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Note that some weblinks, particularly of newspaper articles, are only valid for a short period of time, usually around a month, and that the Scottish and UK Parliament and Government websites 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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**Because of the Jewish Festival of Succot,
the next issue of MEMO will be published midweek on 14 October.**

Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Windrush Lessons Learned Review Response

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) [HCWS480] Today we are publishing the Home Office's comprehensive improvement plan, in response to the Windrush lessons learned review. We have worked closely with community leaders and the cross-government Windrush working group to get this important work right, and I am pleased to have the backing of co-chair Bishop Derek Webley on the steps we are taking. I am also grateful to independent reviewer Wendy Williams for the help she has given in shaping our approach.

The Windrush lessons learned review, published in March, exposed unacceptable failings

in the Home Office over many years and an “institutional ignorance and thoughtlessness towards the issue of race and the history of the Windrush generation”. I have already accepted Wendy Williams’s important findings and repeated my heartfelt apology for the suffering that members of the Windrush generation endured.

The comprehensive improvement plan sets out the action we are taking to put this right and to ensure the mistakes of the past can never be repeated.

It details the work taking place across the Department under the five themes I previously laid out.

Righting the wrongs and learning from the past

We are determined to ensure the Windrush generation have the full help and support they deserve. More than £2.5 million has now been offered through the Windrush compensation scheme and over 13,300 documents have been provided to over 11,500 individuals confirming their status or British citizenship. We are doing more to reach those affected and encourage them to come forward, via a new national communications campaign.

Every member of Home Office staff will also undertake mandatory training on the history of migration and race in the UK so that they better understand the impact of departmental decisions, including when developing and applying immigration policy.

An inclusive workforce

We have relaunched our race action plan to help improve the diversity of staff in senior roles and ensure the Home Office reflects the diverse communities it serves. The permanent secretary has commissioned an overhaul of how performance is managed to better support black, Asian and minority ethnic colleagues. To provide robust challenge to our plans to make the Home Office more diverse, external experts will also be invited to join the refreshed strategic advisory board we have established.

Openness to scrutiny

I have directed my officials to engage with community leaders, civil society and the public throughout the policy-making process to understand real-life impacts. It is crucial that the Department is receptive to outside challenge, so I am creating a new community and stakeholder engagement hub at the centre of the Home Office. This will draw on best practice to build knowledge and skills across the Department.

We recognise the particular circumstances of those who travel to this country to work and live and so we are consulting with the cross-government Windrush working group to recommend how best to engage with migrant communities directly and facilitate their feedback into our policy development and operational activity.

In addition, we are overhauling the Department’s risk management framework to ensure all staff have the knowledge and responsibility to act upon risks that are identified.

Inclusive and robust policy making

We are improving how we assess the effect of our policies on people from different backgrounds, including by carrying out more training for staff on how to do this well. We have worked with the Equality and Human Rights Commission on its investigation into how the Department fulfilled its public sector equality duty on policies affecting the Windrush generation. Following the publication of its report, we will work with it to ensure this important duty is fully considered in all our work.

We are also putting in place a set of policy tests to ensure the key findings from the Windrush lessons learned review are applied as new policy is developed.

A more compassionate approach—people not cases

This theme is the crux of the cultural change the permanent secretary and I want to see. The Home Office must embrace the human impact of its work and empower staff throughout the Department to do the same. To support this, I have launched a new mandatory “Face Behind the Case” training course for all UK visa and immigration staff, with plans to expand this to other areas. A young people’s board is being established to gain crucial insight from those who have recently experienced the immigration system. We

are also making rapid progress on the new vision for the Home Office, consulting staff on the core values we all want to embody.

I have already committed to a full review and evaluation of the compliant environment. While it is right that the Department acts against those who are in the UK illegally, we continue to look closely at how innocent people were wrongly caught up in policies designed to target law breakers. The system must be strong, but it also must be just, so if problems are found, I will fix them.

The comprehensive improvement plan will help transform the Home Office and deliver the lasting and meaningful change the Windrush generation deserve. We will monitor our progress and welcome Wendy Williams's return in September 2021 where I am confident she will see the start of a genuine culture shift.

More detail is available in the comprehensive improvement plan, which has been laid before Parliament (CP 293), available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/922973/CCS001_CCS0820050750-001_Resp_to_Windrush_Lessons_CP_293_Accessible.pdf

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-09-30/debates/20093016000011/WindrushLessonsLearnedReviewResponse>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Immigrants: Coronavirus

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [93654] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support she plans to make available to people with No Recourse to Public Funds who have become unemployed during the covid-19 outbreak while they are awaiting the result of a Change of Conditions application.

Reply from Chris Philp: Many of the wide-ranging Covid-19 measures the Government has put in place will be available to migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF). Migrants working in the UK legally may be able to access contributory based benefits such as employment and support allowance. Local Authorities also have a statutory duty to provide support to families subject to the NRPF condition where a child's wellbeing is in question.

The change of conditions applications, which are available for those who have been granted leave on the basis of their family or private life, are being prioritised and dealt with compassionately.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/93654>

Visas: Foreign Nationals

Stephen Timms (Labour) [85927] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, of the applicants granted extensions of leave to remain in 2019, how many in the (a) work, (b) study, (c) family and (d) other groups had the condition No Recourse to Public Funds attached to their leave.

Reply from Chris Philp: Data on the number of extensions granted in the UK are published in table Exe_D01 of the managed migration detailed datasets in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/managed-migration-datasets> .

The published statistics do not show how many extensions were subject to the No Recourse to Public Funds condition. Currently we cannot provide the data that you have requested. However, as part of the regular publication of this data the Home Office will review whether the data can be meaningfully broken down any further.

Most migrants visiting, studying, working or joining family in the UK are subject to a No Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) condition until they have obtained indefinite

leave to remain. Exceptions are made in respect of some migrants, such as families here on the basis of family life/Article 8, where the condition is lifted if the family can provide evidence that they would otherwise be destitute. 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.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-07/85927>

Immigration: Married People

Sarah Olney (Liberal Democrat) [96146] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of suspending the Minimum Income Requirement.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Minimum Income Requirement as a whole is set at the level which prevents burdens on the taxpayer and promotes integration.

Given the economic impact of Covid-19 we have made adjustments to the requirements under it to support those affected.

Such adjustments are among a range of measures put in place by the Home Office to support those affected by the COVID-19 outbreak. These are set out for customers on GOV.UK and are available here:

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/96146>

Migrant Workers: Visas

Dan Carden (Labour) [93668] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of trends in the time taken to process one-year visa extensions for healthcare workers.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Following the announcement of the automatic visa extension scheme on the 31 March, subsequently expanded on 29 April, UKVI have concluded over 6000 free extensions for eligible healthcare workers and their dependents.

On average, straightforward cases have been concluded within four weeks of receiving necessary information from employers to enable the extension to be undertaken.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/93668>

The announcements referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nhs-frontline-workers-visas-extended-so-they-can-focus-on-fighting-coronavirus>

and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-visa-extensions-for-frontline-health-and-care-workers>

Immigration: Overseas Students

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [94555] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to introduce a new immigration route to allow international students to enter the UK on a work or study-based placement of between six and 12 months from 1 January 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: As part of the new Student route, which launches on 5 October, international students will be able to undertake work placements as part of their course. To be able to undertake a work placement, the placement must be an integrated and assessed part of the course and must account for less than 33 percent of the total length of the course (or 50 percent if the student is undertaking

a course at a Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance). Students undertaking study at an Overseas Higher Education Institution can come to the UK on a Student visa to undertake a short-term study abroad programme as part of their course at degree level or above.

In addition, the Government Authorised Exchange Scheme provides individuals with opportunities to come to the UK for a short time for work experience, training, to complete an Overseas Government Language Programme, or for research or a fellowship.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/94555>

Immigrants: EU Nationals

Hilary Benn (Labour) [95989] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance she has issued to (a) banks and (b) other lenders on ways for EU citizens to prove they hold (i) settled and (ii) pre-settled status.

