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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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## Immigration and Asylum

### UK Parliament Debates

#### **No Recourse to Public Funds**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-10-08/debates/944270AD-A1F0-4E11-8A03-4FC869173C45/NoRecourseToPublicFunds>

#### **Immigration Skills Charge (Amendment) Regulations 2020**

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-07/debates/70EC4177-39BE-4C43-A79D-AB1CC051CF4E/ImmigrationSkillsCharge\(Amendment\)Regulations2020](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-07/debates/70EC4177-39BE-4C43-A79D-AB1CC051CF4E/ImmigrationSkillsCharge(Amendment)Regulations2020)

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

### UK Visas and Immigration: Standards

**Stuart Anderson (Conservative)** [96190] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what additional financial and other support she is putting in place to ensure that UK Visas and Immigration office staff are able to process all inquiries promptly.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** There are a variety of measures in place to ensure that UK Visas and Immigration office staff are able to process MP enquiries promptly. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic a dedicated telephone and email enquiry line has been created to ensure customers can get access to necessary information quickly. All calls are monitored and themes drawn out to ensure insight is feedback into the system, supporting staff to answer queries accurately and promptly. UKVI has also maintained and proactively updated the gov.uk help pages to help aid self-serve to ensure more queries can be resolved without needing to directly contact the Home Office.

Performance against service standards in dealing with inquiries is regularly monitored and the Home Office will take further steps if necessary to ensure they are maintained.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/96190>

### Immigrants: Coronavirus

**Clive Betts (Labour)** [96771] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what additional support the Government will provide to people with No Recourse to Public Funds who lose their jobs during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** The Government remains committed to protecting vulnerable people and has acted decisively to ensure that we support everyone through this pandemic. We have introduced a range of measures to ensure people can stay safe and many of these are available for those with a No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition.

For those whose jobs are impacted but have retained employment status, the assistance provided under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (which remains in place until 31<sup>st</sup> October) and the Self-employed Income Support Scheme are not classed as public funds and are available to all those who are legally working or self-employed respectively, including those with NRPF status and those on zero-hour contracts. Statutory sick pay and some other work-related benefits, which are also not classed as public funds and so are also available to all.

If an individual with NRPF has been working in the UK and lost their employment, if sufficient national insurance contributions have been made, they may be entitled to claim contributory Employment and Support Allowance.

We have also temporarily extended the eligibility criteria for free school meals to support some families with NRPF, in recognition of the difficulties they may be facing during these unique circumstances. More information, including eligibility details can be found here

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance>.

For families facing hardship, further government support is available which can be found on GOV.UK

<https://www.gov.uk/find-coronavirus-support>.

Individuals whose lawful basis of stay in the UK is based on their family life or human rights can apply to have the NRPF condition lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application if they are destitute or at risk of destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances.

Local authorities may also provide basic safety net support, regardless of immigration status, if it is established that there is a genuine care need that does not arise solely from destitution, for example, where there are community care needs, migrants with serious health problems or family cases where the wellbeing of a child is in question. The Government has published guidance and support for migrants affected by Covid-19 on GOV.UK

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96771>

### **Immigrants: Coronavirus**

**Claudia Webbe (Independent)** [98786] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to Recommendation 13 of the Work and Pensions Select Committee's report entitled, DWP's response to the coronavirus outbreak, HC 178, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of suspending the 'No Recourse to Public Funds' conditions on public health grounds for the duration of the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Justin Tomlinson:** Access to DWP income-related benefits such as Universal Credit flows from an individual's immigration status.

DWP has no legal powers to award taxpayer-funded benefits to an individual whose Home Office immigration status specifies no recourse to public funds. Non-UK nationals and family members who are issued with a residence permit with a 'no recourse to public funds' condition are not eligible to access taxpayer-funded benefits such as Universal Credit.

Guidance on the support available for persons granted leave with no recourse to public funds conditions, including from local authorities, is available on the [Gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk). Those with a 'no recourse to public funds' condition can claim contributions-based benefits, such as new-style Jobseeker's Allowance, providing they meet the eligibility criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98786>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/1558/documents/14743/default/>

*The guidance referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Immigrants: Finance**

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [99628] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many requests for reconsideration of No Recourse to Public Funds status for reasons of destitution were received by her Department in each of the last 10 months.

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [99629] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the average time taken for her Department to decide applications to lift No Recourse to Public Funds conditions.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** Migrants with leave under the Family and Human Rights routes can apply to have the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) restriction lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application. This application can be made if a migrant is destitute or at risk of destitution, if the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or where there are other exceptional financial circumstances. Following previous questions and the commitment given to UK Statistics Authority (UKSA), Change of Conditions information is now part of the transparency data which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-protection-data-august-2020>.

The relevant data is in tab CoC\_01.

The published data provides information on the number of requests received on a quarterly basis rather than each month

The published data also shows the average time taken to decide a Change of Conditions request, for each quarter.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-06/99628>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-06/99629>

### **Visas: English Language**

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [100424] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how her Department is making decisions on visa applications for people required to undertake English language tests as part of their application process where language test centres are closed due to the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Home Office has implemented a number of measures for visa applicants, including for those who are unable to take an English language tests due to the impact of Covid-19.

Details of all published concessions are available at

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

Some specific concessions are in place on English language testing, for example, those applying to enter the UK or remain on the basis of family or private life can apply for an exemption if the test centre was closed or if they were unable to travel to a test centre due to Covid-19.

For students, Higher Education Providers (HEP) can self-assess the English ability of those studying at degree level or above and due to Covid-19, this provision has been temporarily extended to allow HEPs to self-assess the English ability of students undertaking pre-sessional courses.

The majority of Secure English Language Testing (SELT) centres have reopened in England and in a number of overseas locations outside of the UK, where local restrictions have eased.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-07/100424>

### **Crimes against the Person: Migrant Workers**

**Claudia Webbe (Independent)** [98788] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to enable overseas workers who are victims of corporate harm in the UK to access the UK courts.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** In cross-border cases, there are well established rules and procedures that determine whether a court in the UK has jurisdiction to determine a case.

This will include considering factors such as where the defendant in the case is based, or whether they can be served a claim in the UK. The court may also consider whether the alleged damage or loss was sustained within the UK or resulted from an act committed within the UK.

Subject to certain limited exceptions, Article 4.1 of the Recast Brussels Regulation confers a right on any claimant (regardless of their domicile) to sue a UK domiciled defendant in a UK court.

The Government has no plans to legislate to amend the current position in law.

From 11pm on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020 the UK will no longer be party to the Recast Brussels Regulation. Transitional provisions will apply in cases where proceedings have been instituted before that date (so that the Brussels rules will still apply in those cases).

For cases where the Brussels Regulation does not apply, and where proceedings

are instituted after the end of the Transition Period, the domestic private international law rules – in a case like the one mentioned, those of England and Wales - will apply to determine where such cases will be heard. Each of the three jurisdictions in the UK have their own rules. Under the rules in England and Wales, the primary factor determining where a case may be heard relates to where the claimant needs to serve the claim against the defendant. If the defendant is present within England and Wales (even temporarily) such that service can take place, then the court in England and Wales is able to take jurisdiction (although the defendant may seek to dispute that). If service in England and Wales is not possible, the claimant will need to obtain permission from the court to serve proceedings overseas (subject to certain limited exceptions).

The UK has applied to rejoin the Lugano Convention 2007. This has similar jurisdiction rules to the Brussels recast Regulation. If the UK's application is accepted, then broadly speaking, in any case where Lugano applied jurisdiction would once again primarily turn on the domicile of the defendant.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98788>

### **Migrant Workers: Coronavirus**

**Claudia Webbe (Independent)** [98798] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will waive the NHS health surcharge for all migrant frontline workers during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Government has now exempted NHS and care workers from paying the Immigration Health Surcharge, and this is not just for the duration of the pandemic.

