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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

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Covid-19 Vaccination

Pauline McNeill (Labour) [S5W-35137] To ask the Scottish Government how many people who are (a) refugees and (b) seeking asylum are included in each COVID-19 vaccination priority group.

Pauline McNeill (Labour) [S5W-35138] To ask the Scottish Government how it will ensure that all people who are seeking asylum, regardless of immigration or asylum support status, will have access to the COVID-19 vaccines.

Pauline McNeill (Labour) [S5W-35141] To ask the Scottish Government how (a) Public Health Scotland, (b) NHS boards and (c) other stakeholders will support people seeking

asylum who are experiencing difficulty travelling to or accessing COVID-19 vaccination sites.

Reply from Mairi Gougeon: The Scottish Government is clear that everyone who is resident in Scotland is entitled to access health care, this includes people who are seeking asylum. Our goal is to ensure all adults in Scotland are included in this Covid-19 vaccination programme. We are working with community leaders and frontline services to adapt our delivery and communication models to reach as many people as possible. Our goal is to ensure all adults in Scotland are included in this Covid-19 vaccination programme. We do not hold the information you have requested centrally.

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-35137>

and

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-35138>

and

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-35141>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Biometric Residence Permits

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [165587] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate her Department has made of the number of applicants who are unable to book a free biometric residence permit enrolment appointment; and what plans her Department has to increase the provision of those appointments.

Reply from Kevin Foster: UK Visa and Citizenship Application Service (UKVCAS) centres are run by Sopra Steria Ltd (SSL) on behalf of UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI).

The Home Office produces intake forecasts for immigration applications which are used to inform business and appointment capacity planning with SSL; forecasts vary across the year and our service is designed to respond and meet fluctuating demand. As part of UKVI's ongoing operational forecasting activities we regularly review and refresh the number of applications we expect from all routes which in turn inform UKVCAS capacity planning.

Demand for appointments to enrol biometrics at a UKVCAS service point is not wholly predictable and is dependent on customer behaviour. All chargeable appointments are optional. Estimates of how many customers are unable to book a free appointment is not possible; many of our customers choose to book chargeable appointments for reasons of convenience, cost and time benefits which enhanced service points or out of hours appointments provide alongside additional services they are able to access within a chargeable appointment, such as document checking and scanning, which are not included with free appointments. UKVCAS appointment levels have now returned to above the levels they were in March 2020, prior to COVID-19 disruption. Although UKVCAS are still currently experiencing very high demand for all appointments and the ongoing impact of measures to maintain COVID-secure facilities is limiting the ability to quickly expand capacity. Nevertheless, appointment capacity, including free appointment capacity will continue to increase over the coming months.

Work is ongoing with SSL not only to ensure enough free appointments are available, but also to ensure family groups have access to them, and access is fairly balanced across the four nations. SSL have successfully recently trialled the

introduction of group booking slots at some of the core service points, including Cardiff which is the closest core site to Bristol, and are now in the process of increasing the number of group slots at other sites.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165587>

Migrants: Coronavirus

Stephen Timms (Labour) [165425] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment the Race Disparity Unit has made of the effect of the No Recourse to Public Funds condition applied to the immigration status of people working lawfully in the UK during the covid-19 outbreak; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Government remains committed to protecting vulnerable people and has acted decisively to ensure we support everyone through this pandemic, including those lawfully working migrants with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) condition.

Many of the wide-ranging COVID-19 measures the Government has put in place have been made available to migrants with NRPF. The assistance being given under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and the Self-employed Income Support Scheme are not classed as public funds and are available to all those in work or self-employment respectively, including those with NRPF status and those on zero-hour contracts. Both schemes have been extended to end of September 2021.

Support is also available from local authorities for those with NRPF in England, in the form of a payment comparable to the Test and Trace Support Payment scheme, which provides a £500 payment to people on low incomes who cannot work from home and have been told to self-isolate by NHS Test and Trace, provided they meet the criteria set by the local authority for discretionary payments in their area. Further information on this scheme can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme-claiming-financial-support/claiming-financial-support-under-the-test-and-trace-support-payment-scheme>

Migrants who rent will continue to be protected from eviction during the new national lockdown period. The Government has extended existing legislation to ensure bailiffs do not serve eviction notices or carry out evictions until at least the end of 31 May but there are exemptions for the most serious circumstances that present the most strain on landlords.

Migrants who have been granted leave on the basis of their family life / human rights can apply to have the NRPF condition on their stay lifted by making a 'change of conditions' application. For these routes, the NRPF condition can be lifted where there is evidence that the applicant is destitute (or at risk of destitution), the welfare of their child is at risk due to their low income, or there are other exceptional financial circumstances.

We have also temporarily extended the eligibility criteria for free school meals in England 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 at:

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

More information on the support available to migrants during the pandemic, including those with NRPF, can be found at:

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165425>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Migrants: Rough Sleeping

Harriet Harman (Labour) [160506] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the effect of No Recourse to Public Funds rules on levels of rough sleeping in (a) Southwark, (b) London and (c) the UK.

Migrants: Finance

Harriet Harman (Labour) [160507] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent discussions she has had with the (a) Chancellor of the Exchequer and (b) Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on the cost to (i) local authorities in the UK and (ii) Southwark of supporting households with no recourse to public funds.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office does not hold data on the total number of people rough sleeping in Southwark, London or across the UK who are subject to no recourse to public funds (NRPF). We are working closely with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to reduce the incidence of rough sleeping among non-UK nationals. The Home Office's Rough Sleeping Support Service (RSSS) also offers an enhanced service for local authorities and registered charities to establish whether a rough sleeper has access to public funds. Part of this service includes the RSSS contacting Home Office casework teams (where there is an open application) to request that the case is prioritised.