Reply from Kevin Foster: EEA citizens can continue to use their national passport or identity card to evidence their status in the UK until the end of June 2021.

We are developing an extensive package of communications to ensure individuals, employers, landlords and other third parties, such as financial institutions, are fully aware of how and where those with settled or pre-settled status can use their online immigration status to prove their status, including when opening a bank account.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/95989>

Undocumented Migrants

Imran Ahmad Khan (Conservative) [95763] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that adequate due diligence is taking place to ascertain the difference between economic migrants who have been working in the grey economy and those migrants with genuine claims of asylum.

Reply from Chris Philp: All asylum decision-makers receive a five-week intensive training programme on considering asylum claims and must follow published Home Office policy guidance on assessing an individual's credibility. Asylum Operations has an assurance process, which assesses the quality of decisions, interviews and the application of Home Office policy.

We ensure claimants are given every opportunity to disclose information relevant to their claim before a decision is taken, even where that information may be sensitive or difficult to disclose. Protection is normally granted when a claimant establishes a well-founded fear of persecution under the 1951 Refugee Convention, for race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group or their particular circumstances engage our obligations under Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which may result in an individual being granted Humanitarian Protection or Discretionary Leave.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-25/95763>

Undocumented Migrants: Temporary Accommodation

Imran Ahmad Khan (Conservative) [95764] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the number of people in temporary accommodation facilities who are (a) not British citizens and (b) do not have a permanent legal right to reside in the UK.

Reply from Chris Philp: The United Kingdom has a statutory obligation to provide destitute asylum seekers with accommodation, transportation and cash / subsistence support whilst their application for asylum is being considered. The number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority can be found at

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

This information includes temporary accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-25/95764>

Refugees

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [95710] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the (a) vulnerable person resettlement scheme to date; and what plans she has for future resettlement schemes after the UK leaves EU.

Reply from Chris Philp: Through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS), we have worked closely with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to identify and resettle refugees fleeing the Syrian conflict who are in need of protection. Since the VPRS was expanded in September 2015, more than 19,750 refugees have found protection in the UK through this route and we are now close to meeting our full commitment. The Home Office continuously reviews the operation of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and uses feedback from delivery partners, stakeholders and refugees to better understand the outcomes of the refugees we resettle and to drive improvement to our processes. In June 2019, the Government reaffirmed the UK's commitment to refugee resettlement by announcing a new, global UK Resettlement Scheme. While we hoped to have both met our commitment to resettle 20,000 vulnerable refugees through the VPRS, and started the new scheme earlier this year, the unprecedented restrictions and pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has meant this has not yet been possible. We are evaluating how to respond to these ongoing restrictions and pressures, but we expect to resume refugee resettlement activity when safe.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-25/95710>

Refugees: Children

Harriett Baldwin (Conservative) [92646] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to offer UK resettlement to vulnerable unaccompanied minors from Syria who have been displaced again by the fire at the Moria refugee camp in Greece.

Reply from Chris Philp: We are very concerned by the reports and images emerging from the Moria camp on the island of Lesbos following the devastating fire. We are working across government and with our embassy in Greece to actively monitor the situation as it develops.

Throughout the pandemic the UK has continued to receive those accepted for transfer under the Dublin III Regulation, including unaccompanied children. We are in regular contact with sending Member States, including Greece, who are responsible for arranging transfers.

We have also committed to continue to process transfer requests under the Dublin family reunion provisions from Greece and other Member States which were received before the end of the transition period.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/92646>

Asylum: British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [97687] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the equity of processing applicants for asylum on (a) UK Crown Dependencies and (b) British Overseas Territories.

Reply from Chris Philp: The UK has a long and proud history of providing protection to those who need it, in accordance with our international obligations. Tens of thousands of people have rebuilt their lives in the UK and we will continue to provide safe and legal routes in the future.

We have seen unprecedented numbers of small boat arrivals in the UK during 2020 – and we are determined to make this route unviable. We have been looking at what other countries do in response to similar situations – but that doesn't mean we will do those things; and no decisions have been taken by Ministers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-30/97687>

Asylum

Paula Barker (Labour) [92935] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how long on average it takes her Department (a) to make an initial decision on asylum applications and (b) to carry out substantive interviews with asylum applicants.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office does not publish data on how long it takes to make an initial decision on asylum applications or to carry out a substantive interview. However, the Home Office does publish data on the number asylum applications awaiting an initial decision by duration. This data can be found at This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2020/list-of-tables>

The Home Office are committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay, individuals who need protection are granted asylum as soon as possible and can start to integrate and rebuild their lives, including those granted at appeal.

Whilst we take steps to increase capacity, with focus on process improvements, to deliver better quality decisions, more efficiently, we have moved away from the six-month service standard to concentrate on older claims, cases with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC). Additionally, we are prioritising cases where an individual has already received a decision, but a reconsideration is required. The intention is for this approach to bring balance back to the asylum system.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-21/92935>

Asylum

Paula Barker (Labour) [92939] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of asylum applications are granted upon first application.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office routinely publishes information on the total number of initial decisions on asylum applications, by outcome. This data can be found at This data can be found at Asy_02a of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2020/list-of-tables>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-21/92939>

Asylum: Applications

Martin Vickers (Conservative) [94386] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum applications were awaiting assessment in the latest period for which figures are available; what recent estimate she has made of the average time taken to process an asylum application; and what steps her Department is taking to reduce the time taken to process those applications.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office does not publish data on the average time taken to process an asylum application. However, the Home Office does publish data on the number asylum applications awaiting an initial decision, broken down by duration. This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-year-ending-june-2020/list-of-tables>

The Home Office are committed to ensuring asylum claims are considered without unnecessary delay, individuals who need protection are granted asylum as soon as possible and can start to integrate and rebuild their lives, including those granted at appeal.

Whilst we take steps to increase capacity, with focus on process improvements, to deliver better quality decisions, more efficiently, we have moved away from the six-month service standard to concentrate on older claims, cases with acute vulnerability and those in receipt of the greatest level of support, including Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/94386>

Asylum: Interviews

Caroline Lucas (Green) [95055] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has issued guidance to staff undertaking face-to-face substantive interviews of asylum claimants to ensure that they facilitate social distancing to enable (a) legal representatives, (b) translators and (c) support workers to attend the interview; if she will make it her policy that claimants do not have to attend interviews alone and without representation; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office published guidance on the resumption of substantive asylum interviews on 6 August 2020. It is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-resumption-of-substantive-asylum-interviews>.

The resumption of substantive asylum interviews has been facilitated by the use of videoconferencing. Where the interview room is large enough to allow the required social distancing, legal representatives, interpreters and support workers can attend interviews in-person.

Where the room is too small to facilitate the attendance of others, legal representatives, interpreters and support workers can join the interview remotely via videoconferencing.

Should a claimant wish to attend their interview with a legal representative, interpreter or support worker, then they should contact the Home Office at least three working days prior to their interview to discuss options, as outlined in the invitation to interview letter. Alternative solutions can be offered such as rescheduling the interview from a VFS centre to a Home Office location or booking a larger room in a Home Office location that will safely accommodate the presence of others.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95055>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Interviews

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [96930] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what processes she used to identify third party suppliers to conduct asylum interviews and gather evidence on asylum cases; and which such suppliers she has selected to deliver her Departments pilot of the use of those suppliers.

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [96931] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what training he plans to provide to proposed external suppliers of asylum interviews; and who he plans will deliver that training.

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [96932] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what governance and accountability mechanisms his Department plans to put in place for the oversight of outsourced asylum interviews.

