosecute. Does the Minister agree that the CPS can realistically base its definition of hate crime only on the perception of victims? Will she reaffirm the emphasis in her earlier Written Answer on the importance of the CPS retaining the confidence of the minority communities that are targeted by hate crime?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I think all noble Lords know the background to where we are today. Twenty years ago this country had a very poor record of dealing with hate crime, and confidence in the criminal justice system among BAME communities was extremely low. We have come a long way. It is important to remember that the definition is used for flagging crimes; when it comes to charging those crimes, they still have to be done within the same legal framework as always.

Lord Mackay of Clashfern: I do not think my noble friend has any authority to instruct the Director of Public Prosecutions in any way. However, she could write to ask the DPP

whether she agrees with the statement in the Question that the definition is broader than what is in the statute and, only if so, to explain the authority on which that has been issued.

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Lords, I will happily write to the director to ask those questions. I believe the response will be that it is broader but it is not used for charging; it is used purely for flagging those cases that may be a hate crime. That definition is a very important one.

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (UKIP): My Lords, will the Government confirm that the latest definition from the CPS of a hate crime is one which is perceived by the victim or any other person to be motivated by prejudice based on a person's religion? Will the Government therefore confirm unequivocally that a Christian who says that Jesus is the only Son of the one true God cannot be arrested for hate crime or any other offence, however much it may offend a Muslim or anyone of any other religion?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Lords, I am not going to comment on that last question from the noble Lord. However, I will say that when the public statements were revised, the definition did not change; it has been the same for the last 10 years. The noble Lord will also be interested to know that that was as a result of a public consultation that went on for 13 weeks. There were 126 responses, and overall they were positive and welcomed the revised public statements.

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-12-06/debates/2322BFC7-28B5-4D8F-BF90-E847771C422B/FreedomOfSpeechHateCrime>

The answer referred to in the first question above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-02/HL2876/>

Press Releases

Supreme Court Judgement relating to racial discrimination

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2016-0174-press-summary.pdf>

The fight against discrimination and hate towards minorities still fails to deliver nearly 10 years on

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/press-release/2017/fight-against-discrimination-and-hate-towards-minorities-still-fails-deliver>

New Publications

Example case studies: EU citizens' rights in the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/case-studies/example-case-studies-eu-citizens-rights-in-the-uk>

Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey

Main results

http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2017-eu-midis-ii-main-results_en.pdf

Interactive national data - survey results data explorer

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publications-and-resources/data-and-maps/survey-data-explorer-second-eu-minorities-discrimination-survey?mdq1=dataset>

Religious clothing and symbols in employment

http://ec.europa.eu/newsroom/just/document.cfm?action=display&doc_id=48810

News

Lord McConnell Honoured as a 'Champion for Change'

<http://nilbymouth.org/2017/lord-mcconnell-honoured-as-a-champion-for-change/>

Call to review NI law on hate crime

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-42231829>

Scottish Gypsies still face 'acceptable racism'

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-42193431>

Anti-black racism on EU agenda for the first time

<http://www.enar-eu.org/Anti-black-racism-on-EU-agenda-for-the-first-time>

How white engineers built racist code – and why it's dangerous for black people

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2017/dec/04/racist-facial-recognition-white-coders-black-people-police>

Jail terms given to small number of people who commit hate crimes, says report

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/news/uk-world/557908/jail-terms-given-to-small-number-of-people-who-commit-hate-crimes-says-report/>

Nazi posters torn down in Dundee city centre

<https://www.thecourier.co.uk/fp/news/local/dundee/558053/nazi-posters-torn-dundee-city-centre/>

Neo-Nazi target minorities in Dundee and Cambridge

<https://tellmamauk.org/neo-nazis-target-minorities-in-dundee-and-cambridge/>

Britain First follower vowed to kill Muslim in Finsbury Park attack

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2017-12-05/news/britain-first-follower-vowed-to-kill-muslim-in-finsbury-park-attack-wtp8zj2sl>

Polish-born Britain First supporter, 48, shouted 'white power' and said he wanted to 'kill Muslims' then drove his van at a curry house owner to 'help the UK' during a drunken rage

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5143793/Britain-supporter-drove-van-curry-house-boss.html>

Man jailed for 15 years for hate crimes after leaving bacon in mosque

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/muslim-hate-crime-bacon-mosque-man-jailed-15-years-michael-wolfe-florida-a8098926.html>

Muslim student ordered to remove her hijab in McDonald's says an apology isn't 'enough'

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/muslim-student-ordered-remove-hijab-mcdonalds-apology-not-enough-bbc-asian-network-a8097511.html>