The NRPF is a condition applied to most temporary migrants, who are required to demonstrate that they can maintain and accommodate themselves and their families in the UK when they make an immigration application. However, individuals whose 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 there are exceptional circumstances related to financial circumstances, to avoid destitution and rough sleeping. Other groups, such as refugees, are exempt from the condition.

The Home Office has published its policy equality statement on the impact of the No Recourse to Public Fund (NRPF) policy on migrants on the 10-year human rights route. It can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-change-of-conditions-of-leave-to-allow-access-to-public-funds-if-your-circumstances-change>

To avoid destitution and sleeping rough, those without immigration status, who also have no recourse to public funds, should regularise their stay or leave the UK. There is support available to do this through the Voluntary Returns Service which offers practical support for people who are in the United Kingdom with no right to reside, as well as those who have, or are claiming, asylum and have decided they want to return home. This is with the exception of Foreign National Offenders, who are not eligible for the service.

With regard to the cost to local authorities of supporting households with no recourse to public funds, the Government has provided unprecedented support of over £8 billion of funding to local authorities in England to help councils manage the impacts of Covid-19 to respond to the spending pressures they are facing, including £4.6 billion which is not ringfenced. Funding provided to local authorities under the Covid-19 emergency response will be paid through a grant, recognising that local authorities are best placed to decide how this funding is spent. The Government has also provided additional funding for the devolved administrations under the Barnett formula as part of the wider government response.

More information on the support available to migrants during the pandemic, including those with NRPF, can be found at:

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160506>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160507>

Pupil Premium: Migrants

Vicky Foxcroft (Labour) [158986] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending pupil premium funding to all children from families with no recourse to public funds.

Reply from Nick Gibb: Pupil premium eligibility is based on Ever6 free school meals (FSM), whereby pupils eligible for FSM at the time of the October census, or at any point in the previous 6 years, attract pupil premium funding in the following financial year.

The Department is working with other Government Departments to evaluate access to FSM for families with no recourse to public funds (NRPF) and are also considering pupil premium eligibility in that context.

FSM was extended to include certain NRPF groups on a temporary basis during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department will also extend pupil premium eligibility to these same groups for the 2021-22 financial year, with schools able to claim pupil premium funding for eligible pupils. We will provide further details on the claims process in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-25/158986>

Migrants: Education and Free School Meals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [163240] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the oral contribution of the Secretary of State for Education of 1 March 2021, Official report, col 19, what the terms of reference are for the joint review on how immigration status and No Recourse to Public Funds status interact with free school meals and other education entitlements.

Reply from Vicky Ford: We are working with departments across government to evaluate access to free school meals for families with no recourse to public funds. In the meantime, the extension of eligibility will continue with the current income threshold until a decision on long-term eligibility is made.

Once the review is complete, we will update our guidance accordingly. Our current guidance regarding the extension can be viewed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-free-school-meals-guidance/guidance-for-the-temporary-extension-of-free-school-meals-eligibility-to-nrpf-groups>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163240>

The oral contribution referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-03-01/debates/F66AA4CD-D1EE-4F0F-B814-ADF0B76A7447/TopicalQuestions#contribution-336D53FF-72FD-4CB5-817E-4402C131BD40>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Visas: Families

Afzal Khan (Labour) [161859] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visas under the adult dependent relative rule were (a) received, (b) granted and (c) rejected in (i) 2017, (ii) 2018, (iii) 2019 and (iv) 2020.

Afzal Khan (Labour) [161860] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visas subject to the adult dependent relative rule were granted visas on first application in (a) 2017, (b) 2018, (c) 2019 and (d) 2020.

Afzal Khan (Labour) [161861] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for visas subject to the adult dependent relative rule were granted a visa on appeal in (a) 2017, (b) 2018, (c) 2019 and (d) 2020.

Afzal Khan (Labour) [161862] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants were granted a visa via the adult dependency rule in each year since 2017.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Home Office Migration Statistics do not capture the number applications received, granted and rejected for visas under the adult dependent relative rule. To capture these numbers would require a manual trawl of data and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

The number and outcome of visa applications for the adult dependant relative rule are grouped with other categories to make up the Family: Other (for immediate settlement) in our published statistics:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962146/entry-clearance-visa-outcomes-datasets-dec-2020.xlsx

Her Majesty's Courts & Tribunals Service data relating to appeal outcomes is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunal-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2020>

The data required for this question in terms of how many were granted through appeal cannot be produced through normal data cycles and would involve manual reconciliation which would incur disproportionate cost.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161859>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161860>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161861>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161862>

Immigration: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [161685] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what guidance her Department has issued to the UK Border Agency on applications for (a) BN(O) visas and (b) asylum from Hongkongers who have been convicted of offences under the National Security Law or other legislation applicable in Hong Kong.

Reply from Kevin Foster: On 31 January the new Hong Kong BN(O) route launched. The route will enable BN(O) status holders and their eligible family members to come to the UK to live, work and study. This new route reflects the UK's historic and moral commitment to those people of Hong Kong who chose to retain their ties to the UK by taking up BN(O) status at the point of Hong Kong's handover to China in 1997. In line with standard operational procedures, all Border Force staff were informed of the opening of the new route. Detailed guidance and training for processing applications for the BN(O) route were also provided to relevant caseworking teams in UKVI.

