



MEMO is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities \(SCoJeC\)](#) 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.

Contents

[Immigration and Asylum](#)

[Equality](#)

[Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination](#)

[Other Scottish Parliament and Government](#)

[Other UK Parliament and Government](#)

[Health Information: Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Other News](#)

[Bills in Progress](#)

[Consultations](#)

[Job Opportunities](#)

[Funding Opportunities](#)

[Events, Conferences, and Training](#)

[Useful Links](#)

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 have been redesigned, so that links published in previous 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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The UK Parliament is in recess until 2 June 2020.

Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Entry Clearances: Coronavirus

Neil Coyle (Labour) [47305] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will allow temporary UK residents whose leave is due to expire on 31 May 2020 a further automatic extension to their visas as a result of (a) travel restrictions and (b) self-isolation relating to covid-19.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Individuals in the UK legally whose visa expired after 24 January 2020 have had their visa extended to 31 May 2020 where they cannot leave the UK because of travel restrictions or self-isolation related to coronavirus. This is being kept under regular review in case further extensions are needed and the Home Office will publish relevant information on GOV.UK prior to this date.

Immigrants: Coronavirus

Dawn Butler (Labour) [33436] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she plans to take to ensure that people with no recourse to public funds are (a) safeguarded and (b) able to self-isolate during the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office is working closely with other government departments to support people, including migrants with no recourse to public funds, through this crisis. We are taking a compassionate and pragmatic approach and will continue to review the situation to consider if more can be done.

The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme will help firms continue to keep people, including workers with no recourse to public funds, in employment with the government paying 80% of furloughed workers wages up to a cap of £2,500.

There are a number of measures in relation to rent and mortgage protections, food vouchers, and protections for the homeless, all of which are not considered public funds. Local Authorities may also provide basic safety net support if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases.

Covid-19 has been added to the list of infectious diseases so anyone experiencing symptoms, regardless of their immigration status, will be treated for free.

People granted leave under the family and human rights routes can apply to have a condition lifted or for access to benefits if their financial circumstances change.

Immigrants: Coronavirus

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [43999] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, what recent estimate she has made of the cost to the public purse of suspending no recourse to public funds conditions during the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: The majority of migrants from outside of the European Economic Area have no recourse to public funds (NRPF); this includes those here for work or as the partner or parent of a British citizen. The public interest in migrants being financially independent and not being a burden on the State is long established.

Many of the wide-ranging Covid-19 measures the government has put in place are not public funds and therefore are available to migrants with NRPF. In light of the support available, we do not believe it is necessary to suspend the NRPF condition. We will keep the situation under review and consider further measures if needed.

The Home Office is, however, working closely with other government departments to support people, including migrants with NRPF, through this crisis. We are taking a compassionate and pragmatic approach to an unprecedented situation.

Migrants with leave under the Family and Human Rights routes can apply to have the NRPF restriction lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application if there has been a change in their financial circumstances. The Home Office has recently digitised the application form to make sure it is accessible for those who need to remain at home, and the applications are being dealt with compassionately.

The Coronavirus job retention scheme, self-employment income support and statutory sick pay are not classed as public funds for immigration purposes. Contribution-based benefits are also not classed as public funds for immigration purposes. Additionally, measures we have brought forward such as rent and mortgage protections are not considered public funds and can be accessed by

migrants with leave to remain.

Local authorities may also provide basic safety net support if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question.

The Government has made in excess of £3.2 billion of funding to local authorities in England, and additional funding under the Barnett formula to the devolved administrations to enable them to respond to Covid-19 pressures across all the services they deliver, including services helping the most vulnerable.

More information on the support available to migrants, including those with NRPf, can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-get-support-if-youre-a-migrant-living-in-the-uk>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-06/43999/>

Immigrants: Coronavirus

Lyn Brown (Labour) [41015] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will hold discussions with the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the provision of financial support to local authorities that have taken on the costs of ensuring that residents with No Recourse to Public Funds are able to self-isolate during the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office is working closely with other government departments, including the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support people, including migrants with no recourse to public funds, through this crisis. We are taking a compassionate and pragmatic approach to an unprecedented situation.

Local authorities can provide basic safety net support if it is established there is a care need which does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question. The Government has provided more than £3.2 billion of funding to local authorities in England, and additional funding under the Barnett formula to the devolved administrations to enable them to respond to Covid-19 pressures across all the services they deliver, including services helping the most vulnerable.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-28/41015/>

Immigrants: Finance

Helen Hayes (Labour) [38514] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of migrants and asylum seekers with the right to work but no recourse to public funds; and what plans she has to review that policy in response to the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: The majority of migrants from outside of the European Economic Area have no recourse to public funds; this includes asylum seekers but also extends to other individuals, such as those here for work or as the partner or parent of a British citizen. The public interest in migrants being financially independent and not being a burden on the State is long established.

However, the Home Office is working closely with other government departments to support people, including migrants with no recourse to public funds, through this crisis. We are taking a compassionate and pragmatic approach to an unprecedented situation.

Many of the wide-ranging Covid-19 measures the government has put in place are

not public funds and therefore are available to migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF).

The Coronavirus job retention scheme, self-employment income support and statutory sick pay are not classed as public funds for immigration purposes. Contribution-based benefits are also not classed as public funds for immigration purposes. Additionally, measures we have brought forward such as rent and mortgage protections are not considered public funds and can be accessed by migrants with leave to remain.

Migrants with leave under the Family and Human Rights routes can apply to have the NRPF restriction lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application if there has been a change in their financial circumstances. The Home Office has recently digitised the application form to make sure it is accessible for those who need to remain at home, and I can assure you that the applications are being dealt with swiftly and compassionately.

Local authorities may also provide basic safety net support if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question.

The Government has made in excess of £3.2bn of funding available to local authorities in England to assist them in managing the pressures arising out of the pandemic.

Asylum seekers do not have an automatic right to work. However, they may apply for permission to work in the UK on jobs on the Shortage Occupation List if their asylum claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, where the delay is through no fault of their own.

Those asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute are supported by the Home Office on application. An asylum seeker or failed asylum seeker who requires assistance can contact Migrant Help and make an application for support from the Home Office through the contact details below:

ASCORRESPONDENCE@MIGRANTHELPUK.ORG

Telephone: 0808 8010 503

As part of this Government's response to covid-19, we have ensured that asylum seekers who are provided with accommodation will be able to remain in their current accommodation for the next three months. This includes those granted refugee status or other leave who can access public funds, as well as those whose application for asylum has been refused. The situation will be reviewed at the end of June.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-21/38514/>

Immigrants: Finance

Lyn Brown (Labour) [41622] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, under (a) what circumstances and (b) with what notice period her Department will end the suspension of the No Recourse to Public Funds exception during the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: The no recourse to public funds (NRPF) condition has not been suspended. The Home Office is working closely with other government departments to support people, including migrants with NRPF, through this crisis. We are taking a compassionate and pragmatic approach to an unprecedented situation. Many of the wide-ranging Covid-19 measures the government has put in place are not public funds and are available to migrants with NRPF.

In light of the support available, we do not believe it is necessary to suspend the NRPF condition. We will keep the situation under review and consider further measures if needed.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-29/41622/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigrants: Finance

Neil Coyle (Labour) [45248] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the High Court's decision of 7 May 2020 on her Department's no recourse to public funds policy.

Neil Coyle (Labour) [45249] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to respond to the High Court's decision of 7 May 2020 on her Department's no recourse to public funds policy.

Reply from Chris Philp: The court's ruling on 7th May concerned the clarity in the policy for family and private life applicants who are seeking to have the no recourse to public funds policy not imposed on them, or lifted if already imposed.

The Home Office notes the court's judgment and that its full reasons will follow; we will consider these carefully when they become available.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45248/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45249/>

The decision referred to above is not yet available online

Visas: Travel Restrictions

Olivia Blake (Labour) [46203] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on people who have vignette visas who are unable to travel to the UK due to covid-19 related travel restrictions; and if she will remove extension fees for vignette visas given the limited travel options available.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office has put in place a range of measures to support those affected by the covid-19 outbreak. It has been agreed that if an individual's 30-day visa to travel to the UK for work, study or to join family has expired, or is about to expire, a replacement visa with revised validity dates valid for up to 90 days may be requested free of charge until the end of this year (2020). Affected customers will need to contact the UKVI Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre. Full details of the Help Centre and how to make a request can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>.

Our Visa Application Centres (VACs) overseas are currently closed due to the impact of covid-19. Customers will be contacted when they reopen in order to arrange for the replacement visa to be endorsed in their passport to enable them to travel.

These are unprecedented times and we may make further adjustments to requirements where necessary and appropriate, to ensure people are not unduly affected by circumstances beyond their control.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-12/46203/>

Foreign Nationals: Visas

Claire Hanna (SDLP) [45503] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 28 April 2020 to Question 37868 on Foreign Nationals: Coronavirus, whether a person who is unable to apply to extend their visa during the covid-19 lockdown will be treated as an overstayer.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Visa nationals whose leave expired after the 24 January and who cannot leave the country because of the COVID-19 pandemic are able to extend their visas. This will last until 31 May, but will be kept under regular review in case further extensions are needed.

No individual who is in the UK legally and whose visa expired after 24 January 2020, or is due to expire, will be regarded as an overstayer or suffer any detriment in the future if they cannot leave the UK because of travel restrictions related to coronavirus.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45503/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-20/37868/>

Visas: Married People

Matt Western (Labour) [45388] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to extend prospective marriage visas free of charge where weddings have been unable to take place as a result of covid-19.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office has put in place a range of measures to support those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic including extending visas for those affected with temporary stay to 31 May. We continue to monitor the situation closely and take these exceptional circumstances into account.

These are unprecedented times and we may make further temporary adjustments to requirements where necessary and appropriate.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45388/>

Visas: Arts

Catherine West (labour) [19984] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the Government has made of the effect on (a) culture and (b) the economy of requiring Tier 5 temporary worker visas for artists.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Government has been clear we are ending free movement, and we have introduced an Immigration Bill to bring in a firm and fair points-based system. EEA artists, entertainers and musicians wishing to come to the UK after the end of the transition period for longer-term work will need to do so under the points-based system, which will continue to include special arrangements for creative workers.

There are several existing provisions for visiting artists, entertainers and musicians – they can perform at events, take part in competitions and auditions, make personal appearances and take part in promotional activities for up to 6 months without the need for formal sponsorship or a work visa if they are not receiving payment. Visiting artists, entertainers and musicians can also receive payment for appearance at permit free festivals for up to 6 months, or for up to one month for a specific engagement, under the Visitor route. We expect to treat EU citizens as non-visa nationals meaning they can come to the UK as visitors without the need to obtain a visa.

More detailed analysis on the impact of the points-based system will be published shortly.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19984/>

Visas: Work Permits

Stuart Anderson (Conservative) [40762] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has for people whose travel visas and work permits in the UK are expiring and whose countries are in lockdown.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office has put in place a range of measures to support those affected by the covid-19 outbreak. No individual who is in the UK legally and whose visa expires between 24 January 2020 and 30 May 2020 will be regarded as an overstayer or suffer any detriment in the future if they cannot leave the UK because of travel restrictions related to COVID-19. Their visa will be extended to 31 May 2020. Individuals must update their records online using the e-form published on Gov.uk. Individuals do not need to do anything else once they have submitted the online e-form and their status in the UK is secure from the point they have submitted.

These are unprecedented times and we may make further adjustments to requirements where necessary and appropriate, to ensure people are not unduly affected by circumstances beyond their control.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-27/40762/>

NHS: Migrant Workers

Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op) [46764] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of granting international medical students who have graduated early due to the covid-19 outbreak and are working for the NHS special dispensation to switch sponsors without having to apply for another visa.