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [96933] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, what his policy is on the recourse available to claimants participating in the pilot of outsourced asylum interviews if there is evidence of poor interview practice; and if he will make it his policy to re-start consideration of all asylum cases in which such evidence is established.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office have been exploring many options to reduce the number of outstanding asylum claims and interviews. As a short-term measure, the department have consulted with Commercial colleagues to explore with third-party suppliers to test the viability of whether they can deliver the support required.

An existing supplier has offered to support the proof of concept to test viability over a short period. Any plans to make more long-term use of the private sector for interviews will be reviewed and subject to a procurement process. A key success factor is to ensure interviews conducted are of a good standard and equal to existing approaches.

To ensure external suppliers are suitably equipped to carry out the role, a bespoke training package has been developed and will be delivered by the department.

To guarantee governance and accountability, mechanisms are in place for the oversight of third-party interviews, the department has a quality assurance process which assesses the quality of decisions, interviews and the application of Home Office policy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96930>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96931>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96932>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96933>

Asylum: Housing

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [93608] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department first discussed with the Ministry of Defence the housing of asylum seekers in military barracks or other accommodation.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office has a statutory obligation to provide support and accommodation to destitute asylum seekers.

As a result of Covid-19, movement of service users out of accommodation was temporarily paused. This combined with the continued large numbers of arrivals in small boats from France has put considerable strain on the accommodation system. As part of the emergency response to this, the Home Office has worked with other government departments to identify alternative accommodation for asylum seekers as a temporary measure.

The Ministry of Defence and Home Office entered into discussions from mid-August regarding the possibility of the Ministry of Defence assisting in identifying accommodation options for asylum seekers.

The Ministry of Defence responded with an offer to review their estate with a view to being able to loan suitable and available sites to the Home Office for up to 12 months. The Defence Secretary confirmed that the two sites at Penally and Napier were indeed able to be offered to the HO on 12 September.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/93608>

Asylum: Employment

Steve Baker (Conservative) [92763] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to grant asylum seekers the right to work.

Reply from Chris Philp: Asylum seekers are allowed to work in the UK if their

claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own. Those permitted to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, which is based on expert advice from the independent Migration Advisory Committee. It is important to distinguish between those who need protection and those seeking to work here, who can apply for a work visa under the Immigration Rules. Our wider policy could be undermined if migrants bypassed work visa Rules by lodging unfounded asylum claims here.

Unrestricted access to employment could act as an incentive for more migrants to choose to come here illegally, rather than claim asylum in the first safe country they reach.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-21/92763>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Asylum: British Overseas Territories and Ferries

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Labour Co-op): To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are planning (1) to establish asylum processing centres in British Overseas Territories, and (2) to house those who are seeking asylum on disused ferries; and, if so, how any such plans would comply with international obligations.

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford):

My Lords, as my right honourable friend the Home Secretary said yesterday, the asylum system is broken, and we stand by our obligations to safeguard the most vulnerable people fleeing oppression, persecution and tyranny. We will take every necessary step to fix this broken system and we will continue to examine all practical measures to effectively deter illegal migration. We do not comment on leaks.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock: My Lords, but will the Minister concede that the options which have been very authoritatively leaked and have been in almost every newspaper would be inordinately expensive, probably illegal but, above all, inhumane? As a do-gooder, I ask the Minister if she will go back to the Home Secretary and say that on this issue, doing good is just common humanity.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Well, I think any noble Lord who listened to my right honourable friend yesterday will at least concede that humanity was at the heart of what she was saying. She was talking about a "firm and fair" immigration system, and about the people traffickers who exploit the most vulnerable. I can confirm that we will act in accordance with our international conventions, and I will not comment on the leaks.

Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Labour): My Lords, I have read the Home Secretary's speech, but how do such ideas, which are widely condemned as inhumane and dehumanising, square with her stated ambition to build a "more compassionate ... Home Office that puts people first"?

Are asylum seekers not people with human rights who are entitled to be treated with dignity? According to the central recommendations of the *Windrush Lessons Learned Review*, that should underpin all Home Office policy.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The noble Baroness will appreciate that my right honourable friend the Home Secretary's words do not accord with many of the things that were leaked. She is absolutely committed, as the noble Baroness will have heard, to accepting all the recommendations in the Wendy Williams lessons learned report. We are working through those now and we want a humane, fair but firm immigration system.

Baroness Hamwee (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, are the reports intended as a message to people who seek sanctuary in the UK or as a dog whistle to the red wall?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Again, I will not comment on leaks.

Lord Mackay of Clashfern (Conservative): My Lords, can the Minister please say why there is such delay in deciding applications for asylum status that so much accommodation is required for applicants?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My noble and learned friend is right to point out the delays in assessing asylum claims. Of course, it has been incredibly difficult during the last few months, and many people who should have had their claims processed in normal times are having to wait. However, to that end, they are still able to receive Section 95 support while their claims are assessed. On accommodation, my noble and learned friend is absolutely right that an awful lot of people are in accommodation for those very reasons.

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): My Lords, will the noble Baroness at least accept that the answers to the root causes of why 70.8 million people are displaced worldwide will not be found on Ascension Island or disused oil rigs or ferries, and that we must urgently tackle those root causes and bring people together who will look for them? Will she also accept support for the Home Secretary's call for legal routes for those who are at genuine risk of harm and for the Government's determination to tackle criminal gangs involved in the trafficking of migrants, and say when detailed plans on that will be published?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I am very pleased to agree with the noble Lord. In fact, he and I spoke the other day about our absolute agreement on how, if we can find the root causes and tackle them, we will cut out some of the criminality around this. My right honourable friend the Home Secretary was absolutely serious yesterday about pursuing those legal routes, because they are the way to run the system.

The Lord Bishop of Southwark: My Lords, talk of Her Majesty's Government possibly acquiring timeshares in property on the isle of Elba or anywhere else aside, it is worth noting that the Home Secretary yesterday stressed the importance of "safe and legal routes" to asylum in the United Kingdom. I was grateful to hear that. Since the Government have now determined that it is safe and appropriate to resume deportation flights from the UK, will the Minister confirm that they have decided to resume immediately the refugee settlement programme they suspended in March? If not, will she inform the House of the difference in criteria for holiday and deportation flights and for those seeking sanctuary in this country?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: As the right reverend Prelate said, my right honourable friend talked specifically about safe and legal routes. Deportation flights, and indeed the processing of asylum claims and removals, are still very difficult. Some deportations have taken place, and some arrivals have taken place over the last few days. However, both sides of the system are incredibly slow at the moment, for obvious reasons. I can absolutely assure the right reverend Prelate that, when things become more normal, resettlement will resume in the way that we would want it to.

Lord Rosser (Labour): Somebody has done the newspaper leaking, and they are probably in government. Yesterday, the Home Secretary said that she would "fix" the asylum system—but, typically for the Government, who have been in office for 10 years, blamed others for the Government's own failings in processing asylum applications. Did the Home Secretary mean "fix" the asylum system like the Government and their algorithms "fixed" the school exam systems, or like the Government and their private contractors have "fixed" the test and trace system, or like their Immigration Acts 2014 and 2016 and the hostile environment "fixed" the Windrush generation? Can the Government say in advance which innocent parties will be unjustly and unfairly hurt this time by yet another loudly announced government scheme to "fix" something—namely, the asylum system?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The word fix ... was in reference to

something that I think nobody in this Chamber can deny was completely broken. Noble Lords have talked consistently about legal routes and the humane treatment of asylum seekers, and I agree with absolutely all of those things. We need to recognise that something is broken in order to fix it.

Baroness Hussein-Ece (Liberal Democrat): The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has said it is not party to any UK government discussions on offshoring asylum seekers or housing them on ships or far-flung islands. So can the Minister assure the House that the UK will provide asylum seekers with access to procedures which comply with international law? Also, as the noble Lord, Lord Alton, said, when will the legal routes that are being referred to be brought forward so that vulnerable asylum seekers can take them without being demonised by the Government?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I can certainly assure the noble Baroness of the first, which is that we will abide by our international obligations. The legal and safe routes will be announced in due course; I am looking forward to that, because the whole issue of legal and safe routes has needed to be sorted for some time now.