The UK has a proud history of providing protection to those who need it, in accordance with our international obligations. All asylum claims are assessed on their individual merits on a case-by-case basis. We would not automatically refuse asylum applications from those with criminal convictions.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161685>

Immigration: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [161686] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to meet potential demand for English language courses created by Hongkongers arriving in the UK under either the BN(O) or other schemes.

Reply from Eddie Hughes: The British National (Overseas) visa route opened on 31 January 2021. Departments across Government are working together closely to ensure that necessary support and guidance is provided for BN(O) status holders who take advantage of the new visa route.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161686>

Health Services and Social Services: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [161690] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what guidance his Department has issued to the (a) NHS and (b) local authorities in England and Wales on access to health and social care for Hongkongers coming to the UK under the BN(O) visa and other routes.

Reply from Edward Argar: Information for the National Health Service and local authorities for Hongkongers coming to the United Kingdom under the BN(O) visa and other routes is available in 'Guidance on implementing the overseas visitor charging regulations' which was published in February 2021 and is available at the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/964543/Main_Guidance_post_February_2021_v3.pdf

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161690>

Qualifications: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [162526] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance he has issued to (a) educational institutions, (b) providers of apprenticeships and (c) other providers of training and education to ensure that people coming to the UK from Hong Kong under (i) the BN(O) and (ii) other visa schemes are able to secure training and education opportunities using qualifications obtained in Hong Kong.

Reply from Nick Gibb: On 31 January 2021, the UK Government introduced a new immigration route for British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) status holders in Hong Kong, providing the opportunity for them and their eligible family members to live, work and study in the UK.

Departments across Government are working together closely to ensure that necessary support and guidance is provided for BN(O) status holders who take advantage of the new visa route.

The UK European Network Information Centre (UK ENIC, and formerly UK NARIC) provides expert advice on behalf of the UK Government on the comparability of international qualifications, including those from Hong Kong to UK qualifications. UK Higher Education Institutions and other educational institutions use the ENIC database to assess the qualifications of applicants for their courses.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-03/162526>

Employment: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [162528] To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what discussions he has had with employers to ensure that people coming to the UK country from Hong Kong under (a) the BN(O) and (b) other visa schemes are able to secure employment using qualifications obtained in Hong Kong.

Reply from Paul Scully: The Department has extensive engagement with businesses of all sizes, as well as trade associations and business representative organisations.

Professionals with non-UK professional qualifications may need to have their qualifications recognised by the appropriate regulator or professional body if they want to work in a profession or use professional titles regulated in the UK. Hong Kong British Nationals can seek advice from the UK Centre for Professional Qualifications to find out which regulatory or professional body they should contact

and how to get their professional qualification recognised.

Many regulators already have arrangements in place with their Hong Kong and other international counterparts and provide routes to recognition for professionals with qualifications obtained outside the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-03/162528>

Jobcentres: Hong Kong

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [162527] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance she has issued to jobcentres to ensure that people coming to the UK from Hong Kong under (a) the BN(O) and (b) other visa schemes are able to secure training and education opportunities using qualifications obtained in Hong Kong.

Reply from Justin Tomlinson: BN(O) entering the UK will have no recourse to public funds (NRPF) as stipulated by their visa conditions. A change is being made to Appendix Hong Kong British National (Overseas) which will allow those on the British National (Overseas) route to apply to vary their conditions to have their no recourse to public funds condition lifted where they are able to demonstrate they are destitute or at imminent risk of destitution.

The Department for Work and Pensions will continue to work closely with Home Office and OGDs to ensure of the smooth integration of BN(O)s who choose to settle into the UK.

The UK European Network Information Centre (UK ENIC, and formerly UK NARIC) provides expert advice on behalf of the UK Government on the comparability of international qualifications, including those from Hong Kong to UK qualifications. UK Higher Education Institutions and other educational institutions use the ENIC database to assess the qualifications of applicants for their courses.

Further information on specific provisions across the four nations of the UK will be set out in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-03/162527>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Schools: Admissions

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [161687] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is planning to take to ensure that the children of Hongkongers coming to the UK under the BN(O) visa and other routes are promptly enrolled in local schools.

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [161688] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what guidance his Department has provided to local education authorities in relation to school admissions for the children of Hongkongers coming to the UK under the BN(O) visa and other routes.

Reply from Nick Gibb: The Department has published guidance for schools and local authorities on the rights of foreign national children to access schools in England and this has been updated to include the rights of the dependent children of British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) families settling here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/schools-admissions-applications-from-overseas-children>

Guidance for parents on applying for a school place, which will be relevant for BN(O) families, already exists and can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/schools-admissions>

Any child resident in the country should be treated equally in terms of access to a school. The Department consulted on changes to the School Admissions Code during the summer and autumn of 2020 to ensure the in-year admissions process is more efficient and consistent so that children can be placed quickly. Subject to parliamentary approval, these changes will come into force in September 2021.

Further details on the School Admissions Code can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-school-admissions-code--4>

The Department is working across the Government with stakeholders and local authorities, in planning for the impact of BN(O) migration on local services, including school places.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161687>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161688>

Au Pairs: EU Nationals

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [160791] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the ability of au pairs who are EU citizens to continue working in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: EEA and Swiss citizens who were resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 can apply for UK immigration status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), to enable them to continue living and working in the UK after 30 June 2021. Eligibility for the EUSS is not generally concerned with whether the applicant has been engaged in a qualifying activity, such as employment.