Reply from Kevin Foster: International students with current Tier 4 visas can already work full-time following the completion of their course without switching sponsors, provided the conditions of their visa permit work.

During the Covid-19 outbreak, those applying for new visas under Tiers 2, 4 or 5 can commence work or study with their new sponsor before a decision is made on their application provided the relevant conditions outlined on Gov.uk are met. These details can be found at:

www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46764/>

Migrant Workers: Visas

Helen Hayes (Labour) [38517] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to review the pay cap on the Government's proposed points based immigration system in response to the covid-19 outbreak to ensure that skilled nurses and carers are able to (a) continue to live in the UK and (b) travel to the UK to work.

Reply from Chris Philp: We set out our proposals for the UK's Points-Based Immigration System in a Policy Statement published on 19 February:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uks-points-based-immigration-system-policy-statement>

Any employer wishing to sponsor a skilled worker under the new system must offer them a suitable salary. On the recommendation of the independent Migration Advisory Committee, the salary requirement for nurses and many other health professionals will be based on published national pay scales.

For those in other occupations, we will be lowering the general salary threshold from £30,000 to £25,600. This may be reduced further through tradeable points.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-21/38517/>

Migrant Workers: Visas

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [45155] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her letter of 29 April 2020 to the Home Affairs Committee on visa extensions for care workers and NHS staff, when she plans to publish detailed guidance on her commitment that dependants of NHS workers who die from Covid-19 will be granted immediate indefinite leave to remain without a requirement to pay a fee.

Reply from Kevin Foster: As set out in the Home Secretary's letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee dated 29 April, we will grant immediate Indefinite Leave to Remain to families of frontline NHS health workers who die as a result of contracting Coronavirus. UK Visas and Immigration will work with NHS Trusts and employers across the whole of the UK to identify dependants in this tragic position. Details of immigration changes relating to COVID-19 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-and-borders>.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45155/>

The letter referred to above can be read at

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/835/documents/5378/default/>

Migrant Workers: Visas

Stuart Anderson (Conservative) [45451] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, whether the automatic visa extension for frontline health workers extends to people employed in the NHS as healthcare assistants.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Government has announced we will extend the visas for a range of healthcare professionals working for the NHS and independent health and care providers, where their current visa expires before 1 October. This offer also applies to their families. The 12-month extension is automatic and free of charge and those benefitting will not have to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge. Details of immigration changes, including the extended list of healthcare professionals covered by this offer, relating to COVID-19 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-and-borders>.

We are continuing to work hand in hand with the Department of Health and Social Care on how we can best support frontline health and care workers.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45451/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Migrant Workers: Domestic Service

Jess Phillips (Labour) [46683] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to protect migrant domestic workers who entered the UK on the Overseas Domestic Worker visa; and what support her Department is providing to those migrant domestic workers who have not taken part in a Government-provided information sessions on their rights during the covid-19 outbreak.

Visas: Domestic Service

Jess Phillips (Labour) [46684] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to support Overseas Domestic Worker visa holders in the UK whose six months visas are due to expire and who are unable to travel due to covid-19 lockdown measures.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Government is committed to the safeguarding of migrant domestic workers entering the UK, which is why all domestic workers are provided with information explaining their rights and how to access help should they need it. Further help and information is also available online at

www.gov.uk/domestic-workers-in-a-private-household-visa/your-employment-rights.

The Home Office has put in place a range of measures to support those affected by the covid-19 outbreak and these provisions are being reviewed regularly. We will review the existing arrangements prior to 31 May and will publish information on Gov.uk prior to this date.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-and-borders

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46683/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46684/>

Migrant Workers: Domestic Service

Jess Phillips (Labour) [46685] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the remit of the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority is for inspecting private households to prevent exploitation of migrant domestic workers.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) has powers under section 114B of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984 for specially trained officers, known as labour abuse prevention officers, to investigate serious labour market offences, including modern slavery offences in England and Wales.

Where it is suspected that there is evidence of a labour exploitation offence, the GLAA can apply to the courts for a warrant to enter and search the premises. This includes private households where a domestic worker may be employed or where other evidence, including records of the exploitation, may be held.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46685/>

Entry Clearances: Overseas Students

Emma Hardy (Labour) [43144] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Tier 4 visa applications have (a) been made and (b) been successful in (i) January 2019, (ii) January 2020, (iii) February 2019, (iv) February 2020, (v) March 2019, (vi) March 2020, (vii) April 2019 and (viii) April 2020.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The most recently published transparency data in February 2020 includes data up to the end of December 2019, so we are unable to provide any published data for 2020.

For the 2019 statistics requested, please see the table below.

Study Applications		
Q1 2019	4,674	In-Country
Q1 2019	14,692	Entry Clearance
Q1 2019	19,366	Total Study Intake

This data is taken from the In-Country Migration Data and International Operations Transparency Data published in August 2019.

The published data does not include grant rates, for this specific cohort of applications, however the table below does show the number of cases granted in this period.

Study Approvals		
Q1 2019	5,438	In Country

Q1 2019	16,099	Entry Clearance
Q1 2019	19,366	Total Study Intake

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-04/43144/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [19860] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 13 February 2020 to Question 14691 on immigration: EU Nationals, how many share codes have been requested in each month since the EU Settlement Scheme became operational.

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [19861] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 13 February 2020 to Question 14691 on Immigration: EU Nationals, by what date his Department will have published data on usage of the view and prove service.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Individuals granted pre-settled or settled status have had the option within the 'view and prove your settled or pre-settled status' service to share their status information for a variety of reasons since 30th September 2019. This is done by generating a 'share code' which can be given to a third party to provide them with time-limited access to the data. One of these options ('work in the UK') takes users to a separate Home Office service, which can also be used by individuals who have not been through the EU Settlement Scheme (holders of Biometric Residence Permits (BRP) and Biometric Residence Cards (BRC)).

The ability to share information via the online service(s) is entirely optional; EEA nationals can continue to rely on their passports or national ID cards until 30 June 2021 to evidence their rights in the UK but can choose to use the online service if they wish. Those with a BRP/C can also continue to rely on their physical cards.

While data relating to number of share codes generated is captured for internal purposes, this is not representative of the number of times users have shared their status information. Data on the number of views of a person's status by third parties gives a more accurate reflection of checks carried out, and this is intended to be included when data on usage is published.

Data on usage of the 'view and prove' service is intended to be published as part of the Home Office Transparency Data. The data will be published once we are content it is robust and of sufficient quality, having been through our assurance processes, which should be before the end of the year.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19860/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19861/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-10/14691/>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Universal Credit: EU Nationals

Hywel Williams (Plaid Cymru) [45965] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many (a) EU nationals and (b) EU nationals with proof of Settled Status have had their claims for universal credit refused since March 2019; and what steps she is taking to ensure Settled Status is accepted as proof of residence by her staff.

Reply from Justin Tomlinson: Eligibility for Universal Credit depends on a person's immigration status in the UK. DWP operates a Habitual Residence Test in order to assess whether individuals have a legal right to reside for the purpose of accessing benefits and are factually habitually resident.

Since 1st March 2019 to January 2020 there have been 27,600 UC Full Service claims closed due to failing the HRT from EEA nationals. Nearly 200,000 EEA nationals were successful in gaining access to Universal Credit during this period, showing the vast majority were accepted. It is normal on UC for some claims to be closed prior to first payment, this can be due to a number of reasons including claimants withdrawing their claim and some claims not being eligible.

The Home Office's EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) allows EEA citizens to apply for settled status (typically on the basis of five years' residence in the UK) and confirm their right to reside in the UK. The Habitual Residence Test recognises leave granted under the EU Settlement Scheme. EEA citizens with settled status who demonstrate habitual residence in the UK will pass the Habitual Residence Test (HRT) and be eligible to access tax-payer funded benefits, such as Universal Credit (UC). The Department does not hold information on the number of EU nationals with settled status who have been refused UC.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-12/45965/>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Peter Kyle (Labour) [48558] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Answer of 21 June 2019 to Question 266278, what plans her Department has to review the decision to not provide EU citizens with physical documentation confirming their settled status after the UK leaves the EU.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office is developing a border and immigration system which is "digital by default" for all migrants, which over time means we will increasingly replace physical and paper-based products and services with accessible, easy to use online and digital services. This mirrors the approach adopted by other countries, such as Australia, in administering their immigration systems and the way in which people increasingly live their lives.

Individuals – including those going through the EU Settlement Scheme - will still receive written notification of their immigration status, by email or letter, which they can retain for their own records. They will also be given access to a digital version of their immigration status information, which can be accessed at any time via the online 'view and prove' service, and which unlike a physical document cannot be lost or stolen. It also allows individuals to view information about their status whenever they wish and share it securely with third parties such as employers or public and private service providers.

We are making this move because it provides a better level of service. Individuals have greater transparency and control over their immigration status data, and tailored digital services mean that only the information that the individual agrees to share is shown, unlike a physical document which must fulfil many purposes. Digital services also allow us to provide information in a format that is easy to understand and accessible to all users, removing the need for employers, landlords and others to interpret myriad physical documents, complex legal terminology or confusing abbreviations. Users can be confident that they are getting information direct from Home Office systems and that it tells them what they need to know.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-18/48558/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-06-18/266278/>

Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Henry Smith (Conservative) [41028] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal migrants have entered the UK via the English Channel since 1 January 2020; and how many of those illegal migrants were returned to France in that period.

Reply from Chris Philp: People crossing the Channel to enter the UK have come from a safe country – usually France – and so there is no reason why they need to make this trip in order to claim asylum. Those fleeing persecution should stay in the first safe country they enter.

The UK continues to work closely with France and other countries to return migrants who have entered the UK by small boat in order to provide a strong deterrent against these dangerous crossings.

The number of migrants arriving in the UK crossing the Channel by small boats for the months of January to March 2020 is approx. 450. These are provisional figures based on operational management information. The figures for April have not passed through a data quality check and cannot be assured. The final figures will be published at a later date, once they have been verified

Since January 2019, over 155 people who entered the UK illegally on small boats have been returned to Europe. However, as a result of COVID-19 the vast majority of EU member states have temporarily paused accepting returns under the Dublin Regulations, but we are tracking those individuals and where appropriate will seek to return them when routes are available.

The processes to manage clandestine arrivals are kept under regular review. In line with Public Health Guidance we are not currently providing routine testing for clandestine arrivals to the UK. In line with established processes, those arriving across the Channel are immediately assessed to establish whether there are any medical requirements. Those showing symptoms of COVID-19 are provided with suitable accommodation in which to self-isolate.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-28/41028/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Damian Collins (Conservative) [45146] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants have been intercepted (a) while attempting to make an illegal crossing of the English Channel and (b) shortly after arriving in the UK in each of the last 12 months for which that data is available.

Damian Collins (Conservative) [45147] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants have entered the UK in the last 12 months as a result of making an illegal crossing of the English Channel; and how many of those migrants have subsequently left the UK.

Reply from Chris Philp: People crossing the Channel to enter the UK have come from a safe country – usually France – and so there is no reason why they need to make this trip in order to claim asylum. Those fleeing persecution should stay in the

first safe country they enter.

The UK continues to work closely with France and other countries to return migrants who have entered the UK by small boat in order to provide a strong deterrent against these dangerous crossings.

The number of migrants arriving in the UK crossing the Channel by small boats for the months of January to March 2020 is approx. 450. These are provisional figures based on operational management information. The figures for April have not passed through a data quality check and cannot be assured. The final figures for all months will be published at a later date, once they have been verified and fully quality assured.