Muslim student ordered to remove her hijab in McDonald's says an apology isn't enough as she praises the white man who stepped in to defend her

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5151175/Muslim-told-remove-hijab-McDonalds-apology-not-enough.html>

Britain First supporter drove van into curry house with aim of 'killing a Muslim'

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/britain-first-supporter-van-attack-curry-house-muslim-kill-latest-a8092136.html>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Debate

Police Scotland and the Scottish Police Authority

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11247&i=102452#ScotParlOR>

Press Releases

Local Governance Review

<https://news.gov.scot/news/local-governance-review>

First Minister's Christmas card unveiled

<https://news.gov.scot/news/first-ministers-christmas-card-unveiled>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

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Islam: Tenets

<http://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2017-12-07/debates/9A2E34BE-13D0-49BA-A734-FD33F3AC679E/IslamTenets>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Slaughterhouses

Greg Knight (Conservative) [114959] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what estimate he has made of the number of (a) animals and (b) poultry killed without first being stunned in the last 12 months for which data is available; and what steps he is taking to reduce those numbers.

Reply from George Eustice: Data for the number of animals killed without first being stunned was previously collected through surveys, with the last in 2015. In the last survey during a 4 week period there were 2,614 cattle, 274,464 sheep and 3,421,470 poultry slaughtered without stunning in the UK with a further 9,463,845 poultry birds slaughtered in accordance with religious rites using electrical stunning parameters that are different to those required for mainstream slaughter.

At the beginning of this financial year the FSA started collecting data on a regular basis. We do not have data for a full 12 month period, however, in the first quarter of 2017/18 there were 4390 cattle and 758,263 sheep slaughtered without stunning in England and Wales.

In the first quarter, there were also 45,396,583 birds which were slaughtered without stunning or using electrical stunning parameters that are different to those required for mainstream slaughter. The Food Standards Agency (FSA) does not separate out poultry slaughtered without stunning in their data.

The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter but respects the right of Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their beliefs.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-21/114959/>

Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare

Kerry McCarthy (Labour) [115455] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if he will launch an investigation into the variation in rates of animal welfare between (a) non-stun halal and (b) other abattoirs.

Reply from George Eustice: Official veterinarians (OVs) from the Food Standards Agency (FSA) are present in all approved slaughterhouses in England and take a prompt, proportionate and risk based approach to enforcement action when animal welfare breaches are identified.

The government is introducing mandatory CCTV recording in slaughterhouses which will further enable OVs to monitor and verify animal welfare standards in the slaughterhouse.

The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter but respects the rights of Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs. We are aware of the audit data suggesting a variation between non-stun and stun slaughterhouses and are investigating this with FSA.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-23/115455/>

Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare

Kerry McCarthy (Labour) [115460] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, if the Government will ban non-stun animal slaughter.

Reply from George Eustice: We are clear that animals must be stunned before slaughter unless they are being slaughtered for religious purposes. The law enables people of Jewish or Muslim faith to eat meat killed in accordance with their religious beliefs. There are strict rules to provide the maximum possible protection to animals subject to religious slaughter.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2017-11-23/115460/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Family Law: Muslims

Lord Lester of Herne Hill (Liberal Democrat) [HL3275] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Keen of Elie on 9 November (HL2598), what steps they are taking, if any, to improve the protection of British Muslim women in family law.

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: The Government continues to study the evidence, to assess options for improving protections for Muslim women on the breakdown of a marriage that is not legally recognised.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-15/HL3275/>

Armed Forces: Religion

The following two questions both received the same answer

Baroness Burt of Solihull (Liberal Democrat) [HL3351] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many armed service personnel in (1) the army, (2) the Royal Navy, (3) the Royal Marines, (4) the Royal Air Force, and (5) the reserves in each of those forces, are recorded as being (a) Buddhist, (b) Hindu, (c) Jewish, (d) Muslim, (e) Sikh, or (f) of any other non-Christian religion.

Armed Forces: Christianity

Baroness Burt of Solihull (Liberal Democrat) [HL3352] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many armed service personnel in (1) the army, (2) the Royal Navy, (3) the Royal Marines, (4) the Royal Air Force, and (5) the reserves in each of those forces,

are recorded as being members of (a) the Church of England, Anglican, or Episcopal churches, (b) the Roman Catholic Church, (c) the Presbyterian Church, (d) the Church of Scotland, (e) the Baptist Church, (f) the Salvation Army, (g) Free Churches, (h) the Methodist Church, (i) the United Reformed Church, (j) the Free Presbyterian Church, (k) the Greek Orthodox Church, and (l) other Christian churches.