Since 1 January 2021, EEA and Swiss citizens newly arriving in the UK and non-EEA citizens are treated equally within the immigration system. As has been the case since 2008, the UK's points-based immigration system will not offer a dedicated route for au pairs.

Those who have general rights to work in the UK, such as those who arrive under our Youth Mobility Schemes (YMS), would be eligible to undertake such work. We remain committed to operating and expanding our YMS. However, as each YMS is subject to a reciprocal arrangement, we will not add nations to the scheme unilaterally without such an agreement as they are not simply a route for recruiting overseas.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160791>

Coronavirus: Undocumented Migrants

Barry Gardiner (Labour) [142759] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate his Department has made of the number of illegal migrants and overstayers who are reluctant to engage with the NHS during the covid-19 outbreak as a result of concerns over their immigration status.

Reply from Nadine Dorries: We have made no such estimate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-01-25/142759>

Refugees: Resettlement

John Nicolson (SNP) [160702] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many places she plans to offer to refugees, per annum, under the new UK Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Chris Philp: The UK is committed to resettling refugees to the UK and we continue to work closely with partners to assess capacity for resettlement activity, as we recover from the pandemic.

Resettlement will continue to play a primary role, alongside a reformed asylum system, which will see us continue to offer safe and legal routes to the UK for vulnerable people in need of protection in the months and years to come.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160702>

Refugees: Resettlement

Mick Whitley (Labour) [163311] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

what progress the Government has made in meeting commitments under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme in the last 12 months.

Reply from Chris Philp: As of December 2020, a total of 19,776 people had been resettled to the UK through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) since it was expanded in September 2015. This is in addition to the thousands of people resettled through our other refugee resettlement schemes.

In the year to December 2020, a total of 662 people were resettled to the UK through the VPRS. During this time, resettlement activity was necessarily paused, between March 2020 and December 2020, due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Home Office is committed to publishing data in an orderly way as part of the regular quarterly Immigration Statistics, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. These can be found at

www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-statistics

To access the number of refugees resettled, access the latest statistical release using the link above, then “data tables”, “asylum and resettlement” and select either the summary or detailed resettlement tables. The latest set of figures were released on 25 February 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163311>

Refugees: Resettlement

Anne McLaughlin (SNP) [164522] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much funding she has allocated to refugee resettlement for 2021-22.

Reply from Chris Philp: The first 12 months of a refugee's resettlement costs are funded by central government using the Official Development Assistance budget which amounts to £8,520 per person. For years 2-5 local authorities receive £12,000 per person overall; tapering from £5,000 in year 2, to £3,700 in year 3, to £2,300 in year 4 and £1,000 in year 5. Funding is also made available for healthcare, education, and to help local authorities with exceptional costs such as social care and housing adaptations.

This tariff funding will be made available to all local authorities who resettle refugees during 2021-22. The number of refugees resettled next year will be dependent on local authority capacity as we recover from the pandemic.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-08/164522>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [161731] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum decisions were made without substantive asylum interviews in 2020.

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [161732] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of substantive asylum interviews were conducted by video conference in 2020.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Home Office is unable to state how many and what proportion of substantive asylum interviews were conducted by video conference or how many asylum decisions were made without a substantive interview as the Home Office does not publish this information

However, the Home Office does publish data on the number asylum applications awaiting an initial decision by duration. This data can be found at This data can be found at Asy_04 of the published Immigration Statistics:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-december-2020/list-of-tables#asylum-and-resettlement>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161731>

and

Asylum: Appeals

Afzal Khan (Labour) [160787] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what the average duration was of the appeal procedure against first instance decisions on asylum applications in the latest period for which figures are available.

Reply from Chris Philp: The average clearance time for asylum appeals in the First-tier Tribunal Immigration and Asylum Chamber, measured from receipt to disposal, was 40 weeks in the period July – September 2020.

This includes Asylum, Protection and Revocation of Protection appeals.

Published statistics can be found at:

www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunal-statistics-quarterly-july-to-september-2020
and

www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmcts-management-information

Quarterly Tribunal Statistics for October – December 2020 will be published on 11 March 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160787>

Asylum: Housing

Imran Ahmad Khan (Conservative) [163327] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, on what basis her Department determines the number of asylum seekers housed within each parliamentary constituency.

Reply from Chris Philp: Asylum seekers are housed across the UK under agreements made between national government and local authorities, rather than constituencies, that have been in place since the introduction of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

The amount of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority area is limited to 0.5% of the 2011 census population or, a ratio of 1:200 of supported asylum seekers to overall population of the area. The majority of local authorities who accommodate asylum seekers are not in close proximity to this limit. We would not normally go beyond that ratio without the agreement of the relevant local authority.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163327>

Asylum: Military Bases

Harriet Harman (Labour) [160508] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to move people seeking asylum out of military barracks.

Reply from Chris Philp: We have a statutory obligation to provide accommodation to asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute. Use of these sites for contingency initial asylum accommodation is temporary whilst pressures in the asylum system are addressed.

People are routinely moved between asylum accommodation venues for a variety of reasons.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160508>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Military Bases

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [165620] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications for her policies of the key findings of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration from its site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks, published on 8 March 2021; and if she will make a statement.