This is in recognition of the contribution they make to the NHS. The purpose of the surcharge is to benefit the NHS and support patient care, something NHS and care workers do directly through their work. However, it is fair to expect people arriving in the UK to work in non-health related roles to contribute to the comprehensive range of NHS services available to them from when they arrive in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98798>

### **Migrant Workers: Coronavirus**

**Claudia Webbe (Independent)** [98797] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to provide dependant family members of all migrant NHS workers Indefinite Leave to Remain during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Migrants working in the NHS and wider health and care sector have made a huge contribution in tackling COVID-19 and the Government has taken un-precedented measures to ensure the sector is supported fully.

We are granting immediate indefinite leave to remain (ILR), free of any charges, to family members of migrant NHS, health and care workers who unfortunately lose their lives as a result of contracting COVID-19.

All other dependant family members of migrant NHS workers may be granted ILR if they meet the relevant eligibility criteria.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98797>

### **Immigrants: Hong Kong**

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [92770] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support is available for Hong Kong citizens seeking asylum in the UK to apply for (a) the right to remain and (b) the right to work and study in the UK.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** There is no provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge.

All asylum claims must be lodged in-country and we have no plans to amend this. However, all asylum claims made in the UK are judged on their individual merits.

Asylum seekers have by definition applied for the right to remain and they will usually have the right to work and the right to study if certain conditions are met. The UK Government is introducing a new immigration route for British National (Overseas) citizens in Hong Kong, providing the opportunity for them and their family members to live, work and study in the UK. This follows the imposition by the Chinese Government of a national security law on Hong Kong, in breach of the Sino-British Joint Declaration, that restricts the rights and freedoms of the people of Hong Kong.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-21/92770>

### **Refugees: Resettlement**

**Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [98727]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many refugee resettlement places the Government plans to make available for each year up to and including 2026.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** 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.

Ultimately the number of refugees we resettle every year depends on a variety of factors including local authorities' capacity for supporting refugees and the extent to which Community Sponsorship continues to thrive. We look forward to working with local communities to welcome thousands more of those in need in the years to come.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98727>

### **Refugees: Resettlement**

**Afzal Khan (Labour) [99107]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what consultation her Department has undertaken with representatives of (a) local authorities and (b) voluntary organisations on their preparedness to accommodate refugee resettlement arrivals in response to the proposed resumption of refugee resettlement flights.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** We maintain regular dialogue with a variety of resettlement stakeholders, including local authorities, Strategic Migration Partnerships and other support providers. To date, our resettlement schemes have been supported by over 300 local authorities across the UK, and we are extremely grateful for this support.

Additionally, the successful Community Sponsorship Scheme puts in place the Government's commitment to develop a scheme to allow community groups, charities and faith groups to support refugees directly

Due to coronavirus (COVID-19) related restrictions and pressures, both overseas and in the UK, it is not currently possible to undertake any refugee resettlement activity. We continue to evaluate how to respond given these restrictions and pressures, but we expect to resume refugee resettlement activity when safe to do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-05/99107>

### **Asylum: Coronavirus**

**Rebecca Long Bailey (Labour) [98710]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers have been evicted from their homes in England

in areas where covid-19 local lockdown measures have been in place.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** We have commenced the cessation of support for both positive cases (who move on to be supported in Local Authority accommodation) and negative cases (failed Asylum seekers).

A Notice to Quit is served on all discontinued cases by the provider and steps taken to remove people from the accommodation following the end of grace period.

Due to the sequencing of both cessations themselves and the additional local restrictions being put in place the number who have received a Notice to Quit where Covid 19 measures are in place is not available in a recordable format.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98710>

### **Asylum: Employment**

**Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op)** [98726] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Under-Secretary of State of 11 June 2020, Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Bill (fourth sitting), Official Report, column 123, if she will publish the evidential basis for the Government's view that unrestricted access to employment opportunities for asylum seekers may also act as an incentive for more people to choose to come here illegally.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** There is already published, independent evidence showing that good economic conditions and essential services can create an incentive for people to choose to go to a particular country illegally. This is because it is easier to work under such conditions – and we cannot ignore that access to the labour market is among the reasons that so many people choose to come to the UK illegally, rather than remain in any of the countries through which they transit. That is why 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.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-02/98726>

*The Minister's comments, referred to above, can be read at*

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-06-11/debates/6ef9890e-5b2a-47e6-a1ef-8cbd337746f7/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill\(FourthSitting\)#contribution-195A3C54-5974-4300-B8F6-6F82DB568985](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-06-11/debates/6ef9890e-5b2a-47e6-a1ef-8cbd337746f7/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill(FourthSitting)#contribution-195A3C54-5974-4300-B8F6-6F82DB568985)

### **Asylum: Employment**

**Debbie Abrahams (Labour)** [100398] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Government's review on the restrictions on asylum seekers' right to work, initiated in December 2018, will provide an assessment of (a) the potential benefits to people's wellbeing while they are in the asylum system and (b) their integration prospects upon receipt of a positive asylum decision.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** There is already published, independent evidence showing that good economic conditions and essential services can create an incentive for people to choose to go to a particular country illegally. This is because it is easier to work under such conditions – and we cannot ignore that access to the labour market is among the reasons that so many people choose to come to the UK illegally, rather than remain in any of the countries through which they transit. That is why 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.

Asylum seeker right to work is a complex issue. This is under review; it is crucial

we take the time to get this right and we are listening carefully to the arguments and considering the evidence put forward on the issue. The Home Office will be happy to discuss the content of the review once it has been completed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-07/100398>

### **Asylum: Hotels**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [89730] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hotels are being used by her Department for asylum accommodation; how many people are resident in those hotels; and what the average length of stay is in hotel asylum accommodation.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** 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 includes the numbers of those accommodated under Section 98, Section 95 and Section 4.

The average length of stay is not available in a reportable format and to provide the information could only be done at disproportionate cost.

It is Home Office policy to move people into suitable Dispersed Accommodation (DA) once their claim for support has been assessed.

The current global pandemic has presented significant challenges when it comes to the provision of asylum accommodation. This has included the need to source sufficient accommodation to meet demand.

A comprehensive cessation plan has been established with input from Local Authorities, Other Government Departments and Stakeholders to reduce the number of people in hotels.

Work to explore further options to accommodate asylum seekers included work with the Ministry of Defence to identify and to utilise MOD sites at short notice.

This accommodation is contingency accommodation, whilst pressures in the system are addressed and will be discontinued as soon as the Home Office is able to do so.

Our accommodation providers are working to maximise their procurement plans throughout the UK, but they can only do so with Local Authority agreement. It is our intention to move all individuals in contingency accommodation into suitable DA as soon as reasonably practical.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-14/89730>

### **Asylum: Hotels**

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [99009] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) safeguarding and (b) other training her Department makes available to (i) provider staff and (ii) hotel staff working in hotels which house asylum seekers.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** The Government demands the highest standards from contractors and their accommodation and monitor them closely to ensure this is maintained.

Details of the providers training programme that all staff including volunteers and subcontractor agents who are likely to have direct contact or have access to Service users details are set out in the contracts with the accommodation providers; specifically the "Statement of Requirements", which can be found at:

<http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2018-1112/AASC - Schedule 2 - Statement of Requirements.pdf>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-05/99009>



### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [95106] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Ministry of Defence sites (a) have been agreed for use and (b) are being considered for use to house asylum seekers; and what the location is of each such site.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** The Home Office has agreed the use of two sites with the Ministry of Defence; Napier Barracks, Kent, and Penally Training Camp, Pembrokeshire. Discussions are ongoing about whether any other sites may meet requirements.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/95106>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [89732] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to move residents from asylum accommodation hotels into dispersal housing; and what the target timeframe is for that work to be completed.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** It is Home Office policy to move people into suitable Dispersed Accommodation (DA) once their claim for support has been assessed. The current global pandemic has presented significant challenges when it comes to the provision of asylum accommodation. This has included the need to source sufficient accommodation to meet demand.