Viscount Trenchard (Conservative): My Lords, does my noble friend agree that it is essential to destroy the business model as currently used by the people traffickers, either by reaching agreement with the French Government that British ships may intercept migrant boats within French territorial waters and return them to France, or by establishing assessment centres overseas, possibly by agreement with countries such as Morocco or Algeria, along the lines of the former Australian detention centres in Papua New Guinea or the Republic of Nauru? Would the Minister also agree that such a policy would indeed comply with our international obligation to provide protection as required by the UN refugee convention of 1961?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I say to my noble friend that we need to explore diplomatic and legal avenues and those that comply with international law to explore some of the options that will be available to us.

Viscount Waverley (Crossbench): My Lords, will reviewing the asylum appeals process also be considered? Also, on a question of practicality, will the Government consider by what routes failed asylum seekers could be repatriated if they have come from a third location, the cost of doing so, with the costs of valuation teams and healthcare provisions properly factored in? Does this not all make the case to utilise cruise ships in the Thames estuary a sensible provision for the Government to consider?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, I am sure that many options will be considered. However, the noble Viscount is absolutely right that asylum appeals are protracted, cost a fortune and leave the people claiming asylum, and their appeals, in limbo.

Baroness Goudie (Labour): My Lords, this is a huge cash business for the traffickers, and many countries that we deal with, particularly the Cayman Islands, Gibraltar and Malta, are the homes of the traffickers' bank accounts. What is being done to take forward the legislation that we have to do something about this?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Noble Lords will have gleaned from my right honourable friend the Home Secretary's speech yesterday that dismantling those trafficking business models, as the noble Lord said previously, is key to bringing forward safe and legal routes, but the only people who are benefitting currently are the people traffickers.

Lord Davies of Gower (Conservative): My Lords, while accepting that we must do everything humanly possible to help those arriving on our shores claiming to have been persecuted in their native countries, the Government's first duty must be to protect UK citizens. What assurance can the Minister give that those immigrants awaiting assessment who are being placed at various locations around the UK, such as the Penally camp in west Wales, do not have a history of criminality which could be a threat to local residents

who, along with local political representatives, it seems were not warned of their impending arrival?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: It is very important that local authorities are not only warned of impending arrivals but consulted with and engage with the people arriving. Criminals should be assessed quickly and expeditiously, and I think that no noble Lord would disagree with criminals who need to be deported being deported quickly.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-05/debates/E954577C-DFC7-41B0-BF5F-84BDE048318C/AsylumBritishOverseasTerritoriesAndFerries>

The transcript of the Home Secretary's speech, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.conservatives.com/news/home-secretary-priti-patel-fixing-our-broken-asylum-system>

The "Lessons Learned Review", referred to above, can be read at
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874022/6.5577_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_WEB_v2.pdf

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Immigration: Enforcement

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL8122] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review (1) their policy towards, (2) the operation of, and (3) the methods used to assess the performance of, immigration enforcement; and what steps they are taking to ensure that such enforcement (a) delivers value for money, and (b) is effective.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Enforcing the UK's immigration laws is critical to a functioning immigration system and effectively implementing the Government's policies.

As the public would expect, we continually review all of the different methods we use to prevent illegal migration, ensure compliance with the Government's policies and enforce the UK's immigration laws, to ensure that they are effective and deliver value for money.

Many of the challenges we currently face in seeking to delivering an effective and efficient enforcement capability, in addition to logistical constraints relating to COVID 19, are due to the rigid nature of the Dublin Regulations and last-minute litigation challenges and will be addressed by the Government's plans to deliver reform to the entire system within the Sovereign Borders Bill.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/hl8122>

Immigration: Au Pairs

Lord Willis of Knaresborough (Liberal Democrat) [HL8261] To ask Her Majesty's Government what immigration rules will apply to au pairs from EU countries who (1) are currently living with families in the UK, (2) wish to commence residency in the UK after 1 January 2021, or (3) are currently living with families but wish to return to their country of origin for the Christmas period and return to the UK after 1 January 2021.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: EU citizens resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 can apply for UK immigration status under the EU Settlement Scheme, to enable them to continue living and working in the UK after 30 June 2021. Their eligibility for the scheme will not be affected if they are absent from the UK over the Christmas period and return to the UK in early 2021.

From 1 January 2021, EU citizens newly arriving in the UK and non-EU citizens will be treated equally under the new points-based immigration system. There will continue to be no dedicated route for au pairs. However, the UK operates a youth

mobility scheme which permits nationals of participating countries to undertake such activity during their stay, along with other routes providing general work rights. We are looking to expand our youth mobility partnerships.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-17/hl8261>

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

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

Information about the points-based immigration system, referred to above, can be read at

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

Undocumented Migrants: Coronavirus

Viscount Waverley (Crossbench) [HL8346] To ask Her Majesty's Government whether migrants crossing the English Channel who are detained by the UK Border Agency receive a COVID-19 test.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Since we introduced quarantine measures in June, those who have come to the UK in illegally facilitated crossings have been placed in facilities where they must self-isolate for 14 days, given we cannot be certain which countries they have travelled through.

Anyone who is symptomatic will be taken to designated accommodation and tested according to Public Health England guidance.

All immigration removal centres have communicable disease contingency plans, based on guidance by Public Health England (PHE). Measures such as protective shielding, improved hygiene and use of personal protective equipment (PPE) are being used to minimise the risk of COVID-19 spreading to vulnerable groups in IRCs.

On 26 March the High Court ruled that the Home Office was taking sensible, precautionary measures in relation to COVID-19 and immigration detention.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-21/hl8346>

The judgement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Detention-Action-v-SSHD-CO-1101-2020.pdf>

Refugees: Families

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL8123] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the work on family reunion for refugees by the Families Together coalition; and what has been their response.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government provides a safe and legal route to bring families together through its refugee family reunion policy. This allows a partner and children under 18 of those granted protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country. Under this policy, over 29,000 family reunion visas have been issued in the last 5 years.

The Government is familiar with the calls for an expansion of eligible family members for the purposes of refugee family reunion. However, amending the policy without careful thought could significantly increase the numbers who could qualify to come here, not just from conflict regions but any country from which someone is granted protection. This would mean extended family being able to come here who themselves do not need protection – which risks reducing our capacity to assist the most vulnerable refugees.

We also believe that if children were allowed to sponsor parents, this would risk creating incentives for more children to be encouraged, or even forced, to leave their family and risk hazardous journeys to the UK. This plays into the hands of

criminal gangs who exploit vulnerable people and goes against our safeguarding responsibilities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/hl8123>

Asylum: Coronavirus

Baroness Coussins (Crossbench) [HL8112] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to enable compliance with the rules on a maximum of six people meeting socially by asylum seekers living in reception centres or hostels which have communal facilities.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: We have worked closely with Public Health to ensure asylum accommodation providers are following relevant guidance and are supporting asylum seekers to follow Public Health guidance within the estate.

Providers are applying controls to further support social distancing such as providing translated public health guidance and instruction to service users.

Communal dining rooms have staggered meal times and appropriate marking to delineate social distancing. Where service users are isolating, food is placed outside of their rooms.

The Home Office are working closely with accommodation providers to ensure that the new health stipulation is followed and implemented accordingly. The varying types of accommodation require different approaches, the Home Office are working closely with providers to understand the implementation of those approaches and to assure themselves that Public Health guidance is applied appropriately.

During these unprecedented times the government is working with a range of partners and across departments to secure further accommodation and the MOD has offered use of some of its sites. We have sought Public Health England/Wales advice on how we can make best use of this accommodation, working within the constraints of the configuration, whilst minimising risks from covid-19.