Information regarding migrants crossing the English Channel was provided to the Home Affairs Select Committee on 5 March 2019 which gave the number of migrants detected entering the UK by small boats from January 2018 to February 2019 as 428.

On 22 July 2019 the then Home Secretary Sajid Javid provided an additional figure to Home Affairs Select Committee that up to 21 July 2019 725 migrants had crossed the English Channel.

Since January 2019, over 155 people who entered the UK illegally on small boats have been returned to Europe. However, as a result of COVID-19 the vast majority of EU member states have temporarily paused accepting returns under the Dublin Regulations, but we are tracking those individuals and where appropriate will seek to return them when routes are available.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45146/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45147/>

The information referred to above provided to the Home Affairs Select Committee can be read at <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-committees/home-affairs/Correspondence-17-19/19-03-05-Letter-from-Sir-Philip-Rutnam-KCB-Permanent-Secretary-Home-Office-Migrant-boats-in-the-channel.pdf>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Christopher Chope (Conservative) [40965] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy that illegal immigrants detained in the UK after crossing the English Channel from France are either required to be returned immediately to France or placed in quarantine in the UK for fourteen days during the covid-19 outbreak; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Chris Philp: We only detain people where it is absolutely necessary and there is always a presumption on liberty.

Decisions to detain are made on a case-by-case basis and kept under constant review but it is only right that we protect the public from high-harm individuals, which is why the vast majority of those in detention are foreign national offenders.

We are following public health advice and providing appropriate health care as it is needed. There is no evidence to show that there is an increased risk from migrants. We continue to work in line with Public Health England guidance; migrants arriving by small boats are not specifically tested for coronavirus but are monitored for symptoms and will be provided with accommodation where they can isolate if needed. As a result of COVID-19 the vast majority of EU member states have temporarily paused accepting returns under the Regulations, but we are tracking those individuals and where appropriate will seek to return them when routes are available.

The health of those in immigration removal centres is of the utmost importance and Immigration Enforcement are following the latest guidance from Public Health England. Measures such as protective isolation will be considered on a case by case basis to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading to vulnerable groups in the immigration detention estate. Further measures including shielding, single occupancy rooms and the cessation of social visits have been introduced in line with the Government direction on social distancing.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-28/40965/>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Damian Collins (Conservative) [45145] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will provide details of the steps her Department is taking to detect migrants seeking to enter the UK by illegally crossing the English Channel.

Reply from Chris Philp: Keeping our border secure is the Government's highest priority and it is committed to doing everything it can to stop these dangerous Channel crossings which are putting vulnerable lives at risk.

Through joint-working with France, the UK has funded the continued deployment of gendarme reservists along the coast of northern France, who are patrolling constantly in order to detect attempted crossings by migrants. Funding has been allocated, among other projects, for further improvements at ports in northern France and on the ground, this now includes drones, specialist vehicles and detection equipment to stop small boats leaving European shores.

Intelligence flows are also key to dismantling the organised crime groups behind crossings. We have restructured and repurposed our approach to support the growing intelligence feeds which is used to inform and direct how and where resource is deployed.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45145/>

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Tom Hunt (Conservative) [45472] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to (a) prevent illegal arrivals through unauthorised crossings of the English Channel and b) remove those people that entered the UK illegally.

Reply from Chris Philp: Keeping our border secure is the Government's highest priority and it is committed to doing everything it can to stop these dangerous Channel crossings which are putting vulnerable lives at risk.

Through joint-working with France, the UK has funded the continued deployment of gendarme reservists along the coast of northern France, who are patrolling constantly in order to detect attempted crossings by migrants. Funding has been allocated, among other projects, for further improvements at ports in northern France and on the ground, this now includes drones, specialist vehicles and detection equipment to stop small boats leaving European shores.

Intelligence flows are also key to dismantling the organised crime groups behind crossings. We have restructured and repurposed our approach to support the growing intelligence feeds which is used to inform and direct how and where resource is deployed. The majority of countries who are signatories to the Dublin Regulations which governs the return of those seeking asylum in the UK to a third country have announced temporary suspension of transfers to and from all EU Member States due to the Coronavirus. Returns to third-countries can still take place where there is a suitable route of return.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45472/>

English Language: Education

Shabana Mahmood (Labour) [46595] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Office, what support her Department is providing to local authorities to deliver English for Speakers of Other Languages (EWOL) courses in local authority areas with high levels of resettled individuals and families seeking asylum relative to other local authority areas.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Department for Education funds English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) through the Adult Education Budget (AEB).

- Individuals aged 19 and over, including refugees, those granted humanitarian protection and asylum seekers, can be fully funded or co-funded depending on their age, prior educational attainment, employment status, and provided they meet the residency criteria set out in the AEB Funding and Performance Management Rules.
- Approximately half the AEB is devolved to six Mayoral Combined Authorities and the Greater London Authority, and they are responsible for commissioning and funding provision, including ESOL provision, for learners resident in their areas.
- As well as access to mainstream services, additional funding is provided to Local Authorities (of £850 per adult refugee) for refugees resettled through the UK's resettlement scheme. This is intended to boost local capacity so that refugees on the scheme can receive additional hours of ESOL tuition.
- We are also investing around £600,000 this year (2020/21) so that refugees on the UK Resettlement Scheme can benefit from additional childcare provision to support access to ESOL classes; and £360,000 to improve regional coordination of ESOL for refugees.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46595/>

Refugees: Children

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [43171] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many trafficked, separated and unaccompanied migrant children were (a) recorded in the UK and (b) appointed an independent guardian in each calendar year from 2015 to 2019.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Government views the slavery, including trafficking, of children as a very serious offence and recognises the particular vulnerabilities of child victims. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery. Between 2015 and 2019, 12,054 children were referred to the NRM. The breakdown of referrals for potential child victims is as follows:

Year	Number of NRM referrals (minors)
2015	977
2016	1279
2017	2118
2018	3130
2019	4550

The NRM referral data is not broken down into the sub-categories outlined in the question. However the Home Office publishes the number of asylum claims lodged by unaccompanied children as part of its quarterly statistics release which can be found

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/819723/evaluation-independent-child-trafficking-guardians-final-horr111.pdf

Where children are found to be victims of modern slavery, their safety and welfare are addressed as the priority, irrespective of nationality or immigration status. Local authorities are responsible for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children in their area. Unaccompanied children looked after by local authorities are entitled to the same services as any other looked-after child, including access to education, healthcare, legal support and accommodation. They will be allocated a social worker who will assess their individual needs and draw up a care plan which sets out how the local authority intends to respond to the full range of these needs. Additionally, they must be allocated an independent reviewing officer, who will be responsible for chairing reviews of care plans and arranging for the child's input; and have access to an independent advocate responsible for accurately representing the child's wishes and feelings.

In addition to this statutory support, the Government has expanded Independent Child Trafficking Guardians (ICTGs) to one third of local authorities in England and Wales. ICTGs are an additional source of advice and support for all potentially trafficked children, irrespective of nationality, and somebody who can advocate on their behalf.

An evaluation of the ICTG service within the early adopter sites was published in July 2019 and can be found [here](#). This evaluation was conducted on the service provided in the three initial sites of Greater Manchester, Hampshire and Wales between February 2017 and January 2019. Over this time period, 445 children were referred to the ICTG service.

Later this year the Home Office will publish its next evaluation of the ICTG service, which will provide further updates on outcomes of the service including the number of children it supports.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-04/43171/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

Margaret Ferrier (SNP) [19911] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund allocated to the UK was spent on (a) removal, (b) resettlement and (c) asylum seeker and refugee integration in (i) 2014-15, (ii) 2015-16, (iii) 2016-17, (iv) 2017-18 and (v) 2018-19.

Margaret Ferrier (SNP) [19912] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she will take to replace the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund following the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) UK Responsible Authority (UKRA) manage AMIF funds in the UK. The total amount allocated to the UK from AMIF is £518.5m.

The UKRA operates according to AMIF years YYYY and YYYY +1 rather than n (current year), rather than the financial year as set out in the question. Therefore, this response includes expenditure claimed from the EU in the AMIF period covered as set out in the header.

Furthermore, the UK does not include asylum seekers in integration activities as this is not appropriate until their status has been settled. In addition, the 'Integration' objective of AMIF applies to Third Country Nationals, including refugees. The UKRA has projects that focus on both, and as such it is not feasible to differentiate expenditure between that on 'refugees' and 'TCNs', so the response relates to all AMIF expenditure on Integration.

Also included in the UK AMIF allocation is an amount for a 'Resettlement Pledge' where the UK can claim an amount for resettling refugees from the EU. Depending on the type of case, figures for this have also been included below.

Any expenditure incurred in 2014-15 was recorded in the 2015-16 accounts.

2015-16 (Expenditure incurred 01/01/14 – 15/10/16)

(a) removal

Actual spend - £53,480,997.80

(b) resettlement

Actual spend - £0

Resettlement pledge - £19,130,434.80

(c) asylum seeker and refugee integration

Actual spend - £0

2016-17 (Expenditure incurred 16/10/16 – 15/10/17)

(a) removal

Actual spend - £10,877,122.00

(b) resettlement

Actual spend - £0

Resettlement pledge - £18,086,956.52

(c) asylum seeker and refugee integration

Actual spend - £3,052,638.95

2017-18 (Expenditure incurred 16/10/17 – 15/10/18)

(a) removal

Actual spend - £25,054,327.61

(b) resettlement

Actual spend - £1,863,468.65

Resettlement pledge - £0

(c) asylum seeker and refugee integration

Actual spend - £6,873,834.41

2018-19 (Expenditure incurred 16/10/18 – 15/10/19)

(a) removal

Actual spend - £0

(b) resettlement

Actual spend - £0

Resettlement pledge - £66,782,608.69

(c) asylum seeker and refugee integration

Actual spend - £0

The Home Office is currently assessing an alternative UK programme to the AMIF and this will form part of spending review discussions.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19911/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-02-24/19912/>

Asylum: Finance

Alex Cunningham (Labour) [47279] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for Section 4 support have been (a) granted and (b) refused since 23 March 2020.

Reply from Chris Philp: Published stats will be available on gov.uk in due course, recent statistics since March 2020 are not yet ready for release. We can confirm that we have seen an increase in Section 4 application and we have moved people who would no longer be eligible for Section 95 support onto Section 4. We are working to ensure that applications are dealt with efficiently, and that no one should be left destitute.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-15/47279/>

Asylum: Iran

Cat Smith (Labour) [6159] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her policy is on the return of rejected asylum seekers to Iran.

Reply from Chris Philp: The UK has a proud history of granting asylum to those who need our protection.

All asylum and human rights claims are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

Each individual assessment is made against the background of the latest available country of origin information and any relevant caselaw. Our assessment of the situation in Iran is set out in the relevant country policy and information notes, which are available on the Gov.uk website.

The Home Office only enforces removal to Iran when it and the courts conclude that it is safe to do so, with a safe route of return. By definition, those whose asylum claim have been unsuccessful do not need protection and are not at risk on return. Enforced removals are carried out in the most sensitive way possible, treating those being removed with respect and courtesy.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-21/6159/>

Asylum: Disease Control

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [39527] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that asylum seekers have adequate space and facilities to self isolate if those people have symptoms of covid-19 while living in shared Home Office-provided accommodation for asylum-seekers.

Reply from Chris Philp: We are carefully following PHE Guidance which recommends that separate rooms should be provided for symptomatic people, or they should be moved to hotels.