Reply from Earl Howe: The Ministry of Defence publishes Biannual Diversity Statistics, the latest of which provides information as at 1 April 2017 and can be found on the Government website at the following address:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-armed-forces-biannual-diversity-statistics-2017>. These statistics include a breakdown, by Service, of the numbers of Armed Forces personnel by self-declared religion. Tables 4 and 17 provide a detailed breakdown for, respectively, UK Regulars and the Future Reserves 2020 population.

The requested information for the Royal Navy (RN) and Royal Marines (RM), the Army and the RAF, as at 1 April 2017, is provided below:

	RN and RM	Army	RAF	Total
Buddhist	40	690	50	780
Christian	22,320	62,820	23,630	108,770
Christian Tradition	60	90	50	210
Hindu	20	1,080	40	1,140
Judaism	10	50	10	80
Muslim	40	440	50	530
Sikh	10	140	20	170
Other Religions	190	500	170	870
No Religion	9,820	17,740	8,980	36,530
Unknown	20	10	260	290

Reserve Service Personnel by Religion

	RN and RM	Army	RAF	Total
Buddhist	10	80	10	90
Christian	2,430	22,290	1,530	26,240
Christian Tradition	10	60	10	80
Hindu	10	170	10	180
Judaism	~	30	~	40
Muslim	10	160	10	170
Sikh	~	50	~	60
Other Religions	50	170	30	240
No Religion	810	6,800	490	8,110
Unknown	230	140	640	1,010

Regular Service Personnel of Christian and Christian Tradition faith split by denomination

	RN	RM	Army	RAF	Total
Church of England	10,490	2,870	36,590	15,240	65,200
Scottish Episcopal Church	10	~	30	10	50
Roman Catholic	2,610	670	9,140	3,150	15,570

Presbyterian	90	20	200	110	420
Church of Scotland	930	160	3,370	1,290	5,760
Baptist	80	20	360	150	600
Salvation Army	10	10	60	20	90
Free Church of Scotland	10	~	10	10	30
United Free Church of Scotland	~	~	~	~	10
Methodist	420	70	1,760	620	2,870
United Reformed Church	20	~	50	40	100
Free Presbyterian	10	10	790	10	800
Greek Orthodox	~	~	10	~	20
Other Christian churches	2,750	1,120	10,550	3,040	17,460

Reserve Service Personnel of Christian and Christian Tradition faith split by denomination					
	RN	RM	Army	RAF	Total
Church of England	1,100	270	12,130	990	14,490
Scottish Episcopal Church	~	~	30	~	30
Roman Catholic	260	100	3,500	190	4,050
Presbyterian	20	~	120	10	150
Church of Scotland	130	30	1,600	100	1,850
Baptist	10	~	170	10	190
Salvation Army	~	~	20	~	20
Free Church of Scotland	10	~	10	~	20
United Free Church of Scotland	~	~	~	~	~
Methodist	60	10	530	40	630
United Reformed Church	~	~	20	~	30
Free Presbyterian	~	~	510	~	510
Greek Orthodox	~	~	10	~	10
Other Christian churches	320	130	3,690	200	4,340

Note: 'Christian' includes personnel declaring the following on Joint Personnel Administration (JPA): Christian Tradition, Christian Scientist, Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter-Day Saints (Mormon), Jehovah's Witness, Unitarian and Other Christian Tradition.

'Other Religions' includes personnel declaring the following on Joint Personnel Administration (JPA): Druid, Pagan, Rastafarian, Spiritualist, Zoroastrian (Parsee), Wicca, Baha'i and Other Religions.

'Unknown' includes those with an unrecorded religion and those who choose not to declare.

Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10, although numbers ending in a 5 have been rounded to the nearest multiple of 20 to prevent the systematic bias caused by always rounding numbers upwards. For example; a value of 25 would be rounded down to 20 and a value of 15 would be rounded up to 20.

Totals and sub-totals have been rounded separately and so may not equal the sums of their rounded parts.

Declaration of religion is not mandatory for Armed Forces personnel. These

statistics only relate to personnel who have made a declaration. At 1 April 2017, the proportion of personnel who had made a declaration was 99.8 per cent of UK Regular Forces, and 97.2 per cent of Future Reserves 2020.

[HL335 and HL3352](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-20/HL3351/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-20/HL3352/>

Prisons: Ministers of Religion

Baroness Burt of Solihull (Liberal Democrat) [HL3350] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the compatibility with equality and human rights legislation of section 7 of the Prison Act 1952, which mandates that every prison must employ a clergyman from the Church of England to fulfil its chaplain position before members of other religions or beliefs can be considered for employment.