We will follow the model which the MOD has adopted which is to continue to use the dormitories as shared rooms but to limit occupancy ensuring a minimum distance between beds of at least 2 metres. This will be complemented by a range of additional safety measures including increased cleaning of surfaces, availability of hand sanitisers, a track and trace system and extensive communications with residents around covid-19 control measures.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/hl8112>

Asylum: Coronavirus

Baroness Coussins (Crossbench) [HL8113] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide information and advice regarding COVID-19 in languages other than English and Welsh on their asylum support webpages

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: There are currently no plans to update the Asylum Support webpages with COVID-19 guidance.

Guidance for COVID-19 has been translated into 60 different languages in partnership with the British Red Cross and other partners such as Migrant help and is available using the link provided:

<http://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/coronavirus-information/>

Also videos with key COVID-19 information for migrants in the UK are being released here:

<https://www.doctorsoftheworld.org.uk/key-covid-19-information-for-migrants/>

Alternatively links to translated support and guidance can be found through our Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) provider, Migrant Help here:

<https://www.migranthelpuk.org/translated-support>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/hl8113>

Asylum: English Channel

Lord Blencathra (Conservative) [HL8268] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking over reports that French Navy patrol boats have been aiding asylum seekers to enter UK waters illegally.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK has a duty both to prevent loss of life and protect the integrity of our border. In doing so we have domestic and international laws to comply with. Search and Rescue (SAR) legal provisions derive from a number of international conventions, in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea 1974 (SOLAS) and the International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue 1979 (the SAR Convention). Under these provisions both the UK and France both have a duty to save lives, and if a boat encounters difficulty and is in distress then there is a need to protect life.

French authorities and vessels do attempt to persuade migrants to abandon their journey and allow themselves to be rescued but are at times met with extreme hostility from migrants. French assets will generally remain with the migrant vessel to ensure they are on-hand in case a rescue is required. The French do not believe forcible interceptions would be safe or permitted under SOLAS or SAR operations. We are doing everything we can to stop these dangerous Channel crossings and bring to justice the criminals behind this organised immigration crime.

We are also continuing to engage with our French counterparts both on an operational and political level, exploring all options to reduce the number of people attempting this dangerous crossing.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-18/hl8268>

Asylum: English Channel

Lord Blencathra (Conservative) [HL8269] To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have paid (1) to the government of France, and (2) organisations based in France, in the last five years to limit asylum seekers crossing the English Channel illegally; and what assessment they have made of whether the government of France has met the commitments of any agreements in place to limit such crossings.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK and France maintain a longstanding relationship on tackling illegal migration at the shared border and the UK has committed several funding packages to supporting this work in recent years. These include:

- In September 2019 the Joint Action Plan on Combatting Illegal Migration Involving Small Boats ('Small Boats Action Plan') was signed. The UK committed €3.6m (£3.25m) to tackling the issue. These funds were utilised for the delivery of strategic communications campaigns and the provision of equipment to improve detection of small boats crossings. This was later supplemented with a further €2.5m (£2.25m) in the 19/20 Financial Year, which was dedicated to the deployment of Gendarme Reservists and further strengthening preventive security measures at the French coast.
- In January 2018 both countries signed the Sandhurst Treaty, under which the UK made a commitment of €50 million (£45.5m) for activity to prevent illegal migration.

The UK and France are committed to ensuring value for money in investment. The UK and France carried out a joint review of bilateral cooperation under the Sandhurst Treaty, which concluded that this programme of work has made a difference to illegal migration. France also continues to invest significant resource into tackling this issue as part of a joint response with the UK.

In addition to the above sums outlined, we have also invested the following:

- The September 2014 Joint Declaration committed £12m for security

improvements at Calais, Dunkirk, and the Eurotunnel terminal at Coquelles. This was supplemented by £1 million for fencing and by £1.7 million to support an enhanced secure freight zone at Calais.

- In 2015, both countries signed a Joint Declaration which committed £45.96 million (majority to Eurotunnel) towards security enhancements of the juxtaposed controls and to moving migrants into reception centres across France.
- This was followed by payments in 2016 (£17 million) and a further (£36 million) to strengthen the border and maintain the operation of the juxtaposed controls.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-18/hl8269>

Asylum: Employment

Baroness Cox (Crossbench) [HL8116] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by Refugee Action Lift the ban: why giving people seeking asylum the right to work is common sense, published in July, what assessment they have made of the potential economic benefits of removing restrictions on asylum seekers' right to work.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seeker right to work is a complex issue and is under review; it is crucial we take the time to get this right. We are listening carefully to the arguments and considering the evidence put forward on the issue.

We are aware the Lift the Ban coalition recently published a follow-up to their 2018 report and the findings of this report will be incorporated into the current review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/hl8116>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Lift-The-Ban-Common-Sense.pdf>

UK Parliament, Home Affairs Committee

Channel crossings, migration and asylum-seeking routes through the EU: evidence session

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/948/html/>

Press Releases

Home Office responds to Windrush Lessons Learned Review

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-office-responds-to-windrush-lessons-learned-review>

Campaign launched to ready businesses for points-based immigration system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/campaign-launched-to-ready-businesses-for-points-based-immigration-system>

Families reunited as asylum seekers transferred to the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/families-reunited-as-asylum-seekers-transferred-to-the-uk>

Home Secretary Priti Patel speech at the Conservative Party Conference, announcing that she will bring forward legislation to overhaul our broken asylum system

<https://www.conservatives.com/news/home-secretary-priti-patel-fixing-our-broken-asylum-system>

Progress on Hostile Environment legal assessment

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/progress-hostile-environment-legal-assessment>

Stranded migrants need safe and dignified return

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=26325&LangID=E>

New Publications

The Response to the Windrush Lessons Learned Review: A Comprehensive Improvement Plan

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/922973/CCS001_CCS0820050750-001_Resp_to_Windrush_Lessons_CP_293_Accessible.pdf

Guidance: Immigration health surcharge: guidance for reimbursement 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-health-surcharge-applying-for-a-refund/immigration-health-surcharge-guidance-for-reimbursement-2020>

Thinking of hiring from the EU next year? Home Office campaign to help employers prepare for the introduction of the UK's new points-based immigration system

<https://pbisemployers.campaign.gov.uk/>

Refugee resettlement in the UK: recent developments

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9017/>

Non-agricultural seasonal and temporary migrant workers in urban and rural Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/non-agricultural-seasonal-temporary-migrant-workers-urban-rural-scotland/>

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Report: Detainees under escort: Inspection of escort and removals to Germany and France

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/Germany-France-escort-report-web-2020.pdf>

HM Chief Inspector of Prisons Service Improvement Plan: Detainees under escort: removals to Germany and France

<https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprisons/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2020/10/Germany-and-France-2020-10-01-Service-Improvement-Plan-TCU-Charter-Final.pdf>

News

Scottish Refugee Council's helpline is changing to a freephone number

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/new-freephone-helpline/>

Government suffers Lords defeats over immigration bill

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54427322>

Priti Patel's flagship immigration bill suffers first Lords defeats

https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18771457_priiti-patels-flagship-immigration-bill-suffers-first-lords-defeats/

Priti Patel pledges to fix 'broken' asylum system in UK

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-54404554>

Priti Patel announces "biggest overhaul" of asylum system and hits out at critics

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18769526.priti-patel-announces-biggest-overhaul-asylum-system-hits-critics/>

Priti Patel to revamp 'broken' system that sends back 1 Channel migrant in 70

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/priti-patel-to-revamp-broken-system-that-sends-back-1-channel-migrant-in-70-vxqsmvj7d>

Asylum seekers who enter UK via Europe will have claims rejected

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/09/30/asylum-seekers-enter-uk-via-europe-will-have-claims-rejected/>

Priti Patel: No asylum for illegal entrants

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/priti-patel-no-asylum-for-illegal-entrants-v6q6gwcsq>

Priti Patel vows to block Channel boat migrants

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/priti-patel-vows-to-block-channel-boat-migrants-rtcznsmdx>