Those with underlying health conditions and people over 70 years of age should also be moved to the appropriate hotel accommodation following PHE guidance, unless individuals do not wish to be moved. We are reviewing each case on an individual basis and continue to work with our providers to ensure the guidance is followed. If an asylum seeker enters the country displaying symptoms we have dedicated , sole use accommodation that allows them to self-isolate before moving into the asylum accommodation estate

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-24/39527/>

Migrant Workers: Asylum

Afzal Khan (Labour) [38015] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans she has to grant permission to work for (a) medical workers and (b) all other potential workers who have been awaiting a decision on their asylum application for over six months; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Chris Philp: Asylum seekers with medical experience and qualifications, who have been waiting for a decision on their claim for 12 months or more, can already apply to work for the NHS in the range of medical professions on the Shortage Occupation List.

Asylum seeker right to work is a complex issue. The review of the policy is ongoing, and we are considering the evidence put forward on the issue. It is crucial we take the time to get this right.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-20/38015/>

Asylum: Finance

Catherine West (Labour) [41562] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will increase financial support for asylum seekers during the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Chris Philp: We are currently reviewing the level of the cash allowances, as we do each year, to ensure that they remain capable of meeting the essential living needs of asylum seekers. In addition to weekly cash payments, asylum seekers who claim support also receive free furnished accommodation in which utilities are paid for.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-04-29/41562/>

Asylum: Housing

Shabana Mahmood (Labour) [45084] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the dispersal of individuals and families seeking asylum has been, by local authority area, over the last five years.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office publishes quarterly figures on the number of asylum seekers housed in dispersed accommodation, by local authority in the Immigration Statistics release,

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/asylum-and-resettlement-datasets#asylum-support>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45084/>

Asylum: Housing

Shabana Mahmood (Labour) [46596] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the equity of distribution of the resettling of individuals and families seeking asylum throughout the UK by (a) geographical region and (b) in terms of the regional public service provision capacity.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office is working in partnership with Local Authority Chief Executives through the Home Office Local Government Chief Executive group's, who have agreed a change plan, that seeks to achieve a more equitable dispersal of asylum seekers across the UK and seeks to overcome barriers to ensure availability of service provision.

The plan has been paused in light of the current covid-19 crisis but will resume once restrictions on accommodation moves have been lifted.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46596/>

Asylum: Housing

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [46102] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that access to (a) WiFi, (b) smartphones and (c) other digital devices are provided for asylum seekers living in National Asylum Support Service supplied accommodation during the covid-19 outbreak.

Chris Philp: Asylum seekers receiving support under section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 are generally provided with accommodation and a cash allowance to cover other essential living needs. The level of the cash allowance provided take into account communication needs, including the cost of buying and using a mobile phone. As a result of the Covid-19 crisis a higher proportion of asylum seekers than usual are being accommodated in full-board hostels and hotels. We are looking at practical ways of providing internet access to this group and other ways to enable them to communicate effectively. Our accommodation providers can and have provided mobile phones to those who do not have one.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-12/46102/>

Asylum: Housing

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [46686] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 1 May 2020 to Question 42081 on asylum: detention centres, if she will take steps to ensure that the advice from Public Health England is published before her Department reviews its policy on evictions and asylum accommodation.

Reply from Chris Philp: As outlined by Minister Chris Philp, the Home Office will be reviewing the current policy to allow service users to remain in their asylum accommodation before the end of June. We will do this in line with the Government advice in place at that time, which will take into account Public Health England guidance. Publication of PHE guidance is a matter for PHE.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46686/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-01/42081/>

Detention Centres: Coronavirus

Harriet Harman (Labour) [46519] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many detainees have died from covid-19 in immigration removal centres in England and Wales since the start of the covid-19 lockdown.

Reply from Chris Philp: The safety and health of people in the detention estate is of the utmost importance. We are following all Public Health England guidance and have robust contingency plans in place.

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.

As of 14 May 2020, there have been no deaths in immigration removal centres as a result of COVID-19.

As of 18 May 2020, there are no cases of Coronavirus in Immigration Removal Centres.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46519/>

Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre: Coronavirus

Jess Phillips (Labour) [34992] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre has accepted new detainees since the start of the covid-19 outbreak; and what steps that centre is taking to ensure that new detainees are not exposed to that disease.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Government remains committed to removing those who violate our immigration rules and foreign national offenders. Detention plays a key role in securing our borders and maintaining effective immigration control. On that basis, Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre will continue to accept new detainees.

All detainees received into Yarl's Wood receive a nurse triage within two hours and are offered a doctor's appointment within 24 hours.

In line with Public Health England guidance, measures such as protective isolation are considered on a case by case basis to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading to vulnerable groups in the immigration detention estate. Further measures

including single occupancy rooms and cessation of social visits have been introduced in line with the Government direction on social distancing.

There are currently no cases of COVID-19 in immigration removal centres.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-03-25/34992/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Chi Onwurah (Labour) [45192] To ask the Secretary for the Home Department, whether detainees released from detention centres have received testing for covid-19.

Reply from Chris Philp: The safety and health of people in the detention estate is of the utmost importance. We are following all Public Health England guidance and have robust contingency plans in place.

All immigration removal centres have dedicated health facilities run by doctors and nurses which are managed by the NHS or appropriate providers. The Home Office, its suppliers and NHS England healthcare providers in immigration removal centres are following PHE guidelines for the management of COVID-19.

Universal testing is not currently recommended under these guidelines for those in detention or those being released. Testing of individuals in immigration detention, including those released from immigration removal centres, will be dependent on individual circumstances.

There are no cases of Covid-19 in the immigration removal estate at present.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45192/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [45262] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been held in the UK's four short-term holding facilities in Calais and Dunkirk since the beginning of the UK's covid-19 lockdown.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office does not routinely publish location specific statistics on the people held in the short term holding facilities at juxtaposed ports. Any high-risk individuals displaying symptoms are referred to French authorities in the first instance. Border Force continue to adhere to Public Health England guidance to ensure we follow the latest scientific advice to seek guidance of our frontline operations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45262/>

Deportation: Poland

Claire Hanna (SDLP) [46189] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is the Government's policy that the private plane chartered from Stansted to Poland to remove EU nationals on 30 April 2020 was essential travel during the covid-19 outbreak; and what measures were taken to ensure social distancing on that flight.

Reply from Chris Philp: We routinely help people with no right to remain in the UK return to their country of origin and we are committed to removing foreign national offenders wherever possible.

We take the welfare of those in our care very seriously. A safer system of work was adapted in line with Public Health England guidance; this included social distancing in transit and on the flight and appropriate Personal Protective Equipment for both escorting staff and detainees.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-12/46189/>

Deportation: Iran

Alex Sobel (Labour Co-op) [5530] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to stop all deportations to Iran.

Reply from Chris Philp: All asylum and human rights claims are carefully considered on their individual merits in accordance with our international obligations under the Refugee Convention and European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

Each individual assessment is made against the background of the latest available country of origin information and any relevant caselaw. Our assessment of the situation in Iran is set out in the relevant country policy and information notes, which are available on the Gov.uk website.

We regularly monitor and review the situation in countries of origin, working closely with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The Home Office only enforces removal to Iran when it and the courts conclude that it is safe to do so, with a safe route of return. By definition, those whose asylum claim have been unsuccessful do not need protection and are not at risk on return. Enforced removals are carried out in the most sensitive way possible, treating those being removed with respect and courtesy.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-20/5530/>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Undocumented Migrants: Deportation

Alexander Stafford (Conservative) [45523] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of migrants who arrived in the UK illegally in the last five calendar years have been deported.

Alexander Stafford (Conservative) [45524] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many illegal immigrants have been deported in the last five years.

Undocumented Migrants

Alexander Stafford (Conservative) [45525] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants have arrived in the UK illegally in each month of the last three years.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office does not publish data on the number of individuals who have arrived illegally in the UK. By its very nature, it is not possible to know the exact size of the illegal population, or the numbers who successfully enter the UK illegally, and so we do not seek to make any official estimates of the illegal population. Keeping our border secure is the Government's highest priority and we are focused on making it harder for people to enter and live in the UK illegally whilst ensuring those who have the right to reside in the UK can do so.

Foreign nationals who abuse our hospitality should be in no doubt of our determination to deport them and while legal challenges and problems obtaining travel documents can frustrate immediate deportation, we never give up trying to deport FNOs and making our communities safer or seek to return people who do not have any legal right to stay in the UK.

The Home Office publishes data on the number of returns from the UK in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the number of Returns (of which deportations are a subset) are published in table Ret_D01 of the [Returns detailed datasets](#).

The term 'deportations' refers to a legally-defined subset of returns which are enforced either following a criminal conviction or when it is judged that a person's removal from the UK is conducive to the public good. Information on those deported is not separately available and therefore the published statistics refer to all enforced returns.

Please note that only some of those returned will have previously entered the UK illegally; others may have entered legally, for example those who enter on a visa and overstay their period of valid leave and are therefore not separately identifiable in the data.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45523/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45524/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45525/>

Human Trafficking: Victims

Alex Norris (Labour Co-op) [45400] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether (a) subsistence rates are payable to all victims of trafficking in the national referral mechanism and (b) those subsistence rates are means tested.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: Potential victims and victims of modern slavery who are referred to the National Referral Mechanism, who have received a positive Reasonable Grounds decision, and have consented to enter the Victim Care Contract, will receive financial support. These payments are not means tested.

Those who receive a positive Conclusive Grounds decision will have their ongoing needs assessed using a Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) to ensure that support is tailored to their recovery needs. The RNA considers whether the victim has financial recovery needs arising from their modern slavery experiences, and whether other sources of financial assistance outside of the Victim Care Contract are available and able to meet those needs.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45400/>

Slavery: Victim Support Schemes

Alex Norris (Labour Co-op) [45401] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether victims receiving outreach support through the Modern Slavery Victim Care contract will continue to be supported for the next two months during the covid-19 outbreak at the same level as victims in government funded safe accommodation.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The safety and security of those supported through the modern slavery Victim Care Contract (VCC) is a top priority for government. Contingency planning continues to consider how essential services and support for all victims of modern slavery can continue throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Victim Care Contract operates as a bridge to lift victims of modern slavery out of a situation of exploitation and help to establish longer-term stability and pathway to rebuild their lives. The Recovery Needs Assessment (RNA) informs tailored move on plans to help victims transition out of the VCC and back into the community where appropriate. The assessment considers the availability of alternative, and often more sustainable, support services and victims only begin a move-on process if it is suitable for them to do so, in line with their recovery needs.

In addition, should someone currently receiving outreach support experience a change in their situation which leaves them destitute and without accommodation, their needs, entitlements and risk factors will be assessed, so that they can be provided with the most appropriate safe and secure accommodation during this time.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-11/45401/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Immigration: Coronavirus

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) [HL3916] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to allow those with irregular migration status leave to remain in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Immigration Rules already provide for undocumented migrants to regularise their status.

If appropriate in light of the situation in their country of origin, irregular migrants may claim asylum. The UK has a long and proud history of providing protection to those who need it and we will continue to uphold our obligations under the Refugee Convention during this time. Therefore, whilst ensuring that the Home Office is adhering to Public Health England's advice in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak, decisions are continuing to be served on asylum claims on a case by case basis where there is sufficient evidence for us to make an accurate and well-informed decision in-line with published policy.

Even if an application is refused, measures we have implemented already guarantee that an individual can remain safely accommodated and be able to follow public health guidance, whilst maintaining access to financial support and healthcare until the end of June, and this will be kept under review.

There are no plans to provide temporary leave to remain to all asylum applicants or those with insecure status.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3916/>

NHS: Migrant Workers

The Lord Bishop of London [HL4423] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that any (1) NHS employee, and (2) agency worker engaged by the NHS, during the COVID-19 pandemic who is currently on (a) a Tier 5 Temporary Worker - Government Authorised Exchange visa, or (b) a family visa, have the right to remain in the UK. [T]

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has announced we will extend the visas for a range of healthcare professionals working for the NHS and independent health and care providers, where their current visa expires before 1 October. This offer also applies to their families. The 12-month extension is automatic and free of charge and those benefitting will not have to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge. Details of immigration changes, including the extended list of healthcare professionals covered by this offer, relating to COVID-19 can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-immigration-and-borders>.