Work to explore further options to accommodate asylum seekers included work with the Ministry of Defence to identify and to utilise MOD sites at short notice.

This accommodation is contingency accommodation, whilst pressures in the system are addressed and will be discontinued as soon as the Home Office is able to do so.

A comprehensive cessation plan has been established with input from Local Authorities, Other Government Departments and Stakeholders to reduce the number of people in hotels.

Our accommodation providers are working to maximise their procurement plans throughout the UK, but they can only do so with Local Authority agreement. It is our intention to move all individuals in contingency accommodation into suitable DA as soon as reasonably practical.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-14/89732>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [89747] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department and its contractors are taking to ensure that people in asylum accommodation can comply with the new public health stipulation of a maximum of six people gathering, in (a) hotels, (b) other initial accommodation centres and (c) HMOs used for asylum accommodation.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** 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.

Laws prohibiting social gatherings of more than six people apart from a set of limited exemptions including work and education apply to everyone. The Home Office are working closely with accommodation providers to ensure that the new health stipulation of “the rule of six” 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/2020-09-14/89747>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [96929] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she consulted public health directors in asylum dispersal areas on her recent decision to resume cessation of asylum support for people whose applications for refugee status have been refused.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** At the beginning of the Coronavirus pandemic, the Home Office paused ending support for people who had been granted asylum, or whose claim had been refused. This was to ensure that people were not made homeless and able to follow social distancing. We said from the outset that this was a temporary measure which would be brought to an end as soon as it was safe to do so.

The Home Office has started cessations of support in a phased way which will reduce demand on the asylum system while prioritising the safety of those within the asylum system. This means moving people out of Home Office accommodation and ending subsistence payments from the Home Office.

We have been working closely with National and Local health Colleagues throughout the pandemic to inform our approach and will continue to do so.

We remain committed to working closely with the accommodation providers and communicating with local authorities to relieve pressure and capacity as much as possible and ensure that health guidance is being followed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96929>

### **Asylum: Slavery**

**Karen Bradley (Conservative)** [98962] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what training requirements her Department plans to include in outsourcing contracts for people undertaking asylum interviews to identify cases of human trafficking and modern-day slavery.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** Asylum Operations are exploring many options to reduce the number of outstanding asylum claims. Alongside seeking temporary resource from within the Home Office and other government departments, we are also exploring with third-party suppliers to test the viability of whether they can deliver the support required as a temporary, short term measure. Asylum interviews have not been outsourced, and at this stage we are only exploring the potential feasibility. Third party interviewing officers will complete a bespoke training package, delivered by the qualified asylum operations training team, that has been designed specifically to meet their needs. The course will include training specifically about modern slavery and safeguarding awareness. Anyone who conducts asylum

interviews receives thorough training to ensure they are fully equipped for the role. To guarantee governance and accountability, mechanisms are in place to provide 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. This will include those interviews conducted by third party interviewing officers

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-10-05/98962>

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

### British Nationality: Coronavirus

**Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench)** [HL8351] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many UK citizenship ceremonies have been cancelled as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic; what assessment they have made of the impact such cancellations have had on the ability of applicants to (1) work, and (2) study; and what plans they have to introduce a mechanism to (a) grant citizenships, and (b) hold citizenship ceremonies, online.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Each Local Authority is responsible for administering citizenship ceremonies within their area of responsibility and figures are not recorded centrally by the Home Office. Although ceremonies were suspended in March in line with Government advice relating to COVID-19, they have now resumed and are being strictly conducted in line with Government advice relating to social distancing and public safety. The Home Office has worked with Local Authorities to enable them to deliver online ceremonies. The first online 'virtual' ceremony took place on 20 July 2020.

The majority of individuals waiting to attend a citizenship ceremony already enjoy settled status in the UK and as such are allowed to work and study here. In a small number of instances where it has been necessary to expedite ceremonies, special arrangements have been made.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-22/hl8351>

### Immigrants

**Lord Greaves (Liberal Democrat)** [HL8519] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people have been granted pre-settled status; and of these people, (1) how many are now eligible to apply for settled status on the basis of five years' continuous residence in the UK, (2) how many will be eligible to apply for settled status before 30 June 2021, and (3) how many will be eligible to apply for settled status in each of the 12 months following 30 June 2021.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The latest published information shows 3.88 million (3,880,400) EU Settlement Scheme applications had been concluded up to 30 September 2020, of which 1,641,600 have been granted pre-settled status. The latest figures can be found on the Home Office's 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics' web page available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics>

A person granted pre-settled status can apply for settled status as soon as they qualify for this. They will be eligible for settled status once they have completed five years' continuous residence or where other criteria for eligibility for settled status without that length of continuous residence are met. The Home Office cannot assess a person's eligibility for settled status until they make an application to the scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/hl8519>

## Visas

**Lord Horam (Conservative)** [HL8414] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many visas have been granted in 2020; and of those, how many were visas for (1) work, (2) family, and (3) study.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office publishes data on visas in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>  
Data on grants of visas, by category, are published in table Vis\_D02 of the entry clearance detailed datasets.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/managed-migration-datasets#entry-clearance-visas-granted-outside-the-uk>

These data show that 512,749 visas have been issued in quarters 1 and 2 (January to June) 2020. Of these, 49,679 were for Work, 46,258 were for Study, and 15,426 were for Family reasons.

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to year ending June 2020. Data relating to the third quarter of 2020 (July to September) are due for future publication, on 26 November 2020.

Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the entry clearance summary tables.

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

The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on entry clearance visas.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the 'Research and statistics calendar'.

[https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?keywords=immigration&content\\_store\\_document\\_type=upcoming\\_statistics&organisations%5B%5D=home-office&order=relevance](https://www.gov.uk/search/research-and-statistics?keywords=immigration&content_store_document_type=upcoming_statistics&organisations%5B%5D=home-office&order=relevance)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/hl8414>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Immigration: Coronavirus**

**Lord Birt (Crossbench)** [HL8409] To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of e-mails received by the Home Office Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre in August were answered within the usual reply period of five working days.

### **Asylum: Employment**

**Baroness Cox (Crossbench)** [HL8410] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the report by the Lift the Ban coalition *Lift the Ban: Why giving people seeking asylum the right to work is common sense*, published on 30 July, what assessment they have made of the potential economic benefit of giving asylum seekers the right to work in the UK.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Asylum seekers can work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months, through no fault of their own. Those allowed to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List, which is published by the Home Office and based on expert advice from the 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.

The Home Office is currently reviewing policy on right to work.

As part of the plans to speed up Asylum decision making, over the last 18 months, UK Visas and Immigration have increased the number of Asylum decision makers

and support staff as part of a rolling recruitment campaign and mobilised a transformation programme that seeks to simplify, streamline and digitise processes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/hl8409>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-23/hl8410>

*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>

## New Publications

**Sanctuary in Scotland Information on refugee issues for faith groups in Scotland**

[https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/69738/sanctuary-in-scotland.pdf](https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/69738/sanctuary-in-scotland.pdf)

**EU Settlement Scheme statistics**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-statistics>

**EU Settlement Scheme: updated factsheet**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-factsheet/eu-settlement-scheme-factsheet>

**EU Settlement Scheme: updated introduction for local authorities**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-introduction-for-local-authorities/eu-settlement-scheme-introduction-for-local-authorities>

**EU Settlement Scheme: updated local authorities toolkit**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-local-authorities-toolkit>

**EU Settlement Scheme: updated introduction for community groups**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-introduction-for-community-groups/eu-settlement-scheme-introduction-for-community-groups>

**EU Settlement Scheme: updated community groups toolkit**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-community-groups-toolkit>