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: All prisons have multi faith chaplaincy teams to provide religious and pastoral support to prisoners. Chaplaincy provision reflects the faith/denominational requirements of the prison and prisons appoint chaplains on the basis of need, which will include a Church of England Chaplain. Church of England Chaplains are appointed under section 7 of the Prison Act 1952, and other Prison Chaplains under section 10 of the Prison Act.

We believe that the provisions on prisoner religion in the Prison Act 1952 and the Prison Rules 1999 are compatible with Articles 9 and 12 of the ECHR, and therefore we believe that HMPPS meets its obligation under the Human Rights Act 1998 to act compatibly with convention rights.

These provisions are also in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, in avoiding discrimination on grounds of religion, whether directly or indirectly. Where new prisons open, the aim is to have a fully functioning multi faith chaplaincy team appointed before the prison becomes operational.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-11-20/HL3350/>

New Publication

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) - July 2017 to September 2017, Experimental Statistics Report

<http://digital.nhs.uk/catalogue/PUB30163>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

**** Domestic Abuse Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/103883.aspx>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.parliament.scot/Domestic%20Abuse%20Scotland%20Bill/SPBill08ML2S052017.pdf>

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

Justice Committee: Stage 1 evidence session

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11244&i=102422#ScotParlOR>

UK Parliament

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/immigrationcontrolgrosshumanrightsabuses.html>

Children Act 1989 (Amendment) (Female Genital Mutilation) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/childrenact1989amendmentfemalegenitalmutilation.html>

EEA Nationals (Indefinite Leave to Remain) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/eeanationalsindefiniteleavetoremain.html>

**** European Union (Withdrawal) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/europeanunionwithdrawal.html>

Committee Stage, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-12-06/debates/09F6086E-3FC1-41D1-B080-DE74491905A7/EuropeanUnion\(Withdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2017-12-06/debates/09F6086E-3FC1-41D1-B080-DE74491905A7/EuropeanUnion(Withdrawal)Bill)

Notices of amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0005/amend/euwithdrawal_rm_cwh_1206.1-7.html

and

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/2017-2019/0005/amend/euwithdrawal_daily_cwh_1205.1-7.html

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaverytransparencyinsupplychains.html>

Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaveryvictimsupport.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionbill.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) (No. 2) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionno2.html>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/unaccompaniedasylumseekingchildrenlegaladviceandappeals.html>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

Enabling Gypsies, Roma and Travellers [Welsh Government consultation]

(closing date 21 December 2017)

<https://consultations.gov.wales/consultations/enabling-gypsies-roma-and-travellers>

International students: economic and social impacts (closing date 26 January 2018)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/international-students-economic-and-social-impacts>

Empowering Schools (closing date 7 January 2018)

<https://consult.gov.scot/learning-directorate/education-scotland-bill/>

Modernising the EU's common visa policy (closing date 2 February 2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/modernising-eus-common-visa-policy_en

Charitable giving by Muslims (no closing date given)

https://cardiffunipsych.eu.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9ZRSLmNhpyNY63j

Police Scotland: Your view counts (open all year)

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/decision-making/public-consultation/local-policing-consultation>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

Engaging Hard to Reach Groups

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

28 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course looking at the various approaches, tools and techniques we can adopt to reach out to people who are seldom heard. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8tg2x4k> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** this week!**

Scottish Human Rights Commission National Participation Event

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (10.00-4.00)

Event to mark International Human Rights Day 2017 and the end of the first four years of Scotland's National Action Plan for Human Rights (SNAP). For information contact actionplan@scottishhumanrights.com or see

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/news/national-participation-event/> of

**** this week!**

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (9.30-12.30)

13 December 2017 in Perth (9.30-12.30)

PAiH training to explain fundamental issues of housing, employment and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals and explore ways to avoid possible threats of Brexit. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact training@positiveactionh.org

**** this week!**

Scotland's National Action Plan (SNAP) for Human Rights

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (10.00-4.00)

Scottish Human Rights Commission event to mark International Human Rights Day 2017 and the end of SNAP's first four years, and providing an opportunity to reflect on SNAP's successes and challenges, guide what comes next, and inform the final evaluation and report on SNAP's first four years. For information see

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/news/national-participation-event/> or contact actionplan@scottishhumanrights.com

**** this week!**

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (1.30-4.30)

13 December 2017 in Perth (1.30-4.30)

PAiH training to explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant, the process involved in making a claim for asylum, barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers building a new life in Scotland, and their respective entitlement to services. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact training@positiveactionh.org