Asylum seekers: UK considered floating barriers in Channel

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-54384858>

UK tested Channel 'blockade' to deter migrants, leak reveals

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/01/uk-tested-channel-blockade-to-deter-migrants-leak-reveals>

Priti Patel is trying to save asylum seekers from danger – by using wave machines to keep them away

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/priti-patel-ascension-island-asylum-seekers-ferry-wave-machine-b742236.html>

At least 7,000 migrants have crossed to the UK in small boats this year, data shows

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrants-uk-boats-france-channel-crossing-home-office-b738136.html>

Migrant boats intercepted in English Channel

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-54349061>

Smugglers 'cut cost of migrant Channel crossings'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-54358029>

Create safe, legal routes for refugee families to reunite in UK, stars urge PM

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/sep/28/create-safe-legal-routes-for-refugee-families-to-reunite-in-uk-stars-urge-pm>

Scottish islands firmly "on the table" for Priti Patel's asylum detention centre plans

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18764622.scottish-islands-firmly-table-priti-patels-asylum-detention-centre-plans/>

Douglas Ross rejects plan for asylum centre on Scottish island

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18767103.douglas-ross-rejects-plan-asylum-centre-scottish-island/>

Perhaps housing migrants on Scottish islands isn't such a daft idea

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18763892.opinion-uzma-mir-perhaps-housing-migrants-scottish-islands-isnt-daft-idea/>

Ascension Island: Priti Patel considered outpost for UK asylum centre location

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-54349796>

Asylum seekers could be processed on old ferries

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-54366346>

Floating asylum centres planned on retired ferries

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/home-office-considered-sending-asylum-seekers-to-north-sea-oilrigs-3vqg22tbj>

Sir Keir Starmer condemns 'inhuman' asylum ferries idea

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-54375347>

UK asylum: the offshore options officials were told to consider

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/01/uk-asylum-offshore-options-that-officials-were-told-to-consider>

Government offshore asylum idea attacked as 'morally bankrupt'

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/01/government-offshore-asylum-idea-attacked-as-morally-bankrupt>

Priti Patel's loopy migration idea isn't quite as cruel or unusual as it looks

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/03/priti-patels-loopy-migration-idea-isntquite-cruel-unusual-looks/>

Proposals to hold newly arrived asylum seekers offshore branded 'illegal, expensive and illogical'

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/immigration-priti-patel-home-office-asylum-seekers-offshore-ferries-b742902.html>

Home Office moved Covid-affected asylum seekers against orders

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/oct/02/home-office-moved-covid-affected-asylum-seekers-against-orders>

Asylum seekers: Human rights lawyers 'not political'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-54356083>

Migration: Agri-food workers added to job shortage list

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-northern-ireland-54343550>

Foreign butchers and bricklayers 'needed in UK'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54341298>

The real crisis is the public health emergency

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/the-real-crisis-is-the-public-health-emergency/>

Home Office deports lone asylum seeker on £30,000 chartered flight

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/10/01/home-office-deport-just-one-asylum-seeker-chartered-flight-court/>

Channel migrants outnumbered six to one on deportation flight by Home Office escort staff

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/03/channel-migrants-outnumbered-six-one-deportation-flight-home/>

Asylum seeker slashed his wrists as 'distressed' migrants deported on Home Office charter flight, report reveals

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/migrant-deportations-charter-flights-coronavirus-self-harm-home-office-b746387.html>

Woman wins UK legal fight over unlawful deportation to Uganda

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/sep/28/woman-wins-uk-legal-fight-unlawful-deportation-uganda>

Gay woman who was attacked after being unlawfully deported to Uganda wins court case against Home Office

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/gay-woman-uganda-gang-raped-home-office-appeal-win-b668908.html>

'This is only the start': Woman wrongly deported from UK encourages others removed under unlawful policy to come forward

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uganda-woman-deportation-unlawful-home-office-gang-rape-asylum-seekers-b695574.html>

The deportation of an autistic black man is an indictment of the UK's racist justice system

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/29/osime-brown-deportation-uk-racist-justice-system-autistic-black-jamaica>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Black History Month

Lord Boateng (Labour) [HL8048] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to commemorate Black History Month in October; which Departments, if any, are supporting specific initiatives to promote a better understanding of the contribution of Black people (1) to the UK, and (2) to the history of the British Isles; and what is the nature of any such initiatives.

Reply from Lord True: Black History Month is an important time to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Black Britons throughout history. Departments across Government will be recognising contemporary and past contributions in a range of ways throughout the month of October.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-14/hl8048>

UK Parliament Early Day Motions

Anne McLaughlin (SNP) (945): Black History Month 2020 – That this House notes that October is Black History Month and welcomes the many events and initiatives across these islands to mark it; resolves to encourage every single person living on these islands to take advantage of all events being online to raise their own awareness of the equal contribution made to the modern world by people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities; resolves to work towards the day when black history does not need a month of its own and is acknowledged, taught and celebrated every bit as much as white history.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57500/black-history-month-2020>

Anne McLaughlin (SNP) (957) Black History Month and the British Hotel and the Scots Jamaican Nurse Mary Seacole – That this House notes October is Black History Month; welcomes the opportunity to highlight some of those people largely forgotten in history but who have made a significant contribution nonetheless; celebrates the tale of Scots Jamaican nurse Mary Seacole who set up her own convalescent home named The British Hotel, to tend wounded soldiers with traditional herbal remedies in the Crimean war of the 1850s; considers it all the more impressive that she did so after being rejected by the War Office and by fundraising for the costs herself; understands she was so well loved for the voluntary work she carried out that when she returned to London in 1857, destitute, and a fundraising gala in her honour on the banks of the River Thames attracted 80,000 guests; understands that Mary Seacole then disappeared from history books for over a century; finds it inexplicable that when her contribution began to be acknowledged in more recent times, there were campaigns against doing so; and considers it fitting that she is now considered one of the greatest black role models and has been remembered with a community hospital named after her in Surrey and a statue erected in her honour outside St Thomas' Hospital.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57526/black-history-month-and-the-british-hotel-and-the-scots-jamaican-nurse-mary-seacole>

Welsh Government Ministerial Statement

Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Communities, Contributions in the New Curriculum Working Group Terms of Reference

<https://gov.wales/written-statement-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-communities-contributions-and-cynefin-new>

Press Releases

Prime Minister's video message for Black History Month

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-video-message-for-black-history-month-1-october-2020>

Black History Cymru 365 will build momentum towards a Wales free from discrimination and inequality

<https://gov.wales/black-history-cymru-365-will-build-momentum-towards-wales-free-discrimination-and-inequality>

LinkNet mentoring service for people from minority ethnic backgrounds to find a job, a place at college or university, or for personal development, is now available online

<http://www.linknetmentoring.com/>

New Publications

Scotland's National Performance Framework: Measuring outcomes for minority ethnic communities

https://864a82af-f028-4baf-a094-46facc9205ca.filesusr.com/ugd/b0353f_88e80a91c2e14803a4e21ea537f92c98.pdf

Minority ethnic recruitment toolkit

<https://tinyurl.com/yd7tqb7b>

Letter from Baroness Berridge to Lord Taylor of Warwick regarding racial disparities for students being accepted into higher education

[http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2020-0555/Letter to Lord Taylor OPQ Exams.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2020-0555/Letter%20to%20Lord%20Taylor%20OPQ%20Exams.pdf)

Black History Month: Whose history do we tell, and how?