**Research briefing: Asylum accommodation: the use of hotels**

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8990/>

**Research briefing: Family visa requirements: future changes affecting British citizens in the EU**

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-9022/>

**The Home Office response to the report on an inspection of family reunion applications**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/response-to-the-report-on-an-inspection-of-family-reunion-applications/the-home-office-response-to-the-report-on-an-inspection-of-family-reunion-applications-accessible-version>

**Letter from Baroness Williams of Trafford to Baroness Lister of Burtersett regarding the Minimum Income Requirement and how the current level was arrived at**

[http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2020-0577/Baroness\\_Williams-Baroness\\_Lister\\_letter\\_ISSC\\_Bill\\_Report\\_Stage.pdf](http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2020-0577/Baroness_Williams-Baroness_Lister_letter_ISSC_Bill_Report_Stage.pdf)

## News

**Scottish 'separatist' blast as UK immigration minister rejects devolved controls**

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/scottish-separatist-blast-uk-immigration-22815584>

**Lords defy government over refugee children's right to family reunion**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/05/lords-defy-government-over-refugee-childrens-right-to-family-reunion>

**Two-thirds of British voters think EU nationals should not have free movement**

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2020/oct/07/two-thirds-of-british-voters-think-eu-nationals-should-not-have-free-movement>

**Channel crossings: Patel warned against arrests of migrants who face risk of exploitation in France**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/channel-crossings-smugglers-migrants-asylum-seekers-forced-labour-b714733.html>

**Migrant crisis: Dinghies to UK could be 'disabled using nets'**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-54499958>

**Britain to use nets to 'disable' dinghies carrying migrants across Channel**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/10/exclusive-royal-navy-use-nets-disable-dinghies-carrying-migrants/>

**Channel 'commander' plans to use nets to stop migrant boats**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/channel-crossing-migrant-nets-boats-asylum-seekers-border-force-b958984.html>

**Three migrant boats intercepted in English Channel**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-kent-54491608>

**They're branded economic migrants – now young men trying to cross Channel tell us why they really want to reach UK**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/channel-crossing-border-calais-economic-migrants-refugees-b555289.html>

**'Of course we are scared but we have no choice': Why family of refugees is risking everything to cross Channel**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/migrant-channel-crossing-refugee-crisis-calais-b431644.html>

**Home Office urged to halt evictions of refused asylum seekers**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/07/home-office-urged-to-halt-evictions-of-refused-asylum-seekers>

**Home Office evicting asylum seekers in areas with local lockdowns in breach of its own guidance**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-eviction-lockdown-coronavirus-home-office-b913200.html>

**Mercy Baguma: Home Office facing legal action**

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18777917.mercy-baguma-home-office-facing-legal-action/>

**Fears of asylum case backlog after cut to legal aid fees**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/fears-of-asylum-case-backlog-after-cut-to-legal-aid-fees-wmf0nv778>

**Third chartered flight to deport Channel migrants is disrupted by human rights challenges**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/09/third-chartered-flight-deport-channel-migrants-disrupted-human/>

**Essex lorry deaths: Vietnamese migrants called relatives while suffocating, court hears**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/09/essex-lorry-deaths-vietnamese-migrants-called-relatives-while-suffocating-court-hears>

**Essex lorry deaths: 39 Vietnamese migrants suffocated in container, court hears**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/07/essex-lorry-deaths-39-vietnamese-migrants-suffocated-in-container-court-hears>

**Essex lorry deaths: Driver told to give migrants 'air quickly' but not to let them out, trial hears**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/07/essex-lorry-deaths-driver-told-give-migrants-air-quickly-not/>

**Migrants in Essex lorry suffocated in pitch darkness and unbearable heat, court told**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrants-in-essex-lorry-suffocated-in-pitch-darkness-and-unbearable-heat-court-told-qmbk365b3>

**Court hears dying message of migrant father trapped in lorry container**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/court-hears-father-s-dying-message-from-container-lorry-pwzf8bdzd>

**Refugees are not burdens, they are assets. The pandemic is our chance to reset Britain's approach to migrants**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/letters/refugees-coronavirus-pandemic-britain-migrants-b937953.html>

**Voters don't necessarily want to exclude low-paid or 'unskilled' immigrants**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/voters-dont-necessarily-want-to-exclude-low-paid-or-unskilled-immigrants-vvpx6nmr7>

**'I'm so scared': They came to the UK seeking safety, only to be targeted by the far right**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-immigration-refugees-far-right-hotels-britain-first-asylum-seekers-b720598.html>

**Osime Brown's mother vows to fight against deportation to Jamaica**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/oct/10/osime-browns-mother-vows-to-fight-against-deportation-to-jamaica>

**Europe's migration 'crisis' isn't about numbers. It's about prejudice**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/oct/08/europe-migration-crisis-prejudice-eu-refugee-orban-christian>

TOP

# Community Relations

## News

**Black Muslims are almost invisible in Britain, but now we're carving out a space**

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/10/black-muslims-invisible-britain-minority>

TOP

## Equality

### UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

#### **Pregnancy: Ethnic Groups**

**Justin Madders (Labour)** [97597] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to MBRRACE's report of 2018 entitled Saving lives, improving mothers' care, what steps the Government has taken to tackle health inequalities among Black (a) pregnant women and (b) mothers in the last two years.

**Reply from Nadine Dorries:** Work to reduce health inequalities around maternal mortality rates is being led by Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent OBE, Chief Midwifery Officer. This includes understanding why mortality rates are higher, considering evidence about what will reduce mortality rates and taking action. The NHS Long Term Plan outlines plans to reduce health inequalities and address unwarranted variation in maternity care. Targeted and enhanced continuity of carer can significantly improve outcomes for women. The Long Term Plan sets out that 75% of black women will receive continuity of carer from midwives by 2024.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-30/97597>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/assets/downloads/mbrance-uk/reports/MBRRACE-UK%20Maternal%20Report%202018%20-%20Web%20Version.pdf>

#### **Adoption: Ethnic Groups**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [97659] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to encourage more people from BAME backgrounds to consider adopting children; and what steps he is taking to reduce delays for prospective adopters from BAME backgrounds at the approval and matching stages of the adoption process.

**Reply from Vicky Ford:** Ensuring the right adopters come forward for the children we have waiting for forever homes remains a priority for the government. That is why this year, we gave the Regional Adoption Agency (RAA) Leaders' Group £1 million to develop a sector led recruitment campaign. This campaign, launched on 16 September, is challenging preconceived conceptions about who can adopt and encouraging more people to come forward.

The campaign will specifically focus on black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities through outreach work in 2 pilot areas, London and Birmingham. There is a focus on BAME communities during the recruitment campaign as children from BAME backgrounds typically wait longer to be placed with a forever family. The RAA Leaders' Group are also funding Home for Good to run a triage service to support prospective adopters from these pilot areas. This will include a safe space to explore adoption and ask further questions, but also seek extra support during the process. We are working closely with the sector to ensure the prospective adopter journey is consistent for everyone across all agencies.



## UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

### Maternal Mortality: Ethnic Groups

**Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick (Non-affiliated)** [HL8603] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had, and with whom, about reducing the number of maternal deaths among Black, Asian and minority ethnic women.