Those in the UK with leave on long term basis can also extend their stay in-country and can continue to apply online. Where an online application is made before leave expires, a person's leave and conditions are automatically extended by virtue of Section 3C of the 1971 Immigration Act until the application can be decided.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-13/HL4423/>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus-frontline-health-worker-visa-extension>

Doctors: Migrant Workers

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff (Crossbench) [HL3258] To ask Her Majesty's Government

whether refugee doctors who are not yet fully registered with the General Medical Council are able to work in the NHS as medical assistants; and if so, (1) what pay grade they are placed on, and (2) whether they are afforded full indemnity, including full vicarious liability indemnity and death in service compensation.

Reply from Lord Bethell: The local employing organisation will decide if refugee doctors who are not registered with the General Medical Council are able to work in the National Health Service. All providers of Care Quality Commission-regulated activity have a duty to ensure that their staff have the skills, knowledge and experience for the work undertaken.

A temporary Medical Support Worker job description has been developed in collaboration with the Chief Medical Officer's office, designed for doctors who are not registered with the General Medical Council. The NHS Job Evaluation Scheme, which helps to ensure staff receive equal pay for work of equal value, has evaluated this job as band 6, meaning a basic salary of £31,365 to £37,890. Enhancements may also be paid for working unsocial hours.

Indemnity for individuals employed or engaged to work for an NHS trust will be covered by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts and if they are engaged by a general practitioner (GP) practice providing NHS GP services, they will be covered by the Clinical Negligence Scheme for General Practice. To ensure there are no gaps in indemnity coverage for NHS staff, the Coronavirus Act 2020 provides additional powers to provide clinical negligence indemnity for NHS activities related to the COVID-19 outbreak, where there is no other indemnity arrangement in place. Information about death in service compensation is yet to be confirmed.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-04-21/HL3258/>

Refugees

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4026] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide temporary Leave to Remain to all asylum applicants, and others, with insecure refugee status.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK has a long and proud history of providing protection to those who need it and we will continue to uphold our obligations under the Refugee Convention during this time. Therefore, whilst ensuring that the Home Office is adhering to Public Health England's advice in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak, decisions are continuing to be served on asylum claims on a case by case basis where there is sufficient evidence for us to make an accurate and well-informed decision in-line with published policy.

Even if an application is refused, measures we have implemented already guarantee that an individual can remain safely accommodated and be able to follow public health guidance, whilst maintaining access to financial support and healthcare until the end of June, and this will be kept under review.

As a result of this, there are no plans to provide temporary leave to remain to all asylum applicants or those with insecure status.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL4026/>

Refugees: Coronavirus

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL3854] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, during the COVID-19 pandemic, they will suspend the return of refugees arriving on UK territory to northern France.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK does not return those refugees who have been granted refugee status in the UK to France or elsewhere. We do, however, return asylum seekers who are yet to have a decision on their

asylum claim in the UK to ensure their claim is considered in the right place. This may be to France or other states who participate in the Dublin Regulation. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we continue to comply with the Dublin Regulation and remain committed to ensuring transfers continue to and from the UK. This is a fast-changing situation and we, along with other countries across Europe, will be subject to wider Government decisions and travel restrictions.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3854/>

Refugees: Coronavirus

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL3855] To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking, during the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that refugees at the UK-France border belonging to at-risk groups, including (1) victims of trafficking, (2) unaccompanied minors, (3) LGBTQ+ persons, (4) people with disabilities, and (5) victims of physical, mental or sexual abuse, can access the necessary protections.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The identification and relocation of vulnerable migrants on French territory remains the domestic responsibility of the French government, who are currently working to transfer those residing in camps into reception centres. At these centres, asylum claims can be lodged and any other welfare needs assessed. Since the start of the Covid-19 lockdown in France, over 600 migrants have been moved to accommodation centres to aid with social distancing measures. Within these centres, individuals are provided with medical and administrative support.

The UK is also committed to meeting our obligations to transfer unaccompanied children to the UK where they have eligible family here and where transfer is in their best interests under the Dublin Regulation. An unaccompanied child must first claim asylum in the EU Member State in which they are present, and the Member State must then raise a Take Charge Request with the UK Government.

Additionally, specialist trained officers are present at all of our Juxtaposed controls, who assist in supporting those identified as vulnerable. We work closely with both French and Belgian partners to ensure that these individuals receive the support they need. All officers receive regular training on safeguarding and when to seek support from a specialist trained officer. Special arrangements are in place at the Juxtaposed controls to refer cases with vulnerability elements to the French and Belgian Police.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3855/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL3893] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the use of administrative immigration detention in the UK's short-term holding facilities in northern France will be discontinued for the duration of the COVID-19 crisis.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Short term holding rooms in Northern France are still in operation. High-risk individuals displaying symptoms of COVID-19 are referred to the French authorities in the first instance. All Border Force staff continue to adhere to Public Health England guidance to ensure we follow the latest scientific advice and seek specific guidance for our frontline operations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3893/>

Asylum: Nutrition

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL4160] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether meals provided for asylum seekers in temporary accommodation must meet the

guidelines set out in the NHS Eatwell Guide.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Meals provided in all catered asylum accommodation facilities meet the NHS Eatwell guide.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-06/HL4160/>

Asylum: Wakefield

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL3895] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the conditions, and treatment of asylum-seekers, in Urban House in Wakefield, following reports that individuals displaying COVID-19 symptoms have been forced to share rooms with others there.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: We've conducted a thorough assessment of Urban House with local health partners and have put in place steps in accordance with all of their recommendations. These steps include staggering meal times, increasing staff numbers, providing information and guidance in a variety of languages, stopping all new arrivals into Urban House.

Although room sharing is in place, no one is forced to share rooms with anyone displaying COVID 19 symptoms. Those with underlying health conditions and people over 70 years of age should also be moved to the appropriate hotel accommodation following PHE guidance

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3895/>

Asylum: Housing

Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle (Green) [HL3896] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum-seekers in housing provided by the Government or local authorities, including through private contractors, are still in shared rooms of two or more people.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: We do not hold the information requested. However, although room sharing is in place, no one is forced to share rooms with anyone displaying COVID 19 symptoms.

PHE Guidance recommends that separate rooms should be provided for symptomatic people, or they should be moved to hotels. Those with underlying health conditions and people over 70 years of age should also be moved to the appropriate hotel accommodation following PHE guidance, unless individuals do not wish to be moved. We are reviewing each case on an individual basis and continue to work with our providers to ensure the guidance is followed.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3896/>

Press Releases

Non-British population of Scotland increased over most recent year

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/news/2020/non-british-population-of-scotland-increased-over-most-recent-year>

Home Secretary announces new public health measures for all UK arrivals

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-new-public-health-measures-for-all-uk-arrivals>

Home Office extends bereavement scheme to NHS support staff and social care workers

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-extends-bereavement-scheme-to-nhs-support-staff-and-social-care-workers>

Further visa extensions for those unable to return home due to coronavirus

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/further-visa-extensions-for-those-unable-to-return-home-due-to-coronavirus>

UK provides new home for 478 children seeking asylum

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-provides-new-home-for-478-children-seeking-asylum>

Historic Immigration Bill returns to Parliament

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/historic-immigration-bill-returns-to-parliament>

New Publications

Updated Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>

Updated Guidance: EU Settlement Scheme Family Permit and Travel Permit

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/885920/euss-family-and-travel-permit-guidance-v4.0.pdf

Coronavirus (COVID-19) and entering or returning to the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>

Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): travellers exempt from UK border rules

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules>

Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Scotland, 2019

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/population-estimates/pop-cob-nat-19/pop-cob-nat-19-report.pdf>

Infographic: Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Scotland, 2019

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/nrs-visual/pop-cob-19/pop-cob-nat-info-19.pdf>

Data: Population by Country of Birth and Nationality, Scotland, 2019

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/population-estimates/pop-cob-nat-19/pop-cob-nat-19-tables.xlsx>

Migrant Journey: 2019 report

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886570/migrant-journey-report2019.pdf

Migrant journey detailed datasets

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886553/migrant-journey-detailed-datasets-2019.xlsx

Overview of the immigration system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/overview-of-the-immigration-system>

How many people come to the UK each year (including visitors)?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/how-many-people-come-to-the-uk-each-year-including-visitors>

Why do people come to the UK? To work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-work>

Why do people come to the UK? To study

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-study>

Why do people come to the UK? For family reasons

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-for-family-reasons>

How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to>

How many people continue their stay in the UK?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/how-many-people-continue-their-stay-in-the-uk>

How many people are detained or returned?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2020/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned>

EU Settlement Scheme Statistics, April 2020

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886174/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics-april-2020.pdf

EU Settlement Scheme Statistics tables, April 2020

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/886175/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics-april-2020-tables.ods

Migration Statistics Quarterly Report: May 2020

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/migrationstatisticsquarterlyreport/may2020/pdf>

Population by country of birth and nationality: 2019

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/ukpopulationbycountryofbirthandnationality/2019/pdf>

Short-Term International Migration for England and Wales: year ending June 2018

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/bulletins/shortterminternationalmigrationannualreport/yearendingjune2018/pdf>

News

MPs give initial backing to immigration bill

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-52701843>

Points-based UK immigration bill passes initial Commons stage

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/18/points-based-uk-immigration-bill-passed-by-parliament>

Points-based UK immigration bill passes initial Commons stage

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/18/points-based-uk-immigration-bill-passed-by-parliament>

Coronavirus: Labour calls for rethink on 'unfair' immigration rules as ministers accused of hypocrisy over key care workers

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/coronavirus-uk-labour-immigration-rules-key-care-workers-a9519521.html>

Immigration Bill will disadvantage people on lower incomes

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/proposed-immigration-bill-will-disadvantage-people-on-lower-incomes>

'Hypocrisy' claim as UK migration law hits NHS key workers

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/uk-news/hypocrisy-claim-uk-migration-law-hits-nhs-key-workers-2857389>

Covid-19 and migration: a ministerial power grab

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/may/18/the-guardian-view-on-covid-19-and-migration-a-ministerial-power-grab>

UK migration: Net migration from outside EU hits 'highest level'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-52752656>

Non-EU migration to the UK hits its highest since 1975 when records began, official figures show

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/05/21/non-eu-migration-uk-hits-highest-since-1975-records-began-official/>

Students push immigration from outside EU to highest ever level

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/students-push-immigration-from-outside-eu-to-highest-ever-level-cc8wks68t>

Coronavirus triggers fall in UK asylum and visa applications

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/coronavirus-triggers-fall-in-uk-asylum-and-visa-applications>

Coronavirus: More bereaved families of NHS staff can stay in UK

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-52746810>

Bereavement scheme will cover all NHS and care staff

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bereavement-scheme-will-cover-all-nhs-and-care-staff-0cdhkt0qp>

Coronavirus: Bereaved families of migrant NHS cleaners and porters locked out of leave-to-remain scheme

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/coronavirus-nhs-cleaners-leave-to-remain-scheme-home-office-a9523111.html>

'I felt the government was coming after my colleagues': Syrian NHS cleaner on why he spoke out against 'unjust' policy for migrant staff

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/hassan-akkad-bereavement-policy-nhs-migrant-workers-uturn-a9529026.html>

NHS care workers left out of leave-to-remain scheme

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/nhs-care-workers-left-out-of-leave-to-remain-scheme-1p8dzs9p0>