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [165621] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, with reference to the key findings by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration from its site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks, published on 8 March 2021, what recent assessment her Department has made of the continued use of (a) Penally training camp and (b) Napier barracks as contingency asylum accommodation.

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [165622] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the key findings by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration from its site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks, published on 8 March 2021, what recent assessment her Department has made its plans to extend planning permission at (a) Penally training camp and (b) Napier barracks.

Liz Saville Roberts (Plaid Cymru) [165623] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when her Department plans to publish its response to the key findings by the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration from its site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks, published on 8 March 2021.

Reply from Chris Philp: The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration announced an inspection of contingency asylum accommodation on 25 January 2021.

The department acknowledges the ICIBI's decision to publish on 8 March the initial findings from site visits to Napier Barracks and Penally.

The ICIBI's inspection continues and a full inspection report will follow.

The duration of the inspection is a matter for the ICIBI and upon its conclusion, following standard procedure set out in the UK Borders Act 2007, the Department will issue a formal response alongside the inspection report as it is laid before Parliament and published on Gov.UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165620>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165621>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165622>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165623>

The initial findings referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/an-inspection-of-the-use-of-contingency-asylum-accommodation-key-findings-from-site-visits-to-penally-camp-and-napier-barracks>

Migrants: Detainees

Apsana Begum (Labour) [159372] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many non-British nationals who have served their sentence remain held in prison under immigration powers awaiting deportation.

Reply from Chris Philp: This Government puts the rights of the British public before those of criminals, and we are clear that foreign criminals should be deported from the UK wherever it is legal and practical to do so.

The Home Office publishes data on people in detention as at the last day of the quarter in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. The number of people in detention held in an HM Prison under immigration powers, published on the 25 February 2021, is available from table Det_D02 of the [Detention detailed datasets](#). Information on those who have served their sentence and remain held in prison under immigration powers awaiting deportation is not available in a reportable format.

We make every effort to ensure that a person's removal by deportation coincides, as far as possible, with their release from prison on completion of sentence. Where an FNO refuses to cooperate with the removal or deportation process, they may be detained. Foreign national offenders held in detention have the option to apply to

an independent immigration judge for bail at any point.

Since January 2019, we have returned 7,240 FNOs, and we make no apology for protecting the public.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-26/159372>

Migrants: Detainees

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [165514] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reasons her Department has cancelled the two pilot schemes offering an alternative to immigration detention.

Reply from Chris Philp: As part of the Department's immigration detention reform programme, we are conducting a series of two pilots exploring alternatives to detention. In line with international best practice, each pilot will run for two years, before a final evaluation

The first of these pilots, Action Access, has provided women who would otherwise be detained with a programme of support in the community. This pilot will conclude on 31 March 2021 after operating for two years, as planned. The second pilot, the Refugee and Migrant Advisory Service, is currently supporting both men and women in the community and will remain in operation until June 2022

We are working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on these pilots and they have appointed the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) to independently evaluate this work. These evaluations will be published, with the evaluation report of the Action Access pilot scheduled for early Summer 2021. We will use the evaluations of these pilots to inform our future approach to case-management focused alternatives to detention.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165514>

Detention Centres: Females

Holly Lynch (Labour) [162658] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to establish smaller capacity immigration detention units for women located in existing male detention facilities.

Reply from Chris Philp: There are no plans to expand immigration detention capacity for women.

The Home Office has acquired the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham and will open it as an immigration removal centre (IRC) for around 80 women by the autumn. We plan to supplement the new Hassockfield IRC by continuing to provide some detention capacity for women at Colnbrook, Dungavel and Yarl's Wood IRCs, in order to provide flexibility in placement and shorter escorting journeys for those in detention.

The immigration removal estate is kept under ongoing review, to ensure that the Home Office has sufficient capacity for men and women it proves necessary to detain for the purposes of removal, and to protect the public; and to provide value for money.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-03/162658>

The following five questions all received the same answer

Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [163251] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many deaths of detainees occurred at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre during the period 15 February to 22 February 2021.

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [163252] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps have been taken to inform relevant next of kin of detainees who have died at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre.

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [163253] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

what steps her Department has taken to inform (a) the police and (b) the Prison and Probation Ombudsman of deaths at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre to ensure a prompt and thorough investigation.

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [163254] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether detainees at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre have been provided with written notice of any deaths of detainees; and if she will place a copy of any such notice in the Library.

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [163255] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps have been taken following deaths in detention at Morton Hall Immigration Removal Centre to (a) provide detainees who remain at that centre with counselling and other forms of bereavement support and (b) complete ad-hoc assessments and formal reviews of Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork files.

Reply from Chris Philp: On 19 February 2021 a man who was detained at Morton Hall immigration removal centre sadly died; the first death in the immigration removal estate since 2019.

The published Home Office Detention Services Order 08/2014 "Death in immigration detention" provides guidance as to the actions that Home Office and contracted supplier staff must take in the event of a death in detention. These actions include notification of the death to appropriate bodies, identifying potential witnesses to the death and supporting the individuals who are in detention. Each death in immigration detention is subject to investigation by the police, the coroner (or Procurator Fiscal in Scotland) and the independent Prisons and Probation Ombudsman. All relevant bodies were informed on 19 February.