**Reply from Lord Bethell:** Discussions regarding reducing the number of maternal deaths among black, Asian and minority ethnic women have been addressed at two recent roundtables. The Minister of State for Patient Safety, Suicide Prevention and Mental Health, (Ms Nadine Dorries MP), chaired a Ministerial roundtable on Inequality in Maternity, and the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) led a discussion between frontline midwives, medical experts, academics, and regional health representatives.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/hl8603>

## Press Release

**Government must introduce ethnicity pay gap reporting now, says TUC**

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/government-must-introduce-ethnicity-pay-gap-reporting-now-says-tuc>

## New Publication

**Ethnicity pay gaps: 2019**

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/articles/ethnicitypaygapsingreatbritain/2019/pdf>

## News

**Legal & General warns FTSE 100 firms over lack of ethnic diversity**

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/oct/05/legal-and-general-warns-ftse-100-firms-lack-of-ethnic-diversity-bame-board-member-2022>

**UK supreme court should have a BAME justice 'within six years'**

<https://www.theguardian.com/law/2020/oct/05/bame-justice-should-be-appointed-to-uk-supreme-court-within-six-years>

**'I altered my personality to fit in at work'**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-54388703>

**Hewitt on race and the importance of speaking out**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/av/rugby-union/54509433>

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# Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

## Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

### Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

**John Mason (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government what its position is on whether the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill will give increased protection to people of any religion. (S5O-04675)

**Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Humza Yousaf):** My view is that, yes, it will. The bill creates new offences relating to stirring up religious hatred. We know that behaviour that stirs up hatred is corrosive and it can leave entire communities feeling isolated and vulnerable to attack. The bill extends protection to people of any religion from those who seek to stir up hatred against religious groups.

As per my statement on 23 September, I will amend the threshold of the bill's new stirring-up offences, so that they are committed only where the accused intends to stir up hatred.

It should also be said that, of course, we have freedom of expression sections in the bill, one of which refers to the right to religious practice and expression of faith. I hope that that gives reassurance to religious groups.

**John Mason:** Does the cabinet secretary agree that it is a bit ironic that some religious groups oppose the bill because they think that they will lose some of their freedom of expression, whereas in fact the bill will give extra protection to people with a religious background?

**Reply from Humza Yousaf:** I simply say this to those groups. I know that the concerns that they express are genuine and I will engage with them. There are concerns around, for example, the section in the bill on the possession of inflammatory material. Again, I hope that my earlier statement to the chamber on moving the threshold of the stirring-up offences to apply only where there is intent would help to calm and mitigate many of the fears that some have expressed. I will continue to engage with religious groups and other stakeholders throughout the bill process, just as I have done from the very beginning.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12883&i=116460#ScotParlOR>

*The statement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12839&i=116077#ScotParlOR>

### Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

**Richard Lyle (SNP):** To ask the Scottish Government for what reason part 2 of its hate crime bill does not require the consent of the Lord Advocate before proceedings for stirring up offences may be instituted, when similar sections of the Public Order Act 1986 and Public Order (Northern Ireland) Order 1987 require the consent of the attorney general or director of public prosecutions, and whether it will amend part 2 to include this safeguard. (S5O-04677)

**Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice (Humza Yousaf):** In Scotland, all public prosecutions are brought by prosecutors within the system of prosecution for which the Lord Advocate is responsible. It is a matter for the Lord Advocate, as head of that system, and acting independently of any other person, to prescribe prosecution policy and to issue such directions as the Lord Advocate considers appropriate in relation to prosecution of any particular offence or category of offences.

In England and Wales, many public bodies in addition to the Crown Prosecution Service prosecute crime. As a result, there are a number of criminal offences for

which, as a legislative safeguard, the Attorney General's consent is required before a prosecution can commence.

The distinction between the jurisdictions is routinely recognised in the drafting of offences. For example, the Public Order Act 1986 does not include provision requiring the Lord Advocate's consent to prosecute the current Scottish offence of stirring up racial hatred.

**Richard Lyle:** The Scottish Government recently outlined a significant change to the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill by clarifying that intent would be required for the offence of stirring up hatred to be committed.

I welcome that change, which will provide much-needed clarity and will reduce the possibility of the freedoms of speech and of expression being undermined. However, as far as I can tell, the issue that I have raised today has not been discussed. It is important that it be discussed and addressed at the earliest possible stage. ...

Will the Cabinet Secretary for Justice rectify that omission? If he will do so, I will then be happy to support the bill.

**Reply from Humza Yousaf:** I do not agree with Mr Lyle's characterisation of that as an "omission". As I have explained, there is no requirement to obtain the Lord Advocate's consent before a prosecution, because all public prosecutions in Scotland are brought by prosecutors within the system of prosecution for which the Lord Advocate is responsible, independent of the Scottish ministers.

That is in contrast with the position in other jurisdictions in the United Kingdom, in which, as I have said, prosecutions can be brought by many other bodies. That being the case, providing that prosecution of certain offences requires the consent of the Attorney General ensures appropriate oversight of those other bodies. That is not the case in Scotland, so I suggest to Mr Lyle that the provision that he seeks is not required.

**Liam Kerr (Conservative):** The bill has provoked unprecedented responses from fundamentally different sections of Scottish society and, as more and more views are published, it is clear that the majority of passionately voiced opposition is to the stirring up hatred offences in part 2. Does the cabinet secretary concede that, by not even considering removal and reconsideration of part 2, he is ignoring public opinion and, ultimately, that he risks undermining the important purposes that underlie the bill?

**Reply from Humza Yousaf:** I think that Liam Kerr ultimately undermines the decision of the Parliament by suggesting that.

When he secured a debate on the issue, using his Opposition debating time to do so, the motion was to scrap the bill in its entirety. As we know now from press reports of his leaked emails, that was not his preferred strategy, but was, nonetheless, the strategy that he proposed to the Parliament. It was roundly rejected, so I suggest that Liam Kerr put the victims at the heart of his considerations, rather than politicking around this important issue.

If he were to do that, he might well listen to the victims who say that the stirring up hatred offences being extended to them is hugely important. He has every opportunity in the parliamentary process—I am due in front of the Justice Committee later this month—to create and lodge amendments, if he wishes to strike out entire sections of the bill. We have a parliamentary process, so let us engage in it, but my plea to Liam Kerr is that he think about the victims in all this.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=12883&i=116462#ScotParlOR>

## Scottish Parliament Motion

**S5M-23040 Alex Cole-Hamilton (Liberal Democrat): Show Racism the Red Card, Wear Red Day –** That the Parliament acknowledges that 16 October 2020 is Wear Red

Day; welcomes that this day aims to raise awareness of racism by encouraging as many people as possible to wear red; acknowledges that Wear Red Day has been organised by the charity, Show Racism the Red Card; applauds the work that this charity does in the delivery of anti-racism educational workshops to young people and adults in schools, workplaces and at other events; thanks the charity for delivering these educational sessions to over 50,000 individuals per year, and recognises that there is still a long way to go in tackling racism in Scotland.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-23040>

## UK Parliament Debate

### **IHRA Definition of Antisemitism: Universities**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-10-06/debates/CE3A5D9D-8FD2-4E32-80DC-F66CDD2E390D/IHRADefinitionOfAntisemitismUniversities>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

### **Internet: Safety**

**Catherine McKinnell (Labour) [96066]** To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many times (a) he and (b) his officials have met with representatives of groups working to tackle online harms in respect of (i) anti-black racism, (ii) anti-Muslim hatred, (iii) antisemitism, (iv) homophobia, (v) child sexual exploitation and abuse and (f) terrorism in the last three months; and if he will make a statement.

**Victoria Atkins:** Across Government, we regularly engage with civil society representatives to understand the online threat communities face and to help inform our efforts to tackle online harms. We are clear that what is unacceptable offline should be unacceptable online.

Within the Home Office, we work closely with our international partners and engage with industry colleagues to discuss how platforms can best safeguard their users from terrorism, while also encouraging tech companies work together as one coordinated body through the Global Internet Forum to Counter Terrorism (GIFCT), to reduce the availability of terrorist content online. We are also working with civil society partners and social media platforms to encourage victim reporting of online hate crime, including hateful online abuse related to Covid-19.

Home Office officials also meet a range of stakeholders regularly to discuss the online child sexual exploitation and abuse threat and what can and is being done to tackle it. This includes technology companies, non-governmental organisations and other government partners. We have recently been engaging with relevant organisations on the Voluntary Principles to Counter Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and the government's online harms agenda.