Court rules bar set too high for NHS surcharge and visa fee waivers

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/21/court-rules-home-office-setting-bar-too-high-for-visa-fee-waivers>

Johnson forced to drop NHS surcharge for migrant health workers

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/johnson-forced-to-drop-nhs-surcharge-for-migrant-health-workers>

Coronavirus: Health and care workers to be exempt from NHS charge

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/coronavirus-health-and-care-workers-to-be-exempt-from-nhs-charge-s3hqxcb8s>

Despite U-turns, migrants to Britain are being failed miserably

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/commentisfree/2020/may/24/despite-u-turns-migrants-to-britain-are-being-failed-miserably>

'We feel insulted': migrant health workers on PM's refusal to scrap NHS surcharge

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/20/we-feel-insulted-migrant-health-workers-react-boris-johnson-refusal-to-scrap-nhs-surcharge>

'Britain is great': Syrian porter thanks public after NHS migrant surcharge U-turn

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/video/2020/may/21/britain-is-great-syrian-porter-thanks-public-after-nhs-migrant-surcharge-u-turn-video>

One in three EU nationals in Scotland still not approved for settled status

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18463475.one-three-eu-nationals-scotland-still-not-approved-settled-status/>

Lawyers deny British army to blame for veterans' illegal immigrant status

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/20/lawyers-deny-british-army-to-blame-for-veterans-illegal-immigrant-status>

'Give more children sanctuary here': Scheme bringing lone child refugees to safety in UK ends

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/child-refugees-dub-scheme-amendment-unaccompanied-home-office-a9526231.html>

Home Office deporting migrants who cross Channel in small boats

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/may/21/home-office-deporting-migrants-who-cross-channel-in-small-boats>

Government planning new laws to force Channel migrants back to France

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/05/20/government-planning-new-laws-force-channel-migrants-back-france/>

Australian-style sea patrols needed to return migrants to France, says former Border Force chief

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/05/21/australian-style-sea-patrols-needed-return-migrants-france-says/>

Channel migrants: Rise in unaccompanied children arriving in Kent

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-52680025>

Number of unaccompanied child migrants placed in council care has doubled this year, as smugglers ferry them across the Channel

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/05/22/number-unaccompanied-child-migrants-placed-council-care-has/>

Three boats with 35 migrants on board intercepted off Kent

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-52703423>

Channel migrants: More than 60 people attempt crossing

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-52747770>

Surge in number of migrant boats crossing Channel

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/surge-in-number-of-migrant-boats-tp23plk2c>

Cross-Channel migrants 'threaten' UK border

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/cross-channel-migrants-threat-to-uk-border-9brtgvnsc>

Britain won't work without unskilled migrants

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/priti-patels-immigration-rules-arent-fit-for-our-covid-world-bbhb2dp3v>

Home Office grants man leave to remain after 28-year battle

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/19/home-office-grants-man-leave-to-remain-after-28-year-battle>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Community Development

Baroness Uddin (Non-affiliated) [HL4064] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that (1) BAME, and (2) Muslim, women's organisations are allocated enough funding to meet service demands.

Reply from Lord Greenhalgh: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government continues to play a facilitative role in ensuring Government understands the needs of BAME communities, including Muslim women, and the challenges they may be currently facing in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. There is some evidence to suggest that BAME communities may be disproportionately affected by coronavirus.

There is a substantial package of targeted support for charities on the frontline of responding to COVID-19. The £750m DCMS-led funding package that the Government has announced will support organisations working with vulnerable groups impacted by COVID-19, including some in BAME communities.

Of this funding, £370m will support smaller, local charities working with vulnerable people. In England, this support will be provided through the National Lottery Community Fund. More details of the funding criteria and application process will be released in the coming days via the National Community Lottery Fund. £60m of

the funding will be allocated through the Barnett formula so the devolved administrations are funded to provide similar support in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. DCMS always strives to engage with and represent all British people in its work, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds.

A further £360m will be distributed between Government departments to provide targeted support to the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. This funding will not be allocated via an open bid but will be awarded in line with agreed departmental priorities, with the first £76m going towards supporting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, vulnerable children and their families and victims of modern slavery announced on 02 May.

As part of this, MHCLG launched a £10m 'Domestic abuse safe accommodation: COVID-19 emergency support fund' for charities providing safe accommodation for domestic abuse victims to bid directly into (attached)

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-safe-accommodation-covid-19-emergency-support-fund>).

This includes charities that provide specialist services such as those dedicated to supporting BAME victims. The deadline for charities to put forward an application is Thursday 21 May.

Departments, including MHCLG, continue to work at pace to ensure this funding reaches the areas of greatest need as quickly as possible, with the aim for our key partners to receive money in the coming weeks.

In addition, for 2020/2021, MHCLG has launched a new competitive grant scheme, with a budget of up to £2m for established community organisations and charities to carry out projects that promote shared values and integration, whilst tackling the harmful behaviours which lead to religiously and racially motivated hate crime. We welcome proposals from projects supporting the BAME community and Muslim women.

The Home Offices' Building a Stronger Britain Together programme is also continuing to support BAME communities and Muslim women's organisations within its network. These civil society organisations work within communities to tackle all forms of extremism; support victims of extremism and hate crime, as well as challenging the divisive, extremist narratives targeting minority communities. Preparations for 2020/21 delivery of the BSBT programme are currently underway. The programme uses robust grant standards to ensure our funding delivers the greatest impact for these organisations in tackling extremism issues.

[Prospectus](#)

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-06/HL4064/>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Hate Crime: Coronavirus

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46773] To ask the Secretary of State for the Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential threat of hate crimes towards the Chinese diaspora in the UK after the lockdown due to the covid-19 outbreak has been lifted.

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46774] To ask the Secretary of State for the Housing,

Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential risk of hate crime

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46775] To ask the Secretary of State for the Housing, Communities and Local Government, what assessment he has made of the potential risk of hate crime towards the Jewish community in the UK once the covid-19 lockdown restrictions are eased.

Reply from Luke Hall: The Government takes hate crime and discrimination of any kind very seriously. We are alert to the risks that an easing of the lockdown restrictions presents and will not tolerate hate crime under any circumstances. We will not however speculate on potential future trends. We are a tolerant and welcoming multicultural society and we have one of the strongest legal frameworks in the world to report, record and prosecute hate crime. I would encourage anyone who experiences hate crime to report it to the police.

Government's Hate Crime Action Plan published in October 2018 sets out a comprehensive programme of work across Government and the police. We fund hate crime reporting platforms, including True Vision, and we continue to engage with communities of all backgrounds and local leaders including councils and the police to make sure we are aware of any concerns communities may have and can provide targeted support.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46773/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46774/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46775/>

The Action Plan referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF

True Vision, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.report-it.org.uk/>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Hate Crime: Coronavirus

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46776] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she will take to prevent an increase in hate crime when the covid-19 lockdown is eased.

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46777] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps is taking to support different ethnic and religious communities in the UK who are being targeted with online abuse and hate speech due to the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Home Office are working closely with the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC), civil society partners and social media platforms to encourage victim reporting of online hate crime during the pandemic. We are also working with the NPCC to ensure that all police forces are providing reassurance to affected communities.

Government continues to work with communities around the country and the police to ensure people of all backgrounds have access to the latest information and are supported through this period

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46776/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46777/>

Hate Crime: Coronavirus

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [46778] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Government's Hate Crime Action Plan, what data has been collated through her Department's collaboration with Cardiff University and the National Police Chief's Council on incidences of online hate crimes committed as a result of the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Home Office does not hold Covid 19-related hate crime data from this collaboration. The NPCC partnership is still in development and intended to design a tool for understanding trends in hateful sentiment online. It does not monitor instances of online hate crimes for criminal investigations.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46778/>

News

White supremacist who collected bomb manuals and expressed admiration for Hitler spared jail

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/white-supremacist-george-fowle-bomb-manuals-hitler-camp-america-a9522831.html>

'Discrimination' on frontline of coronavirus outbreak may be factor in disproportionate BAME deaths among NHS staff

<https://www.itv.com/news/2020-05-13/discrimination-frontline-coronavirus-covid19-black-minority-ethnic-bame-deaths-nhs-racism/>

Scottish national poet Jackie Kay talks about racism she endured as a child

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2020/may/22/scottish-national-poet-jackie-kay-talks-about-racism-she-endured-as-a-child>

'We need leaders who hear black players' concerns'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/we-need-leaders-who-hear-black-players-concerns-36d58fxkd>

TOP

Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Press Releases

First Minister's Eid message

<https://www.facebook.com/TheScottishGovernment/videos/266630197867095/>

Eid message from Humza Yousaf

<https://www.facebook.com/HumzaYousaf/videos/201113010878606/>

TOP

Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Stop and Search: Ethnic Groups

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [47450] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the (a) ethnicity was of each individual subject to and (b) outcome was of each incidence of stop and search since the beginning of the covid-19 lockdown.

Reply from Kit Malthouse: The information requested is not currently centrally available. The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of stop and searches including the ethnicity of the person searched and the outcome. Data are published annually in the 'Police Powers and Procedures, England and Wales' statistical bulletin, the latest of which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/police-powers-and-procedures-england-and-wales>

The next bulletin is due to be published in October 2020.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-15/47450/>

Places of Worship Security Funding Scheme

Bambos Chalambous (Labour) [46780] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's News story of 19 March 2019 entitled Places of worship to get security funding boost, how much of her Department's £5 million fund to provide security training for places of worship has been awarded; and how much of that funding has been awarded to each organisation.

Reply from Kit Malthouse: The Home Office is working with policing and faith representatives to understand the training needs of places of worship and how these are best met. This is to ensure the training made available is suitable and effective for faith institutions.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-13/46780/>

The news story referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-to-get-security-funding-boost>

New Publication

Letter to the Home Affairs Select Committee confirming appointment of the Independent Reviewer of Prevent

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letter-to-the-hasc-confirming-appointment-of-the-independent-reviewer-of-prevent/letter-to-the-hasc-confirming-appointment-of-the-independent-reviewer-of-prevent>

TOP

Health Information: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

NHS

NHS Inform (Scotland)

Latest guidance about COVID-19 from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government,

including social distancing and stay at home advice.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

Healthcare for overseas visitors

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-overseas-visitors>

Healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers>

NHS Near Me (Scotland)

Near Me is a video consulting service that enables people to have health and social care appointments from home or wherever is convenient. All you need is a device for making video calls like a smartphone and an internet connection. Near Me is a secure form of video consulting approved for use by the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland.

<https://www.nearme.scot/>

NHS (England and Wales)

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Outdoor Weddings

John Mason (SNP): The First Minister mentioned earlier that activities that take place outside are safer than those that take place inside. Can she give any guidance about the Government's thinking on an activity, such as a wedding, that could take place in either place? Would it be possible to lift the restrictions on weddings that take place outside before we lift them on those that take place inside?

The First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): I will not give a guarantee to do that specific thing. In general terms, the risks of transmission outdoors appear to be lower than the risks of transmission indoors but, even outdoors, considerations about social distancing have to be taken into account.

I understand why people want weddings to go ahead as quickly as possible, but in intimate family gatherings there will always be concerns around social distancing and transmission risks. Wedding and civil partnership ceremonies are restricted by the current regulations, which include the restrictions on gatherings in a public place. Scientific and medical evidence does not yet support allowing marriages and civil partnerships to go ahead, but we will look in more detail at the outdoor issue and, for example, extending the practice of some ceremonies taking place in private spaces, such as gardens. I see where John Mason is coming from but, in all those issues, we have to consider all the relevant factors and move as swiftly but as carefully and safely as possible.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12649&i=114454#ScotParlOR>

Weddings

Jeremy Balfour (Conservative): As the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government will be aware, registrars will issue wedding certificates so that people can get married. However, places of worship and most venues and hotels are still closed. Given the First Minister's announcement, when is it likely that weddings will be able to take place, either in a place of worship or a hotel or venue?