**** this week!**

The Scots in Poland - A Forgotten Diaspora

12 December 2017 in Glasgow (6.00-8.00)

Lecture by Billy Kay as part of the BEMIS "Scotland's Diverse History Lecture Series". For information see <https://tinyurl.com/ybr6awyg>

**** this week!**

Community Empowerment Act and Participation Requests

13 December 2017 in Glasgow (10.00-12.30)

BEMIS workshops providing an opportunity to learn more about how the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 can impact your community. The Act empowers community bodies to get involved in local issues and participate in the decision-making process for public services. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8rc8mn3>

**** this week!**

Refugee Community Sponsorship

14 December 2017 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

24 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** this week!**

Self-Creative Writing to explore and celebrate integration

15 December 2017 in Glasgow (2.00-3.30)

12 January 2018 in Glasgow (2.00-3.30)

Creative writing workshops organised by the UNESCO Chair in Refugee Integration

Through Language and Art at Glasgow University. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y77alnbx> or contact Aimee Ottroh ottroh@icloud.com

New Scots: Refugees and the Asylum Process

23 January 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

1 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

17 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine why people might need to flee their own country, how they seek asylum in the UK and what opportunities they have for rebuilding their lives here in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/z68a5k8> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Holocaust Memorial Day 2018

24 January 2018 at Glasgow Caledonian University

Details will be available in due course. For information contact the Scottish Interfaith Council admin@interfaithscotland.org / 0141 558 0778.

Discrimination Law in 2018: The authoritative review of the most dynamic area of employment law

29 January 2018 in Edinburgh (9.00-4.00)

Equality and Human Rights Commission conference to provide an update on discrimination in relation to employment law. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y6vxwcb> or contact Ross Mathers 0141 228 5919 / equalityactscotland@equalityhumanrights.com

Working with Interpreters

31 January 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

8 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

22 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the process of using an interpreter, where the responsibility lies for the success of the interpreted session, examines the pitfalls and their consequences, and sets out best practice for using interpreters. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/zy436gr> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Hate Crime and 3rd party reporting advisory panel

1 February 2018 in Glasgow (10.30-12.30)

West of Scotland Regional Equality Council are setting up an advisory panel to challenge issues and barriers around under-reporting of hate crime, and 3rd party reporting. For information see https://scojec.org/memo/files/17-18_wsrec.pdf or contact Rabeea rqureshi@wsrec.co.uk / 0141 337 6626.

New Scots: Refugees and VPRS Resettlement

6 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

19 April 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the issues facing Syrian refugees as they move from countries around Syria to the UK, and highlight the challenges and opportunities they face as they build new lives in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/jt93fog> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Unaccompanied Refugee Children

8 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-4.30)

2 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to better understand where unaccompanied refugee children are, and how you can help them in their journey. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y7mz5uuv> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Age Assessment Awareness

21 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

The Age assessment process is used to establish the approximate age of an unaccompanied young person who may have been trafficked or otherwise separated from their families, so that their Rights and entitlements can be fulfilled. This Scottish Refugee Council course provides social workers and other relevant staff with an awareness of the components that are used to build a picture of a person's age. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8f2z7p4> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Refugee Rights to Housing

21 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to identify the different groups of asylum seekers and refugees most likely to seek housing in Scotland, learn how to identify their legal rights, and the duties and obligations on local authorities and other housing organisations towards them. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y9pvpl5r> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

First World Congress on Migration, Ethnicity, and Health

17-19 May 2018 in Edinburgh

(closing date abstracts for posters, presentations and workshops: 6 October 2017)

The aims of the Congress include improved research, population health and health care for migrants and other discriminated-against populations, and considering the health effects of social, environmental and demographic change associated with population migration, and the effects on diseases and their causes. For information see <http://www.merhcongress.com/> or contact merh@in-conference.org.uk / 0131 336 4203.

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Useful Links

Scottish Parliament <http://www.parliament.scot/>

Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/>

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

GovUK (links to UK Government Departments) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations>

UK Government Honours system <https://www.gov.uk/honours/overview>

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

One Scotland <http://onescotland.org/>

Scottish Refugee Council <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk>

Interfaith Scotland <http://www.interfaithscotland.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/>

Volunteer Development Scotland <http://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

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

Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel <https://www.goodfundraising.scot/>

Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS) www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services

Disclosure Scotland <https://www.mygov.scot/working-jobs/finding-a-job/disclosure/>

BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>

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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. (Scottish Charity, no. SC027692) <http://www.bemis.org.uk/>



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.gov.scot/>

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