The Government does not routinely comment on Ministerial meetings which are held as part of the process of policy development and delivery.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-28/96066>

## UK Parliament Early Day Motions

**Jim Shannon (DUP) (1006) National Hate Crime Awareness Week** – That this House notes the commencement of National Hate Crime Awareness Week 2020; takes the opportunity to remind people that there is always a choice to be kind and further

encourages an understanding that a gentle answer turns away wrath; underlines our intention to ensure that social media platforms grasp the responsibility to prevent bullying and hate speech by any means possible whilst balancing the right to free speech; and supports the aims of saying no to hate crime and supporting our communities.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57566>

**Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat) (1005) Hair Discrimination** – That this House believes that hair policies enforced by schools and employers either officially or unofficially are an all-too-prevalent form of racial discrimination; notes with alarm cases of black children being sent home from school because of their afros, black boys being told to cut off their dreadlocks, black women being turned down for jobs because they wear their hair in braids or cornrows, and black employees being told to chemically straighten their natural hair; calls on the Government to develop new guidance for schools and employers to prevent hair discrimination in policies and practices; further calls on the Government to launch an awareness campaign to help schools and employers understand their obligations not to discriminate in relation to hair, and to help individuals understand how to uphold their rights not to be discriminated against; and urges the Government to conduct a review to determine whether any further changes, including legal changes, are necessary to prevent hair discrimination.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57565>

## Welsh Assembly Debate

**Tackling Racism and Race Inequality**

<https://record.assembly.wales/Plenary/6592#A60774>

## Press Releases

**Hate crime: Report it to stop it**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/hate-crime-report-it-to-stop-it/>

**Proportion of hate crime cases getting increased sentences at all time high**

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/proportion-hate-crime-cases-getting-increased-sentences-all-time-high>

**Secretary General appoints Special Representative on Antisemitic and Anti-Muslim Hatred and Hate Crimes**

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/secretary-general-appoints-special-representative-on-antisemitic-and-anti-muslim-hatred-and-hate-crimes>

## New Publications

**Resources for the “Hate crime: Report it to stop it” campaign**

<https://onescotland.org/campaigns/hate-crime-campaign/>

**Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2019/20**

**Report**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925968/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925968/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920.pdf)

## Data tables

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925257/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920-tables.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925257/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920-tables.ods)

## Appendix tables

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925258/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920-appendix-tables.xlsx](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925258/hate-crime-1920-hosb2920-appendix-tables.xlsx)

## Annex: Provisional trends in racially or religiously aggravated offences to July 2020 under COVID-19 restrictions

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/925969/annex-hate-crime-1920.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925969/annex-hate-crime-1920.pdf)

## News

### David Lammy MP criticises Twitter over 'death threat' tweet

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-54452248>

### The Tories aren't ashamed of their Islamophobia. They're proud of it

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/07/tories-islamophobia-proud-muslims-scapegoat>

### Boris Johnson has 'zero plans' to tackle impacts of racism, warns ousted government adviser

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/boris-johnson-racism-inequality-black-lord-woolley-b911607.html>

### Black Lives Matter is 'not force for good' says Tory MP Sajid Javid

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/sajid-javid-black-live-matter-blm-racism-tory-mp-b806336.html>

### UK passport photo checker shows bias against dark-skinned women

<https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-54349538>

### Home Office's passport checker guilty of racial bias

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/10/08/home-offices-passport-checker-guilty-racial-bias/>

### Bristol hate crime reports spike after Black Lives Matter protests

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-bristol-54467002>

### Police who stopped black athletes' car and put baby on database investigated for misconduct

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/bianca-williams-police-athlete-baby-database-investigation-racism-b887977.html>

### Opening up on racial microaggressions in sport

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/av/54442752>

### 'An act of racist vandalism' - Scots Black Lives Matter exhibition is destroyed

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/18772931.an-act-racist-vandalism---scots-black-lives-matter-exhibition-destroyed/>

## **M&S customer 'racially harassed by staff member' in Basildon**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-essex-53778430>

## **'I changed my name because it sounded foreign'**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-54434451>

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## **Other UK Parliament and Government**

### **UK Parliament Early Day Motion**

**Bell Ribeiro-Addy (Labour) (989) Census 2021** – That this House notes that the ONS England and Wales Census as it appeared in 2011 did not allow for non-white citizens to identify as British; acknowledges that while the formal categories are not intentionally exclusionary, this oversight tells people of colour that they are unable to identify as solely British and may only identify by the heritage of their parents, grandparents or great grandparents; agrees that the questions regarding ethnicity in the 2011 Census and as they are proposed to appear in the 2021 Census are outdated and do not reflect the complexity that is ethnicity in the UK; notes that people from multiple ethnic backgrounds are the fastest growing demographic in the UK and thus questions on ethnicity in the Census must change to reflect this and accommodate the various combinations of multiple ethnic backgrounds in the UK; recognises that many citizens of multiple ethnic backgrounds do not identify by their ancestors ethnicity but by their Britishness; calls on the Government to update the 2021 questions regarding ethnicity to accommodate this and allow Black, Asian, and Mixed-Race citizens to identify as British on the 2021 Census and as such, the options available for the Black ethnic category will read as follows, British, African, Caribbean, Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, please describe, and similar would appear for other ethnic categories.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/57545/census-2021>

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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/>

## NHS (England and Wales)

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

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

### Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

**Naz Shah (Labour)** [96936] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, how much Government funding has been allocated to covid-19 messaging for non-English speaking BAME groups through (a) television, (b) radio and (c) written publications.

**Naz Shah (Labour)** [96937] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, what steps he has taken to help ensure that critical covid-19 messaging is able to reach (a) Pakistani / Urdu / Pushto, (b) Bangladeshi / Sylheti, (c) Sikh / Punjabi, (d) Indian / Hindi and (e) Gujarati people.

**Naz Shah (Labour)** [96938] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether the Government has made agreements with any (a) Muslim, (b) Sikh and (c) Hindu media channels to help ensure that critical covid-19 messaging is broadcast to BAME viewers.

**Reply from Penny Mordaunt:** I refer the Hon. member to the answers given to PQ 55066 on 10 June 2020, PQ 46692 on 29 May 2020 and to PQ 45460 on 11 May 2020.

The Government is working with specialist multicultural marketing agencies, addressing barriers by targeting audiences with bespoke COVID communications. Core marketing materials are translated into multiple languages nationally and on request from Local Authorities and external stakeholder groups. We are also utilising trusted voices, relevant channels, and translated messages to reach a wide range of audiences across the country. This helps the Government to maximise the impact of its ongoing multichannel communications strategy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96936>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96937>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-29/96938>

*The answers referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-04/55066>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-05-13/46692>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-05-11/45460>



## Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

**Theresa Villiers (Conservative)** [90064] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, as part of preparations in the NHS for winter 2020-21, what steps he has taken in response to the conclusion of Public Health England that BAME communities are at greater risk of harm from covid-19.

**Reply from Jo Churchill:** The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) leads the cross-Government activity responding to the conclusion of Public Health England that black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities are at greater risk of harm from COVID-19. The Department continues to support the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities on this work. We are also working with other Government departments, local authority public health systems and experts such as the Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies producing reactive and proactive guidance and measures to protect BAME and other vulnerable communities from COVID-19.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-15/90064>

The Public Health England conclusion referred to above can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908434/Disparities\\_in\\_the\\_risk\\_and\\_outcomes\\_of\\_COVID\\_August\\_2020\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908434/Disparities_in_the_risk_and_outcomes_of_COVID_August_2020_update.pdf)

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

### Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: BAME Communities

**Lord Woolley of Woodford (Crossbench):** To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the end of the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, what assessment they have made of its impact on black, Asian and minority ethnic communities in the United Kingdom.

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, people from a minority ethnic background can be more vulnerable to unemployment than those from a white background, although rates vary considerably by ethnicity. The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and other government support schemes have helped protect against rising unemployment during the pandemic. So far, the scheme has helped 1.2 million employers across the UK furlough 9.6 million jobs, protecting people's livelihoods.