<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/black-history-month-whose-history-do-we-tell-and-how/>

News

Exam board criticised for absence of black authors

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/exam-board-criticised-for-absence-of-black-authors-q2bfm00vl>

Oxford University to offer postgraduate scholarships for black British students

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/sep/30/oxford-university-to-offer-postgraduate-scholarships-for-black-british-students>

Keir Starmer: pupils should learn more black British history

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/sep/30/keir-starmer-pupils-should-learn-more-black-british-history>

Black History Month: 'As a black female, it's important I can be seen'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-54355163>

Ayrshire minister reflects on Black History Month

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2020/Kirk-minister-reflects-on-Black-History-Month>

Windrush Cymru stories, in their own words - an online exhibition to celebrate a generation

<https://senedd.wales/en/newhome/pages/newsitem.aspx?itemid=2141&assembly=5>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Motions

S5M-22865 John Finnie (Green): Home Secretary's Comments on the Traveller Community – That the Parliament condemns recent comments by the Home Secretary,

Priti Patel, regarding the Traveller community; rejects any suggestion that the Traveller community is inherently criminal or violent; considers that Travellers remain routinely and unfairly stigmatised in the UK; believes that prejudiced comments from senior public figures contribute to ongoing discrimination; supports calls for the Home Secretary to apologise and retract her comments, and extends its solidarity to the Traveller community.
<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-22865>

Information about the comments referred to above can be read at

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/priti-patel-pc-andrew-harper-death-racial-hatred-irish-travellers-b596251.html>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Hate Crime

Bambos Charalambous (Labour) [96162] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what the timetable is for updating the Hate crime action plan 2016 to 2020; and what the process is for engaging stakeholders in its development.

Reply from Luke Hall: The Government remains committed to stamping out hatred in all its forms. Many of the initiatives outlined in the action plan will continue, and we also remain committed to delivering on our existing priorities. We are considering a range of options for our work from July 2020 and will work in close consultation with stakeholders.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/96162>

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

NHS: Racial Discrimination

Abena Oppong-Asare (Labour) [76923] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the Answer of 16 July 2020 to Question 62691 on NHS: Racial Discrimination, what steps his Department has taken to protect NHS staff who have been assessed as high risk.

Reply from Helen Whately: A number of resources are available to support organisations to protect staff who have been assessed as being at high risk. These include a risk reduction framework published by the Faculty of Occupational Medicine published in response to COVID-19 and the adult social care risk reduction framework. Additionally, NHS Employers have published guidance on how to enhance existing risk assessments. Risk is best managed at a local level in discussion between individuals and their managers.

There are a range of steps employers are taking to mitigate risk. These include stringent infection prevention and control assurance such as prioritisation of fit testing, rota adjustments, and regular health checks including COVID-19 testing.

Personal protective equipment is also being procured, which addresses concerns about fit for some groups of people.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-07-20/76923>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-22/62691>

Press Release

Human Rights Council 45: Statement for Item 9 General Debate on racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related forms of intolerance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/human-rights-council-45-statement-for-item-9-general-debate-on-racism-racial-discrimination-xenophobia-and-related-forms-of-intolerance>

New Publication

How Black Working-Class Youth are Criminalised and Excluded in the English School System

<https://irr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/How-Black-Working-Class-Youth-are-Criminalised-and-Excluded-in-the-English-School-System.pdf>

News

Half of Conservative party members believe Islam is threat, poll finds

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2020/sep/30/half-of-conservative-party-members-believe-islam-is-threat-poll-finds>

Half of Tories say Islam clashes with British life

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/half-of-tories-say-islam-clashes-with-british-life-pzhgn9rhq>

Only one in five universities has adopted anti-Semitism definition despite Government's threats

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2020/09/29/one-five-universities-has-adopted-anti-semitism-definition-despite/>

Black people disproportionately affected by homelessness, new data shows

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/02/black-people-disproportionately-affected-homelessness-new-data/>

Black working-class pupils unfairly excluded in England, thinktank warns

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2020/sep/28/black-working-class-pupils-unfairly-excluded-in-england-thinktank-warns>

Barrister fined for 'positive discrimination' comments after Asian woman appointed as judge

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/01/barrister-fined-positive-discrimination-comments-asian-woman/>

N-word: The troubled history of the racial slur

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-53749800>

World premiere of play on the death of Sheku Bayoh in police custody to shine a light on Scottish racism

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18763929.world-premiere-play-death-sheku-bayoh-police-custody-shine-light-scottish-racism/>

Glamorgan accused of racism over lack of opportunity for Asian cricketers
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/cricket/2020/09/29/glamorgan-accused-racism-lack-opportunity-asian-cricketers/>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Petitions

National Curriculum (African Scottish History) (PE1813) and National Curriculum (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic History) (PE1814)
<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12852&i=116180#ScotParlOR>

New Publication

Scotland's Population 2019 - The Registrar General's Annual Review of Demographic Trends
<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/rgar/2019/rgar-2019.pdf>

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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/coronavirus>

Protect-Scot contact tracing app

<https://protect.scot/how-it-works>

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/>

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

COVID-19 information: Languages

S5W-31972 Alison Johnstone (Green): To ask the Scottish Government in which languages it publishes its COVID-19 information, other than in English.

Reply from Jeane Freeman: As part of our activity we have worked with public and third sector partners to understand language and accessibility requirements, and have worked collaboratively to translate and distribute key coronavirus information. This has included the following information:

1. Scottish Government has been leading the coordination of translations of NHS Inform coronavirus content with NHS Scotland and Public Health Scotland, which continues to be updated on a bi-weekly. Languages or formats are Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Hindi, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish, Urdu, BSL, Easy Read and audio.
2. Coronavirus public health information posters have been produced in multiple languages and formats. For example, Household Isolation posters were translated into Arabic, BSL, Audio MP3, Easy Read, Kurdish, Polish, Sorani, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Tigrinya and Vietnamese.
3. The Scottish Government Route Map Publications (Route Map, Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3) were translated into Audio, BSL, Easy Read, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, Gaelic, and Polish.
4. The two National Door Drop Mailings (Covid-19 and Test and Protect) distributed by the Scottish Government have been made available in a variety of languages and accessible formats.
5. The FACTS poster was created in 38 additional languages and formats.
6. The Parent Club key coronavirus information for parents and carers was translated into the following additional languages and formats: Audio, BSL, Arabic, Bengali, Simplified Chinese, Hindi, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Slovak, Spanish and Urdu.
7. The Protect Scotland App Explainer Video was created in BSL, Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Punjabi and Urdu.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-31972>

BAME people: COVID-19 information

S5W-31998 Alison Johnstone (Green): To ask the Scottish Government how it ensures that its COVID-19 information is made available and accessible to (a) BAME people and (b) non-native English speakers.

Reply from Jeane Freeman: The Scottish Government has been working with public and third sector partners understand language and accessibility requirements, and have worked collaboratively to create and disseminate this information. Given the fast-moving nature of coronavirus-related guidance, we took into consideration the lead time with translations and the danger of out-of-date messages being shared and distributed, and focused on working in partnership to create and distribute key coronavirus information to benefit the wider community.

1. Media spend: Up-weighting for ethnic minorities through our media buy is now a standard part of our activity relating to health messaging. For example, the Test and Protect App campaign had budget allocation for media channels that support targeting to ethnic minority communities.