In accordance with the guidance, the individual's family has been informed and a family liaison officer has been assigned. Our thoughts and condolences are with the individual's family and friends. In parallel, a community notice was issued at Morton Hall to inform residents of the death, the independent investigation and where to access support. In addition to this, ad-hoc assessments were undertaken of all individuals with open, or recently closed, Assessment Care in Detention and Teamwork (ACDT) plans and formal assessments undertaken of those considered particularly vulnerable to the news.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163251>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163252>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163253>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163254>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-04/163255>

The Order referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/909328/DSO_08_2014_Death_in_Detention_v6.pdf

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Visas: Migrant Workers

Baroness Bull (Crossbench) [HL13572] To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Permitted Paid Engagement visa route limits a professional's stay in the UK to up to one month; and what plans they have to extend the duration of its validity to 90 days.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Permitted Paid Engagement visitor route allows professionals in several sectors, including the creative sector,

to enter the UK for up to one month to undertake permitted paid engagements, where they have been invited by a UK-based organisation and without the need to apply through the sponsored work routes.

Those wishing to undertake longer periods of engagement in the UK may use the T5 Creative concession, which allows non-visa nationals to enter the UK for up to three months without applying for a visa in advance, provided they have a Certificate of Sponsorship. For anyone wishing to remain in the UK for up to 12 months, the full T5 Creative route is also available.

We will continue to keep our policy under close review, including through wide engagement and dialogue with stakeholders from a range of sectors.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-23/hl13572>

Undocumented Migrants: EU Nationals

Lord Green of Deddington (Crossbench) [HL13421] To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures are in place to identify EU citizens in the UK who overstay their visas.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: EU migrants whose visas expire will be identified and treated in the same way as any other overstayers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13421>

Asylum: Appeals

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL13713] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum applications they disputed on the grounds of having little or no evidence of an asylum seeker's claimed age in (1) 1991, (2) 2010, and (3) 2018.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on asylum applications in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release'. Data on the number of asylum applications that had an age dispute raised are published in table Asy_D05 of the asylum and resettlement detailed datasets. The table below is given from the published data.

Age disputes raised for asylum applicants between 2006 and 2020

Year	Age disputes raised
2006	2,246
2007	1,930
2008	1,515
2009	1,146
2010	531
2011	370
2012	338
2013	323
2014	318
2015	791
2016	929
2017	718
2018	875
2019	798
2020	732

Notes:

1. An age dispute case refers to an applicant who does not have credible documentary or other persuasive evidence to demonstrate their age claimed,
2. 'Age disputes raised' relates to the number of age assessment requests raised for a main asylum applicant in a year. Figures to the period when the age dispute was raised, which may differ from the period the asylum application was received.
3. Age dispute figures for years before 2010 can be found in as_10 of the old format

asylum data tables volume 3.

Data on age disputes prior to 2006 is not readily available.

Information on how to use dataset Asy_D05 can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relate up to December 2020. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the 'summary tables'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on asylum and resettlement.

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-25/hl13713>

Asylum: Finance

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL13714] To ask Her Majesty's Government when they introduced the provision of £39.63 in cash support to those seeking asylum in the UK; and what are the eligibility criteria for that payment.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute are provided with accommodation and a weekly allowance to cover their other essential living needs.

The level of the standard allowance is reviewed each year and adjusted where necessary. As a result of this year's review the allowance has been raised from £37.75 per week to £39.63 per week. The £39.63 rate took effect from 22 February 2021, although an earlier exceptional temporary increase to £39.60 was implemented from 15 June 2020 pending the outcome of the full review.

The allowance is reduced if the asylum seeker is accommodated in full-board facilities where some of their essential living needs, for example food and toiletries, are provided in kind.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-25/hl13714>

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL13611] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the living conditions of the former Napier barracks, and (2) whether those conditions would be suitable for use by the British Armed Forces.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: As required by law, we provide asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute with accommodation which is safe, secure and fit-for-purpose, paid for by the taxpayer.

We welcome independent scrutiny of our sites, processes and procedures; and routinely facilitate inspections from relevant bodies to assure ourselves of the ongoing safety and suitability of the accommodation and services we provide.

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration announced an inspection of contingency asylum accommodation on 25 January 2021.

The department acknowledges the ICIBI's decision to publish on 8 March the initial findings from site visits to Napier Barracks and Penally.

The ICIBI's inspection report will be laid before Parliament in the usual way after the inspection has concluded. The Department will issue a formal response alongside the report as it is published on Gov.UK. It is not known when the final inspection report will be received but this is a matter for the ICIBI.

An independent rapid review was also recently conducted to assure ourselves of the extensive COVID-19 protocols in place to safeguard the health and safety of asylum seekers during the pandemic. The Home Office is currently reviewing and acting upon the recommendations of the review.

We continue to work closely with our provider and partners to identify opportunities for improvement, as we do across our entire accommodation estate.

Medomsley Detention Centre

Baroness Lister of Burtersett: To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to open an immigration removal centre for women on the site of the former Hassockfield Detention Centre in Medomsley; and what plans they have to expand the use of engagement-focused alternatives to detention to resolve women's immigration centres in the community.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The immigration removal estate is kept under ongoing review to ensure that the Home Office has sufficient capacity, in the right places and that it provides value for money.

The Home Office has acquired the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham and will open it as an immigration removal centre for women by the autumn. Initial discussions with the planning authority have taken place and work has commenced at the site. An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed as part of this programme of work.

Now in its second year, the Action Access pilot has provided women who would otherwise be detained with a programme of support in the community, including case management support. We are working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and they have appointed the National Centre for Social Research to independently evaluate this work, once the pilot concludes in March 2021. The evaluation is scheduled for publication in June 2021. We will use the evaluation to inform our future approach to case-management focused alternatives to detention.