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Local Government

(Aileen Campbell): In many respects, it is very difficult to give a definitive date for when those things can start to happen, but it is clear that the need to make a balanced judgment on the evidence and the continued efforts to suppress the spread of the virus is what is motivating the sequence of those decisions. That is a very difficult and delicate balance and we have articulated that within the document, “Scotland’s route map through and out of the crisis”, which was published today. We need to think ahead about when we might be able to get to a position when we can open places of worship and other business premises. How those family gatherings can be safely configured also needs to be considered.

Although that does not necessarily give any comfort and there is no definitive date as to when weddings might be able to take place, we are absolutely aware of the need to give people certainty and an understanding of when they can start to plan some of those events. The need to suppress the spread of the pandemic, however, has to govern those decisions. As the First Minister said, we need to make sure that there are no bridges by which the disease can spread. We will continue to work and engage with our faith groups and churches to make sure that they understand what they might need to do so that their congregations can meet safely, when they start to return to their places of worship.

We have engaged with our faith groups to try to find and support other ways by which people can observe their faith and feel that connection, which is so important, particularly when people are in lockdown. We will continue to keep the member and the population informed, but we have to make sure that we are governed by the evidence and the information, that we make a balanced judgment and continue to work with the groups that have an interest in weddings and other celebrations.

Jeremy Balfour: I am sure that the cabinet secretary is aware that weddings and other forms of public worship vary in size and type of service. Will there be a different standard for smaller weddings compared with larger weddings, and will churches and other places of worship be able to open in different ways, depending on how many people attend the venue?

Reply from Aileen Campbell: We are continuing to engage with our faith groups. At the start of the pandemic, I endeavoured to call as many of our faith leaders as possible, because we knew that it would have a real impact on the observance of faith. At this point in time, when people are feeling isolated and removed from their family, they will often look to their faith to find some support, but the ability to do so physically is no longer there. Therefore, we have engaged with our faith groups to make sure that we can move forward safely.

Worship and ceremonies are listed in the document that has been published today, but we have to be careful that we do not put people under any increased risk. That is why we will continue to work with our faith leaders in order that they can put in place some of the measures that are necessary for gatherings to happen safely. At the moment, that will not happen any time soon. This afternoon, the First Minister talked about the very gradual easing of restrictions, and when we can do so more generally, we will continue to work with our faith groups in order to move forward safely. We will keep Jeremy Balfour and others informed as the thinking on the issue progresses.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12652&i=114480#ScotParlOR>

The First Minister’s announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/>

The document referred to above can be read at

<https://tinyurl.com/ybnzwamc>

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

COVID-19: Black and Minority Ethnic People

S5W-28718 Jackie Baillie (Labour): To ask the Scottish Government what assessment it has made of the impact of COVID-19 on black and minority ethnic (BAME) people.

Reply from Joe FitzPatrick: The Scottish Government is concerned by recent reports (from England and the US) suggesting that minority ethnic communities are disproportionately affected by Covid-19.

Collection of ethnicity data is undertaken on a voluntary basis in Scotland in order to provide useful information for medical and other research purposes. Ethnicity questions are included in the death registration process, with informants to a death provided with a short statement as to their purpose, and noting that these questions, unlike the rest of the death registration process, are not statutory, and can be passed over if the informant does not wish to answer them.

More information on the quality of the data on ethnicity can be found on the NRS website via the following link:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/deaths/deaths-background-information/ethnicity-of-the-deceased-person>

Analytical partners across the Scottish Government, NRS, Public Health Scotland and the NHS are working together to consider how we can better understand the impact of COVID-19 on those from all minority ethnic communities including from Black and Asian backgrounds. This data will be published when work is completed.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-28718>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Coronavirus: Travel

Jessica Morden (Labour) [41930] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what the Government's guidance is on people (a) travelling and (b) travelling a distance of over 10 miles to visit someone who is dying at home from a non-covid-19 terminal illness.

Reply from Helen Whately: On 10 May, the Prime Minister released a statement explaining that everyone must stay at home wherever possible. People are allowed to leave home for limited purposes including medical need, such as caring for or supporting a vulnerable person. The Government has not set specific travel distance restrictions.

On 13 May 2020, National Health Service England published guidance on visitors for patients at the end of life in all settings - healthcare inpatient settings, care homes, hospices and at home. The considerations assert the rights of the dying to see their loved ones and/or to receive religious support. For end of life care at home, it is the healthcare professional's role to advise on minimising risk while allowing close family members or friends to accompany and say goodbye to their loved ones. Practical considerations include the number of visitors at the bedside is limited to one close family contact or somebody important to the dying person. However, where it is possible to maintain social distancing throughout the visit, a second additional visitor (including a child) could be permitted.

The considerations aim to minimise risk of infection whilst allowing close family members or friends to accompany and say goodbye to their loved ones at the end of their life. This guidance applies to both COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 related illness.

More information can be found at the following link:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/coronavirus/wp-content/uploads/sites/52/2020/03/C0393-clinical-guide-for-supporting-compassionate-visiting-arrangements-13-may-2020.pdf>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-01/41930/>

Religious Buildings: Coronavirus

Stephen Timms (Labour) [47171] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, under what circumstances the Government plans to authorise the re-opening of places of worship; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Luke Hall: On 11 May, the Government launched the document “Our Plan to Rebuild”, which outlined the steps it would be taking to ease the lockdown restrictions;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/884760/Our_plan_to_rebuild_The_UK_Government_s_COVID-19_recovery_strategy.pdf

As the document makes clear, the Government’s ambition is to reopen places of worship, with the current assumption that this will be no earlier than 4 July. The Government’s priority is to protect the public and save lives. We are committed to ensuring our faith communities have access to the latest public health advice, and to support them to adapt their practices in line with the Government’s COVID-19 guidance.

As part of the recovery strategy, the Government has launched a Places of Worship Taskforce to look at how places of worship can reopen and operate safely. The first meeting took place on 15 May. Meetings are being led by the Secretary of State for Communities, or the Faith Minister, and comprise of representatives from the country’s major faiths. The Taskforce will work towards the safe reopening of places of worship, including for individual prayer, and services and ceremonies such as weddings. It will also address the specific issues that places of worship face in the course of reopening safely.

Places of worship are essential in bringing our communities together, which is why we want them to reopen them as soon as we can. However, no place of worship will be able to reopen before a final decision by the Government and the accompanying changes to the legal position in the published regulations. Even after we permit places of worship to reopen fully, some may choose to reopen in stages or at a slower pace depending on their local circumstances.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-05-15/47171/>

Travellers: Coronavirus

Conor McGinn (Labour) [46104] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of the covid-19 outbreak on gypsy, roma and traveller communities.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: It is important to continue to develop our understanding of how this new virus affects different communities, and to use the insights gained from the latest available data and research. This is why we have asked Public Health England to review COVID-19 outcomes among different groups, and to explore potential reasons for disparities.

We have also asked all local authorities to consider how best to support communities, especially those potentially at risk such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller citizens, who may need specific support, including access to basic services such as water, sanitation and waste disposal.

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Covid-19: BAME NHS Staff

Baroness Lawrence of Clarendon (Labour): To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of COVID-19 on black, Asian and minority ethnic frontline staff working in NHS hospitals.

The Question was considered in a Virtual Proceeding via video call.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care (Lord Bethell): My Lords, the Government are deeply concerned about these groups. That is why we have asked Public Health England to review the evidence. In advance of PHE's recommendations, NHS England has written to NHS services so that, on a precautionary basis, employers can risk-assess staff at potentially greater risk and make appropriate arrangements accordingly.

Baroness Lawrence: ... I have been asked by the Labour leader to conduct a review into the effects of Covid-19 on the BAME community. Are the NHS and Government making sure that BAME nurses are properly shielded with adequate PPE? Have they considered taking BAME nurses and staff off the front line, as they are overrepresented in the death toll of the virus?

Reply from Lord Bethell: As I mentioned in my previous Answer, arrangements have been put in place for local trusts to risk-assess all employees, including BAME nurses, and to assess whether they are at a higher risk and, if necessary, to change their rotas and staffing arrangements accordingly. I understand that some trusts have already taken these measures.

Baroness Wheeler (Labour): My Lords, I pay tribute to my noble friend Lady Lawrence for the leading role she is playing in finding out why BAME communities and health workers are disproportionately bearing the brunt of Covid-19. I understand that the Public Health England review of ethnic minority health records and data is due to report at the end of May. It is looking into how factors such as ethnicity, deprivation, age, gender and obesity can affect the impact of Covid-19. People from ethnic minorities may also be at a higher risk due to the prevalence of co-morbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular conditions and sickle cell disease. Overall, black people are dying with Covid-19 at almost double the rate of white people. Can the Minister say what the next steps will be after the PHE review and what are the Government's plans, remit and timescale for the more in-depth analysis and inquiry that is needed to better understand entrenched health inequalities and to respond to the needs of BAME communities and health staff?

Reply from Lord Bethell: The noble Baroness put this very well. We are deeply concerned about genetic differences between groups. This virus is like malaria and other viruses in that it affects different ethnic groups differently. We are concerned about behavioural issues such as diet and environmental issues such as urban versus rural living arrangements. We have already invited health trusts to put in place arrangements to protect our BAME NHS workers. We are also inviting other academic studies, of which there is a large number, to look at the various concerns about how the virus has hit different groups. We will be commissioning a very large amount of medical research into this important area.

Baroness Uddin (Non-affiliated): I salute my noble friend for her relentless uphill struggle to combat institutional discrimination in our country. No one can ignore the sobering statistics on front-line deaths among members of minority communities. These have raised the deepest fears about the tragic number of deaths. Leaders in the NHS who are responsible for diversity have also said that the Government have been too slow to act to

protect NHS front-line staff. What measures are in place to monitor this situation and to assure BAME staff that they can be confident about continuing to provide their services to the NHS in safety?

Reply from Lord Bethell: I completely and utterly reject the suggestion by the noble Baroness that there is institutional racism in the NHS. That is a completely inappropriate slur and I invite the noble Baroness to retract it at a future date.

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth (Conservative): My Lords, I recognise that this one nation Minister and one nation Government are committed to action, but clearly there is an urgency about this. I realise that we have the Public Health England review, but after that, how soon will the Minister be expecting to take action to ensure that its recommendations are implemented forthwith?

Reply from Lord Bethell: I can reassure my noble friend that action is already being taken. Individual trusts are putting in place trials and arrangements to try out different forms of amelioration, including changing staff rotas and taking vulnerable staff out of the front-line wherever possible. We will build on these pilots and trials in order to move as quickly as we can. The causes of the massive difference in the effects of the disease on different ethnic groups are not clear yet, so it is not possible to say for sure which pilots will work. However, we are moving as quickly as we can and we will build on the evidence base in order to put in effective measures.

Baroness Hussein-Ece (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, this pandemic must be a wake-up call for us all. The Government's review is not sufficient. BAME people make up 72% of NHS and social care staff and are 4.2 times more likely to die. Given all these separate initiatives referred to by the Minister, will he meet key leaders from BAME communities to look at establishing a Covid-19 race equality strategy, to find solutions to the current crisis based on the collective experiences of service and sacrifice from these communities?