**Lord Woolley of Woodford:** My Lords, in August, the Government were made acutely aware that a disproportionately high number of black, Asian and minority ethnic workers have been furloughed or made redundant. With the main job retention scheme coming to a close, we can now expect another spike in BAME redundancies. Can the Minister tell me whether the Government undertook a BAME impact assessment before making these changes? Also, despite repeated calls, including a petition signed by 140,000 people, why do we still do not have a Covid-19 race equality strategy?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, when designing the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and its next steps, the Government undertook an analysis of how the policies were likely to affect individuals sharing protected characteristics, in line with our public sector equality duties. Of course, the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme comes to an end at the end of October. It is being replaced by the Job Support Scheme, which will continue to support jobs during the pandemic.

**Lord Boateng (Labour):** My Lords, Covid has entrenched existing inequalities. The Government's review, *The Time for Talking Is Over. Now Is the Time to Act: Race in the Workplace*, makes a number of specific recommendations: first, that there should be legislation to make large companies publish ethnicity data; and, secondly, that the public sector should use its procurement powers to drive change. That was three years ago. When will the time to act be? Will the Government implement these two recommendations? If they do not, we are wasting millions of pounds on these schemes.

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, the Government have taken a number of measures to support employment for people from minority-ethnic backgrounds, partly as a result of the race disparity audit and the work done by the noble Lord who asked the Private Notice Question. The Government are taking things further, with the Commission for Racial Equality. Employment is one of the aspects being looked at by the commission, and it is due to report by the end of this year.

**Baroness Hussein-Ece (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, there is overwhelming evidence that black and minority-ethnic communities have borne the brunt of this pandemic, facing a disproportionate fatality rate and now being hit harder by job losses. Do not take my word for it; the analysis is confirmed in research published by the House of Commons Library, which found that in areas of the economy that had been shut down there were an above average number of BAME workers. I press the Minister on the Question put by my noble friend Lord Woolley. A petition signed by 140,000 people is calling for a proper Covid race equality strategy. On the new job support scheme which will replace the support currently in place at the end of October, has there been an impact assessment of whether it will be effective?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, the Government take the issue extremely seriously. A number of different factors feed into this. On the vulnerability of people from black and minority-ethnic communities to the virus itself, work was done by Public Health England and there is follow-up work being undertaken, including asking every NHS trust to undertake risk assessments and then take action to mitigate those risks. On the equality impact assessment, an assessment was done under the Government's public sector equality duty of both the CJRS and its successor schemes.

**Lord Dobbs (Conservative):** My Lords, we are using lockdown to fight Covid, but lockdown itself costs lives, costs jobs and denies futures. Those damaged most by lockdown are the poor, who include so many among the BAME communities: it is the poor who pay so much of the price. Does my noble friend accept that there is at least a case—one that some of us feel is increasingly persuasive—that we cannot simply carry on with the endless cycle of lockdown after lockdown, which effectively does far too much of the disease's dirty work for it by putting the poor in BAME and other communities at greatest risk?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, of course the Government want to move forward from that approach. That is why we have invested so much in the development of vaccines and why we are working on improving test and trace. The reality is that there are health costs to lockdowns as well as economic costs, but at the same time there are economic costs if we do not get the virus under control. People do not have the confidence to go out and participate in our economy. We are seeking to find the right balance between those, at all times, in our response.

**Lord Bilimoria (Crossbench):** My Lords, the ethnic-minority groups fared much worse as a result of the 2008 recession than the white majority, exacerbating pre-existing inequalities, with higher unemployment, lower earnings, lower self-employment rates and higher housing costs. The consequences were far-reaching and long-lasting. Can the Minister inform us about the Public Health England report in June which found that the highest coronavirus diagnosis rates were among people from black and Asian ethnic groups, who are twice as likely to die from Covid-19 than white people? More than a month after PHE's first report and outcomes, the Government have announced research funding for projects. Can the Minister tell us the progress and findings of these projects to explain the situation? Does she also agree that mass testing would greatly help the situation?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** I agree with the noble Lord, who has raised the question of mass testing a number of times in this Chamber. The Government are working as hard as they can to make progress. As for the report by Public Health England, there was follow-up work to be done—that is still being done, but it did not

stop up from taking action immediately. For example, all health trusts were asked to undertake the risk assessments that I referred to earlier, and to put in place steps and processes to mitigate the risk to staff in those trusts, which was identified as one of the factors that could cause higher mortality rates among those communities.

**Lord Tunncliffe (Labour):** My Lords, throughout the pandemic, black, Asian and minority-ethnic people have died at a higher rate. The Institute for Public Policy Research has suggested that by June, 13% of BAME workers had lost their jobs, compared with 5% of the overall population. What structures, if any, have Ministers put in place to address the specific challenges faced by BAME communities? With the second wave upon us, it is vital that the Government show that they are learning from previous mistakes.

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, there are two things I have referred to that help answer the noble Lord's question. The first is the assessment of our policy approaches under the public sector equality duty. The second is the commission that will report by the end of this year on a range of issues, including health, but also employment and how to take things forward. The Government's response to Covid, particularly in terms of peoples livelihoods, is unprecedented. We have committed to keeping support in place for the duration of the pandemic, adapting it to respond to where we are in our medical response.

**Lord Sheikh (Conservative):** My Lords, the pandemic has adversely affected the health of the BAME community and caused financial hardship. I have been informed by the Runnymede Trust that only about 44% of the BAME community was aware of the measure to allow those out of work due to the crisis to claim universal credit. Furthermore, only one-third of the BAME community had heard of the arrangements making statutory sick pay available from the first day of self-isolation. Does my noble friend agree that more should be done to publicise these benefits, such as liaison with local authorities and community groups?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, that is one of the lessons that we have learned in our response to the pandemic so far. As we have had to work with local authorities to impose further local measures, we have seen that local authorities often know their population and community better and have better routes to outreach. We have also given them funding to reach those who have not necessarily heard of the support so far.

**Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick (Non-affiliated):** My Lords, as we mark Black History Month 2020, can the Minister detail what specific discussions the Government have had with the devolved Administrations to address the economic and financial problems facing BAME communities within those devolved regions, which have impacted on those communities throughout the United Kingdom?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, as noble Lords have noted, it is often those in BAME communities who are most vulnerable to unemployment, or to seeing a loss or change to their income during the pandemic. That is why the Government have had continued engagement with the devolved Administrations. Last Friday, the Government confirmed that they are uplifting the guaranteed funding to the devolved Administrations by at least £1.3 billion to £14 billion. That includes £2.4 billion for the Northern Ireland Executive on top of the spring 2020 Budget funding.

**Baroness Prashar (Crossbench):** My Lords, as we have already heard, there is now mounting evidence that some communities within the ethnic-minority population are being hit harder by the economic crisis resulting from the pandemic. Does the Minister agree that the Government need to better assess how different groups are being affected by the pandemic and put mechanisms in place to channel support to those most in need? Can she please tell the House whether they are doing this as a matter of urgency, and whether they are urging employers to do the same?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** My Lords, it is because the Government completely understand that some of the most vulnerable in our society might be hit hardest by

this pandemic in terms of both their health outcomes and their livelihood that we have put unprecedented support into supporting people's livelihoods. We are continuing the job support scheme and we said on Friday how that will help to support those in businesses that may need to close down as a consequence of further restrictions imposed to help get the virus under control.

**Lord Liddle (Labour):** My Lords, in the Minister's replies I hear no hint of any new action to tackle this great injustice. Do the Government not accept that this is disappointing, given that Covid strikes hardest where inequalities are greatest, that one of the greatest drivers of inequalities is rising unemployment and that the BAME community has suffered most of all from this?