In order to meet operational needs and demands we will continue to operate the immigration removal estate in a flexible manner.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13464>

Migrants: Deportation

Lord Green of Deddington (Crossbench) [HL13666] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many individuals have been removed from the UK in each of the last 10 years as a result of the expiry of their leave to remain.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office publishes data on the number of returns from the UK in each quarter in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly release'. The latest data are published in Ret_01 of the Returns summary tables. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relate to the year ending September 2020.

The Home Office seeks to return people who do not have any legal right to stay in the UK, which includes people who:

- enter, or attempt to enter, the UK illegally (including people entering clandestinely and by means of deception on entry);
- overstay their period of legal right to remain in the UK;
- breach their conditions of leave;
- are subject to deportation action; for example, due to a serious criminal conviction and
- have been refused asylum.

The published data relate to all returns, regardless of reason for return.

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

[Copy of Returns Summary Table](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-24/hl13666>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Human Trafficking: Children

Baroness Doocey (Liberal Democrat) [HL13660] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of potential human trafficking victims facing exploitation of a sexual nature.

Baroness Doocey (Liberal Democrat) [HL13662] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (1) to reflect, and (2) to combat, increases in reports of potential human trafficking cases related to sexual exploitation.

Baroness Doocey (Liberal Democrat) [HL13663] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to amend the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (1) to reflect, and (2) to combat, increases in reports of the number of potential human trafficking cases involving children.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government is committed to tackling modern slavery including cases involving child trafficking and sexual exploitation. The Modern Slavery Act 2015, gives law enforcement agencies the tools to tackle modern slavery, including maximum life sentences for perpetrators and enhanced protection for victims. In July 2018, the Government commissioned an Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to identify what can be improved in the implementation of the Act. The Government's response to this review can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/government-response-to-the-independent-review-of-the-modern-slavery-act>

We are committed to strengthening the law enforcement response to modern slavery and in 2020/21 we allocated over £2 million funding to the police to support the Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime programme. During the pandemic we have also worked closely with law enforcement to monitor any changes in the threat of modern slavery including cases involving trafficked children and sexual exploitation.

The Home Office continues to work with First Responders to ensure they understand the indicators of different exploitation types and can refer potential victims into appropriate support. In July 2020, we released an E-Learning module available to all First Responders to improve their understanding of their responsibilities and the support available.

With this greater awareness and improved understanding of modern slavery, more potential victims are being identified and protected. The latest statistics can be found at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-referral-mechanism-statistics>

The Home Office is currently addressing an earlier identified error that occurred in the data processing for the Q1-Q3 of 2020 statistics where some sexual exploitation referrals were miscategorised as 'Not recorded or unknown'. Once this error is rectified, the number of sexual exploitation referrals will be higher than in the current statistical bulletins and the number of 'not recorded or unknown' referrals will be lower. The updated data will be released alongside the Quarter 4 (October to December 2020) statistics which are being prepared and will be released on 18 March 2021.

The Government continues to focus on improving identification and support for potential victims by embarking on an ambitious National Referral Mechanism Transformation Programme to build on our world leading efforts to identify vulnerable victims and provide the support that they need to rebuild their lives. This will ensure that victims are safeguarded and supported based on their individual recovery need, with a focus on supporting the most vulnerable and making good use of existing access to mainstream services. As part of this programme, we are

progressing the roll out of the Independent Child Trafficking Guardians service. The Government is committed to tackling the drivers that can lead individuals to become potential victims of trafficking. Local authorities are responsible for the safeguarding and promotion of welfare of all children in their area, co-operating closely with police and other statutory agencies to offer child victims required protection and support. In 2020-21, local government received an additional £1 billion grant for adult and children's social care. This is on top of the continuation of the £410 million social care grant. In addition, we are investing £84 million in targeted, evidence-based interventions to improve the support provided to vulnerable children and their families and enable more children to stay at home thriving in stable family environments. The Government is also strongly committed to supporting victims of sexual exploitation and continues to provide investment in this area, including by allocating £76 million to support victims of modern slavery, sexual violence, and domestic abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Home Office has committed to create a new Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy this year and ran a nationwide Call for Evidence from 10 December to 19 February to gather the views from a wide range of stakeholders to inform this strategy. The strategy will also consider wider work, including on modern slavery and sexual exploitation.

[Gov Response Independent Review Modern Slavery](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-24/hl13660>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-24/hl13662>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-24/hl13663>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Angela Crawley (SNP) [1602] EU Settlement Scheme documentation for married women – That this House is aware EU Settlement Scheme paperwork has been issued to married women showing names they do not currently use; understands that when processing EU Settlement Scheme documentation the Home Office takes information only from the machine readable zone of an applicant's passport; notes that passports from many EU countries list both the maiden and married name for married women, and that only the former shows up in the machine readable zone; recognises that discord in the names shown on different forms of documentation may cause complications for affected women when proving their right to live and work in the UK, causing unnecessary barriers when applying for jobs, renting, setting up bank accounts or applying for social security; deplores the cultural insensitivity shown to European women who retain their maiden names on their passports after marriage; and calls on the Home Office to amend married women's settled status documentation to allow information to match the name used on other forms of identification and in their day to day lives.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58225>

Press Release

An inspection of the use of contingency asylum accommodation – key findings from site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/an-inspection-of-the-use-of-contingency-asylum-accommodation-key-findings-from-site-visits-to-penally-camp-and-napier-barracks>

New Publications

Updated Guidance: Healthcare for EU citizens living in or moving to the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/healthcare-for-eu-and-efta-nationals-living-in-the-uk>

Caseworker Guidance: EU Settlement Scheme: EU, other EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/953873/main-euss-guidance-v9.0ext.pdf

Letter from Kevin Foster MP to Yvette Cooper MP regarding the approach to family applications on the Hong Kong British National (Overseas) BN(O) route.