Reply from Lord Bethell: My Lords, I share the noble Baroness's tribute to BAME staff in the NHS, who, as she rightly points out, are on the front line and putting themselves at risk. We should all, as a nation, be enormously grateful for their contribution. I also salute those in the NHS moving quickly to address the concerns and evidence that the disease itself is discriminatory. I would be glad to meet representatives, but I want to be clear that the processes in place in the NHS are reasonable, proportionate and will, I believe, deliver the needed results.

Lord Blencathra (Conservative): Will my noble friend the Minister please ensure that the inquiry carefully and thoroughly investigates all anomalies? While black Afro-Caribbeans have a much higher than death rate than white people, I understand that the rate is even higher for Filipinos and far lower for the Chinese. Will the inquiry also look at why 70% of those dying are men, which is nothing to do with race, and why obesity, diabetes, vitamin D and blood thinners all seem to be factors in this epidemic?

Reply from Lord Bethell: The noble Lord is entirely right. This disease is racist, fatist and sexist. We need to understand why it is discriminatory in all these areas. I reassure the noble Lord that the National Institute for Health Research and UK Research and Innovation have jointly called for research proposals to investigate emerging evidence of an association between ethnicity, behavioural and social factors, and the adverse health outcomes it is generating.

Baroness Finlay of Llandaff (Crossbench): Given the association that there seems to be between a wide range of factors, are these being centrally collated? Are the Government producing guidance on, for example, vitamin D supplementation in the event of deficiency being detected, so that the national results are rapidly rolled out, and those cases where risk is discovered can be managed and supported?

Reply from Lord Bethell: I reassure the noble Baroness that the data is being centrally aggregated. ONS has published figures on ethnicity and the CMO and PHE are both scrutinising them. On their list of issues to consider is the role of vitamin D, where the evidence is interesting but unproven.

Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill (Labour): To follow further on the data, many medical bodies, and the Science and Technology Committee today, are calling for greater collection of real-time data on infection and deaths by protected characteristics, and for it to be recorded, analysed and shared so that urgent action can be taken to prevent deaths of front-line staff. What assurances can the Minister give that this work is actively underway now?

Reply from Lord Bethell: I reassure the noble Baroness that we have a large amount of data—although we could do with more and better. The collection of death certification data, for instance, has already improved dramatically and we are working hard to ensure that the evidence is there to inform our policy-making.

Baroness Benjamin (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the coronavirus crisis has exposed the fact that the majority of NHS BAME healthcare staff—including Filipino workers, who are often forgotten—hold junior positions and are therefore more likely to find themselves on the front line in the fight against Covid-19; many have lost their lives doing so. After this crisis, what will the Government do to encourage the NHS to develop better career paths and promotion initiatives for its BAME staff?

Reply from Lord Bethell: The noble Baroness is entirely right. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to those BAME staff, whether black Afro-Caribbean or Filipino, who have put their lives at risk on the front line. It is a wake-up call; we should always be thinking about how we can accelerate opportunities for all members of staff. Those who start at the lower ranks should be given whatever opportunities are available to progress to a higher rank. The noble Baroness is entirely right that this puts a spotlight on our commitment to those groups. I completely endorse her point.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-05-19/debates/7452AAAC-3B87-400E-B80F-E94D70B9C9B1/Covid-19BAMENHSSStaff>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Hospitals: Coronavirus

Baroness Manzoor (Conservative) [HL3833] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many BAME NHS staff are working directly on the COVID-19 frontline; whether such staff are provided with any specific safety information or guidance in addition to any guidance provided to all NHS staff working on the frontline; and if so, (1) what is that guidance, and (2) where such guidance is published.

Reply from Lord Bethell: Data on the number of black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) National Health Service staff working directly on COVID-19 is not held centrally.

Guidance for all BAME colleagues working in the NHS has been published by NHS England and is available on the NHS England website. This is in addition to information from NHS Employers on COVID-19 and the prioritisation and management of risk, including ethnicity. NHS England is prioritising engagement with staff and staff networks and are looking to hear and learn from lived experience, to share guidance, and to hear views on what support is required nationally. NHS England has started a series of webinars with staff networks across organisations and disciplines using existing BAME, faith and other networks.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3833/>

Hospitals: Ministers of Religion

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL4185] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the contribution of NHS hospital chaplains during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reply from Lord Bethell: We have not made a formal assessment of the contribution of National Health Service chaplains during the COVID-19 pandemic. NHS England and NHS Improvement recognise the importance of chaplains, and leaders of all faiths, in the delivery of high-quality palliative and end of life care. The significant role they play in spiritual, emotional and psychological care is recognised in our clinical guides for palliative care in hospitals during the COVID-19 pandemic and for compassionate visiting arrangements.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-12/HL4185/>

Travellers: Coronavirus

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) [HL3918] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to protect public health in Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Communities during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Reply from Lord Bethell: The Government takes the welfare of all citizens seriously and we are working hard to ensure people get the support they need to look after themselves and their families during the COVID-19 outbreak. This includes enabling all communities to take the necessary measures to reduce the spread of the virus.

The Minister of State for Home Affairs and Housing, Communities and Local Government (Lord Greenhalgh) wrote to councils outlining their responsibility to support all communities, including Gypsy and Traveller communities, and to ensure they have access to water, sanitation and waste collections.

COVID-19 health guidance for members of Gypsy, Traveller and Boater communities is currently in development for dissemination in a range of formats.

NHS England and NHS Improvement have written to general practice reminding them of the importance of continuing to deliver appropriate care to their local population and the requirements on registration of patients, including those with no fixed address.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL3918/>

Scottish Government Press Releases

Update to Coronavirus symptoms

<https://www.gov.scot/news/update-to-coronavirus-symptoms/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): trends in daily data

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-trends-in-daily-data/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's speech 22 May 2020

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-speech-22-2020/>

MSPs support further emergency coronavirus legislation

<https://www.gov.scot/news/msps-support-further-emergency-coronavirus-legislation/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19): framework for decision making - Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-framework-decision-making-scotlands-route-map-through-out-crisis/>

Schools to re-open in August

<https://www.gov.scot/news/schools-to-re-open-in-august/>

Scottish Government Publications

Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance on support, information, food and other essentials

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-support-information-food-and-other-essentials/>

Scotland's route map through and out of the crisis

<https://tinyurl.com/ybnzwamc>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Framework for Decision Making: Overview of Public Engagement

<https://tinyurl.com/y7ojsahn>

Other Organisations

STUC Black Workers Committee – Open Letter

<http://www.stuc.org.uk/media-centre/news/1447/stuc-black-workers-committee-open-letter>

News

Over three-quarters of BAME doctors fear they will contract Covid-19

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/may/18/over-three-quarters-of-bame-doctors-fear-they-will-contract-covid-19>

Losing a 'beacon of light' of the UK's ultra-Orthodox community to coronavirus

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-52731506/losing-a-beacon-of-light-of-the-uk-s-ultra-orthodox-community-to-coronavirus>

TOP

Other News

New donations platform to help small charities

<http://thirdforcenews.org.uk/tfn-news/new-donations-platform-to-help-small-charities>

Plan to open mosque in Trocadero in London sparks objections

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/may/22/plan-to-open-mosque-in-trocadero-in-london-sparks-objections>

TOP

Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Children (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112632.aspx>

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

Disclosure (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/111895.aspx>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

UK Parliament

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/asylumseekerspermissiontowork.html>

Asylum Support (Prescribed Period) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/asylumsupportprescribedperiod.html>

**** Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill**

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-21/immigrationandsocialsecuritycoordinationeuwithdrawal.html>

Second Reading, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-18/debates/7FA826EF-0D2F-473A-B036-78D1A7F01A31/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-18/debates/7FA826EF-0D2F-473A-B036-78D1A7F01A31/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

Proposed amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-01/0104/amend/immigration_rm_pbc_0519.1-7.html

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/immigrationcontrolgrosshumanrightsabuses.html>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/marriageapprovedorganisations.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/refugeesfamilyreunion.html>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/unaccompaniedasylumseekingchildrenlegaladviceandappeals.html>

TOP

Consultations

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

COVID-19 Move out of lockdown (closing date 29 May 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/115116.aspx>

Shortage occupation list (closing date 24 June 2020)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/shortage-occupation-list-call-for-evidence>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill (closing date 24 July 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/115038.aspx>

Your Police 2020-2021 (closing date 31 March 2021)

Police Scotland recognise the importance of understanding the views and priorities of Scotland's diverse communities. This is especially important during the ongoing Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. This survey is an opportunity for you to give your views and opinions during these challenging times, and beyond.

<https://consult.scotland.police.uk/surveys/your-police-2020-2021/>

Equality and human rights impact of Covid-19 (closing date not stated)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/114975.aspx>

Experiences of Islamophobia (closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/amina-islamophobia>

Raising skills and standards of supporters of refugees and asylum seekers

(closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3R8SDYN>

TOP

Job Opportunities

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

[Click here](#) to find out about Graduate, Modern, and Foundation Apprenticeship opportunities.

TOP

Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

Grants online: Coronavirus

A number of Community Foundations and other organisations have launched funding programmes to assist local organisations in responding to the challenges of the Coronavirus Pandemic. To read a list of organisations and the types of funding they have made available, see <https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

Third Sector Resilience Fund

Closing date not stated

Scottish Government grants and loans from £5,000 to £100,000 for the Third Sector in

response to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Third Sector Resilience Fund is an emergency fund for charities, community groups, social enterprises and voluntary organisations working in Scotland. The fund will support organisations that already deliver services and products but find themselves in financial difficulties directly as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The primary intention of the fund is to help third sector organisations to stabilise and manage cash flows over this difficult period. For information and to apply see <https://scvo.org/support/coronavirus/your-funding/for-organisations/third-sector-resilience-fund/>

Covid-19 Transition Fund

Closing date not stated

Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network funding for organisations to respond to the changing needs of their members in a sustainable way. Funding priorities will be to ensure that community organisations can:

- set up sustainable networks that support access to food and sustenance needs initially up until August 2020
- support their communities to be connected to services, information and communication
- provide services to tackle isolation, such as online events and befriending

For information and to apply see

<https://bemis.org.uk/emnrn/transition-fund/>

Covid-19 Rapid Response Fund

Closing date not stated

This small grant fund has been established by the William Grant Foundation, Faith in Community Scotland and the National Lottery Community Fund so that Scotland's network of local faith groups and related community organisations can provide immediate support for individuals and families. For information and to apply see

<https://www.faithincommunity.scot/covid19info>

Fife Centre for Equalities Diversity Week Activity Fund 2020

Closing date not stated

Grants of up to £100 for charities, community and voluntary groups, sporting groups, and informal groups to host a one-off activity celebrating the diverse population of Fife during Fife Centre for Equalities Diversity Week 7-13 September 2020. For information and to apply see <https://tinyurl.com/stbmu24>

TOP

Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

Talking Prejudice

Details of this event have been removed from the website, so it may be presumed cancelled

2 June 2020

YouthLink event for youth workers and others working in diverse communities to hear from other professionals about the tools and services available to address hate crime and prejudice. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/v29nlow>

3rd International Conference on Migration and Mobilities

8–10 July 2020 in St Andrews

The conference is orientated around the four themes that reflect key contemporary

conceptual and policy concerns: internal migration and urban change, forced migration and bordering, visualising mobilities, and European migration in turbulent politic. For information see <http://www.imigmob2020.org/home>

[TOP](#)

Useful Links

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Refugee Survival Trust <https://www.rst.org.uk/>

Freedom from Torture <https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/>

Interfaith Scotland <https://interfaithscotland.org/>

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

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

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

ACAS <http://www.acas.org.uk/>

SCVO <https://scvo.org.uk/>

Volunteer Scotland <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

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

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

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

Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services
<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/disclosure-services/>

BBC News <https://www.bbc.com/news>

[TOP](#)

SCoJeC
Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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) <https://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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