**Reply from Baroness Penn:** Well, what I am trying to say to noble Lords is that the Government have been aware of this fact since the beginning of the crisis and it has informed our response so far—so, instead of trying to retrofit our response in the light of this information, it has driven our response. The noble Lord said that the Government are not taking any new action in response to this. New action was announced on Friday and I am updating the House on it today. The Equality and Human Rights Commission will report by the end of the year on employment, which is one of the themes it is looking at.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-12/debates/74EB72B0-02F5-4A6C-B5A3-7704F8B80176/CoronavirusJobRetentionSchemeBAMECommunities>

*The Government review referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf)

*The Public Health England report referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908434/Disparities\\_in\\_the\\_risk\\_and\\_outcomes\\_of\\_COVID\\_August\\_2020\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908434/Disparities_in_the_risk_and_outcomes_of_COVID_August_2020_update.pdf)

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

### Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

**Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated)** [HL7995] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the research published in the British Journal of General Practice Prevalence of suspected COVID-19 infection in patients from ethnic minority populations, published on 7 September.

**Reply from Lord Bethell:** As yet, no assessment has been made of the research published in the British Journal of General Practice, Prevalence of suspected COVID-19 infection in patients from ethnic minority populations.

The recent review published by Public Health England concluded that ethnicity is a factor on the impact of COVID-19. The National Institute for Health Research and UK Research and Innovation have commissioned research proposals to investigate the association between ethnicity and COVID-19. This research will complement the wider disparity review on COVID-19, which is led by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP). The Government welcomes and will continue to consider all relevant evidence on COVID-19.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-09/hl7995>

*The research referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7480178/>

*The review referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908434/Disparities\\_in\\_the\\_risk\\_and\\_outcomes\\_of\\_COVID\\_August\\_2020\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908434/Disparities_in_the_risk_and_outcomes_of_COVID_August_2020_update.pdf)

### **Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups**

**Lord Boateng (Labour)** [HL8018] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the incidence of stress-related illness and suicide amongst Black, Asian and minority ethnic staff working for the NHS (1) before, and (2) after, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what action has (a) Public Health England, and (b) the NHS, taken to address this.

**Reply from Lord Bethell:** Data on the incidence of stress-related illness and suicide amongst black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) National Health Service staff is not made publicly available due to concerns about misuse.

In April, the Chief People Officer at NHS England and NHS Improvement launched a comprehensive programme to address the impact of COVID-19 on BAME staff in the NHS. This has included work to update the health and wellbeing offer which is available to all staff to specifically address BAME staff.

Public Health England is developing a Real Time Suspected Suicide Surveillance system. The pilot is currently collecting data from local areas in England, as this system is in the pilot stage, data are not yet available. Ethnicity and employment status are specified within the requested minimum dataset, with the option to include occupation as an additional data item.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-10/hl8018>

### **Ethnic Groups: Coronavirus**

**Lord Boateng (Labour):** [HL8441] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Institute for Public Policy Research's findings, published on 24 September, that people from BAME backgrounds are (1) twice as likely as the wider population to expect to face financial difficulty in the next quarter, and (2) more than twice as likely to have lost their jobs or access to paid work during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic; and what steps they are taking to address this discrepancy.

**Reply from Baroness Stedman-Scott:** This Government is committed to levelling up opportunities for everyone, we have already taken action to set up the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities which will review inequality across the UK. The Commission will set out a new, positive agenda for change, balancing the needs of individuals, communities and society, maximising opportunities and ensuring fairness for all. This is in addition to the work we are taking forward on the findings of the Public Health England review into disparities in the risks and outcomes of COVID-19, published on 2 June. Throughout these unprecedented times the Government has provided a crucial safety net to record levels of claimants, ensuring all our customers receive the support they need, when they need it. We know some people might require additional help to get back into work so we have launched our Plan for Jobs, including the Kickstart scheme, the expanded youth offer, the Job Entry Targeted Support and the Sector-based Work Academy Programmes to offer new support to those who lose their job as a result of COVID-19, investing £90 million towards activities that address disparities in youth unemployment – with a focus on the data from the Government's Race Disparity Audit - and more. The Government is working to ensure that ethnic minority customers have the opportunity to benefit from this extensive package.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-09-24/hl8441>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.ippr.org/blog/minority-ethnic-groups-face-greater-problem-debt-risk-since-covid-19>

*The review referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/908434/Disparities\\_in\\_the\\_risk\\_and\\_outcomes\\_of\\_COVID\\_August\\_2020\\_update.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908434/Disparities_in_the_risk_and_outcomes_of_COVID_August_2020_update.pdf)

## Scottish Government Press Releases

### **New moves to stop COVID-19 spread**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-moves-to-stop-covid-19-spread/>

### **Self-Isolation Support Grant now open**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/self-isolation-support-grant-now-open/>

### **Care home visiting restrictions eased**

<https://www.gov.scot/news/care-home-visiting-restrictions-eased/>

## 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/>

### **Updated guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): shielding advice and support**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-shielding/>

### **Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's speech 13 October 2020**

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-speech-13-october-2020/>

## UK Government Press Releases

### **Prime Minister announces new local COVID Alert Levels**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-announces-new-local-covid-alert-levels>

### **Ethnic minority communities and the elderly called upon to bolster the fight against coronavirus**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ethnic-minority-communities-and-the-elderly-called-upon-to-bolster-the-fight-against-coronavirus>

## UK Government Publication

### **Prime Minister's statement on coronavirus (COVID-19): 12 October 2020**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/prime-ministers-statement-on-coronavirus-covid-19-12-october-2020>

## Other Organisations

### **Volunteer Scotland**

#### **Impact of COVID-19 on the Third Sector in Scotland**

[https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/1667732/tsi\\_scotland\\_network\\_-\\_vs\\_full\\_presentation\\_2020\\_-\\_final.pdf](https://www.volunteerscotland.net/media/1667732/tsi_scotland_network_-_vs_full_presentation_2020_-_final.pdf)

## University of Birmingham

### Vitamin D deficiency increased risk of COVID in healthcare workers, new UK study shows

Healthcare workers who self-isolated after developing symptoms of COVID-19 were more likely to have a vitamin D deficiency, with workers from Black, Asian or ethnic minority backgrounds particularly affected

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/university/colleges/mds/news/2020/10/vitamin-d-covid.aspx>

## News

### Covid: BAME people's mental health 'forgotten about'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-politics-54483038>

### Coronavirus: Ethnic-minority vaccine volunteers needed

<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-54512175>

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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>

Report Stage, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-06/debates/B7B7561E-E2E0-4301-A0AA-487AFE4FA60E/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-06/debates/B7B7561E-E2E0-4301-A0AA-487AFE4FA60E/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

Third Reading, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-12/debates/994C0558-9B73-4DB5-8E6B-0CEBD76E0D1A/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-10-12/debates/994C0558-9B73-4DB5-8E6B-0CEBD76E0D1A/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

Proposed amendment

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/lbill/58-01/137/5801137-l.pdf>

## **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**

**\*\* closes 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/emnrrn/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](mailto:frances@interfaithscotland.org)

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## Events, Conferences, and Training

\*\* new or updated this week

**\*\* this week!**

### **Vulnerable Citizens and The EU Settlement Scheme - Part 1**

13 October 2020 (online, 4.00)

Citizens' Rights Project webinar to learn how you can support vulnerable EU citizens to continue living in the United Kingdom and safeguarding their rights after Brexit. For information and to register see <https://tinyurl.com/y4eu8hn8>

**\*\* this week!**

### **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>

**\*\* this week!**

### **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>

## **Vulnerable Citizens and The EU Settlement Scheme - Part 2**

20 October 2020 (online, 4.00)

Citizens' Rights Project webinar to learn how you can support vulnerable EU citizens to continue living in the United Kingdom and safeguarding their rights after Brexit. For information and to register see <https://tinyurl.com/y2ycz49g>

## **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/qzta5btqsfhvukh/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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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>

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**SCoJeC**  
Scottish Council of  
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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

**BEMIS**  
Empowering Scotland's Ethnic and  
Cultural Minority Communities

**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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