2. The First Minister's daily briefings include BSL interpreters to make COVID-19 policy updates accessible to deaf people.
3. We have been working in partnership with NHS Scotland and Public Health Scotland to spread the message of available translations and formats. Organisations reached include: Scottish Refugee Council; NHS Lothian Minority Ethnic Inclusion Service (MEHIS); British Red Cross; Inclusion Scotland; Scottish Independent Living Coalition (SILC); Progress in Dialogue; Article 12.
4. In addition to translated materials we have co-created coronavirus information with organisations to develop materials specific to ME communities. For example we have been working with the Scottish Public Health Network (ScotPHN) to create a bespoke, printed Easy Read Version of the Test and Protect Door Drop created specifically for the Gypsy/Traveller community, which was distributed by COSLA to Gypsy/Traveller sites.
5. The Scottish Government is collaborating with BEMIS, the national umbrella body supporting the development of the Ethnic Minorities Voluntary Sector in Scotland, on coronavirus-related public health messaging and information for parents and carers. This includes development of supporting materials and share of information across their main networks and membership across Scotland.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-31998>

Scottish Government Press Releases

New grant for those self-isolating

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-grant-for-those-self-isolating/>

Support for self-isolating students

<https://www.gov.scot/news/support-for-self-isolating-students/>

Scottish Government Publications

Coronavirus (COVID-19): daily data for Scotland

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

Coronavirus (COVID-19): trends in daily data

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

UK Government Press Releases

Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 30 September 2020

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-30-september-2020>

Interim results from largest COVID-19 study published

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/interim-results-from-largest-covid-19-study-published>

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Other News

Black History Month: Postboxes painted to honour black Britons

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-54344961>

Black History Month: First black Rangers player honoured with specially designed postbox in Glasgow

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/people/black-history-month-first-black-rangers-player-honoured-specially-designed-postbox-glasgow-2987567>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Children (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/children-scotland-bill>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

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

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

UK Parliament

Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2699>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2638>

Asylum Support (Prescribed Period) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2535>

European Citizens' Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2704>

Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2660>

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

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2714>

Proposed amendments

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/58-01/121/5801121-R-II.pdf>

Report Stage, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-09-30/debates/7A84FDAB-9954-4A64-8F33-24C37C38101B/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-09-30/debates/7A84FDAB-9954-4A64-8F33-24C37C38101B/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-05/debates/FB777698-CA5A-4478-BA74-52F6FB2A3064/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-05/debates/FB777698-CA5A-4478-BA74-52F6FB2A3064/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-05/debates/97A02583-03AD-4CBD-BAE9-8E85758EA004/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-05/debates/97A02583-03AD-4CBD-BAE9-8E85758EA004/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2574>

Immigration (Health and Social Care Staff)

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2770>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2538>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2611>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

Coronavirus (COVID-19): supporting people and communities (closing date 16 October 2020)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/supporting-people-and-communities-call-for-ideas/>

Hate crime laws [in England and Wales] (closing date 24 December 2020)

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>

Future Arrangements for Early Medical Abortion at Home (closing date 5 January 2021)

<https://consult.gov.scot/population-health/early-medical-abortion-at-home/>

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>

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Job Opportunities

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

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

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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>

Resilient & Inclusive Communities Fund

Running until March 2021

BEMIS grants of up to £3,000, in partnership with Foundation Scotland, for eligible local community groups and organisations supporting disadvantaged and excluded communities (suffering with domestic abuse; mental health; access to food, shelter and amenities; poverty, access to services/care). For information see <https://bemis.org.uk/ricfund/>

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/>

**** Places of Worship Fund**

Running until mid January 2021

Interfaith Scotland grants of up to £500 for places of worship that are struggling to meet the safety requirements of re-opening their buildings and safely holding services within Government Guidelines. With discretion the funds can also be used to assist in keeping open places that have managed their initial outlay with regard to safely reopening their place of worship but are now struggling to keep up the measures required to stay open.

This fund will help places of worship to:

- **Re-open** safely, including deep clean premises, provide appropriate signage and ensure that all volunteers and staff have appropriate training and PPE.
- **Keep open** places of worship that are struggling with the on-going health and safety costs during the pandemic
- **Remain connected** with those still too vulnerable to come to a place of worship – this may be through regular mail outs, telephone calls or the provision of mobile devices to allow those without digital access to keep in touch
- **Advancing Equality and Tackling Loneliness** Supporting faith communities to open the doors of their places of worship in a safe and inclusive manner will enable thousands of lonely and isolated people across Scotland to re-connect with their wider community.

The funding will be available for faith communities and community groups that utilise places of worship only, and will be offered to faith communities that are members and associate members of Interfaith Scotland in the first instance. For full details and an application form contact Frances Hume frances@interfaithscotland.org

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

** *this week!*

Falling through the cracks: how can we protect vulnerable EU citizens?

7 October 2020 (online, 3.00–4.00)

All-Party Parliamentary Group on Migration event on the challenges for EU citizens applying to the EU Settlement Scheme, including include a presentation from the Migration Observatory on their new report "[Unsettled Status – 2020](#)" and testimonies from EU citizens about their difficulties in accessing the Scheme. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y5q5tn3d>

** *this week!*

Under 25? Have Your Voice Heard by Decision Makers in Scotland!

8 October 2020 (online, 6.30–7.30)

Interfaith Scotland and the Scottish Youth Parliament consultation on issues facing young people in Scotland such as the government's response to homelessness, the protection of young people from seldom heard groups, equal pay, and the government's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. For information contact aparna@interfaithscotland.org and register for the event [here](#)

**** Ten Years of the Equality Act 2010: Where Next for Equality at Work?**

14 October 2020 (online, 11.05–11.55)

Panel discussion reflecting on the positive changes brought by a decade of the Equality Act and future challenges and opportunities for equality, diversity and inclusion in the workplace. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yydsgjfc>

**** Racism and Religion Where do we go from here?**

15 October 2020 (online, 6.00–8.30)

Interfaith Glasgow dialogue on hate crime, the Black Lives Matter movement, and lessons from the pandemic, highlighting intersectional and interfaith approaches to building an anti-racist movement, as, together, we seek to re-imagine and reshape our post-pandemic world. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yyvauus6>

Developing Management and Leadership Skills Programme for Black and Minority Ethnic Communities

21 October 2020 to 20 May 2021 (online)

PATH training programme to address imbalances in the representation from black and minority ethnic communities in all aspects and levels of public life. For information see <https://www.dropbox.com/s/gztq5btqsfhvukh/dmls%202020-21%20course%20outline.docx?dl=0>

**** Strengthening Migrants' Human Rights in Scotland: The Plans & the Priorities**

28 October 2020 (online, 9.30–12.00)

Human Rights Consortium event on how migrants' rights can be strengthened, as Scotland moves to incorporate more international human rights. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yxu2ppyl>

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

4 November 2020 (online, 10.00–12.00)

13 January 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

3 March 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

Positive Action in Housing course to provide information about fundamental issues of housing, homelessness and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals and look at how service users might prepare themselves to avoid the threats of Brexit. For information contact training@positiveactionh.org or see <https://www.paih.org/our-services/training/>

Scottish Interfaith Week

8-15 November 2020

SIFW brings people together whilst promoting dialogue, understanding and co-operation between Scotland's diverse religious communities and cultures. The full programme of events is available at <http://scottishinterfaithweek.org/programme-2020>

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

11 November 2020 (online, 10.00–12.00)

20 January 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

10 March 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

Positive Action in Housing course to explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant and the process involved in making a claim for asylum. The course will also explore the barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers building a new life in Scotland and their respective entitlement to services. For information contact training@positiveactionh.org or see <https://www.paih.org/our-services/training/>

No Recourse to Public Funds

18 November 2020 (online, 10.00–12.00)

3 February 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

17 March 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

Positive Action in Housing course to help frontline workers identify a tenant's current status, clarify what this means in terms of access to public funds and plan effective support where difficulties arise. For information contact training@positiveactionh.org or see <https://www.paih.org/our-services/training/>

Equality and Diversity in Workplace

18 and 19 November 2020 (two day course) (online, 10.30–12.30)

Positive Action in Housing course outlining the fundamentals of how to create a respectful, supportive and inclusive working environment for a diverse staff and volunteer group, discuss the type of language that can be offensive and excluding, and debate how to

challenge such behaviour in a constructive manner. For information contact training@positiveactionh.org or see <https://www.paih.org/our-services/training/>

Interpreting Culture

19 and 20 January 2021 (two day course) (online, 10.30–12.30)

Positive Action in Housing course to examine where culture comes from and look at examples of its extraordinary diversity, and focus on interactions with people from other cultures to improve understanding, confidence and trust. For information contact training@positiveactionh.org or see <https://www.paih.org/our-services/training/>

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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



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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