<http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2021-0217/letter Kevin Foster to HASC chair BNO route family applications.pdf>

Equality Act 2010 Schedule 3, Part 4, Paragraph 17(4)(a): Ministerial Authorisation

<http://data.parliament.uk/DepositedPapers/Files/DEP2021-0217/deposit MA for HK route later applications by.pdf>

News

High court rejects bid to extend UK's EU settlement scheme

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/mar/11/high-court-rejects-bid-to-extend-uks-eu-settlement-scheme>

Feeling unwanted in Britain, Poles head home in an exodus fuelled by Covid

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/feeling-unwanted-in-britain-poles-head-home-in-an-exodus-fuelled-by-covid-gl0b9xwkt>

Foreign gangs making 'easy profits' by turning to Channel people smuggling

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/03/09/foreign-gangs-making-easy-profits-turning-channel-people-smuggling/>

Border Force patrol boat HMC Vigilant taken off migrant route

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/border-force-patrol-boat-hmc-vigilant-taken-off-migrant-route-js9rsddn0>

Thousands of refugee children stuck in limbo

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/thousands-of-refugee-children-stuck-in-limbo-rnh20phgp>

Asylum seekers threatened with homelessness for not complying with 'unlawful' 23-hour curfew, court hears

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-homeless-curfew-high-court-b1816073.html>

Asylum seekers: Napier Barracks and Penally camp 'filthy and run-down'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-56325360>

Inspectors condemn conditions in barracks asylum accommodation

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/inspectors-condemn-conditions-in-barracks-asylum-accommodation/>

Asylum seekers at high-risk of self-harm held in 'uninhabitable' self-isolation block in Napier Barracks

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-napier-barracks-self-harm-b1814059.html>

Inspectors condemn Covid safety of barracks used to house asylum seekers

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/mar/08/inspectors-report-condemns-covid-security-of-home-office-asylum-barracks>

Channel migrant barracks 'unfit for human habitation' and major Covid outbreaks 'inevitable'

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/03/08/channel-migrant-barracks-unfit-human-habitation-major-covid/>

Scottish Parliament recognition for church asylum seeker project leader

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/scottish-parliament-recognition-for-church-asylum-seeker-project-leader>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Equality Act 2010

Martyn Day (SNP) [162660] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what plans she has to strengthen the protection against intersectional discrimination and enact section 14 of the Equality Act 2010.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: We have no plans to implement the dual discrimination provision in the Act. We believe that current protections are adequate and that enactment would introduce unwelcome regulatory complexity and place new costly burdens on business and the public sector consequent on the introduction of a further 21 protected characteristics. In addition, an employee or service user may bring a discrimination claim under more than one ground, which the courts can then consider consecutively, where appropriate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-03/162660>

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Ethnic Groups

Afzal Khan (Labour) [160786] To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many workers from (a) white, (b) Black, (c) Asian, (d) other minority ethnic backgrounds have been furloughed (a) in total and (b) as a proportion of the working population of that group.

Reply from Jesse Norman: Information on the ethnic breakdown of recipients supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) is not available. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) publish statistics on the CJRS. The latest release was published on GOV.UK on 25 February 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-february-2021>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160786>

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme: Ethnic Groups

Afzal Khan (Labour) [164616] To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2021 to Question 160786, on Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme:

Ethnic Groups, whether his Department has plans to collect information on the ethnic breakdown of recipients supported by the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme.

Reply from Jesse Norman: HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) do not hold information on the ethnicity of employees who have been furloughed under the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) nor on whether they have a disability. There are no plans to collect this data. HMRC publish statistics on the CJRS. The latest release was published on GOV.UK on 25 February 2020:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme-statistics-february-2021>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-08/164616>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160786>

Treatment of, and Outcomes for, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Individuals in the Criminal Justice System Independent Review

Claudia Webbe (Independent) [160870] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what steps his Department is taking to communicate the findings and recommendations of the Lammy Review to the full and part-time judiciary; and what steps his Department is taking to protect whistleblowers from discrimination and victimisation.

Reply from Chris Philp: Since the publication of the Lammy Review in September 2017, the Ministry of Justice has worked with Judicial Office to respond to its recommendations, which have been disseminated and widely read amongst the Judiciary. The issues raised are of continued interest and concern and remain high on the agenda.

Any Ministry of Justice employees who raise a concern using the Raising a Concern (including whistleblowing) policy will be supported and will not suffer any unfair or negative treatment as a result. Where a protected disclosure is made, the individual also has a legal entitlement to protection. Any disclosures made under this policy will be treated in a sensitive manner. Details of individuals will only be shared with those who need to know in order to investigate and progress the matter.

For the Judiciary, there are three related Judicial Grievance policies which cover complaints of bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, systemic complaints and complaints of broader wrongdoing. The grievance policies provide a framework for raising complaints formally or informally. These apply to all judicial office holders; salaried and fee-paid including the magistracy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-01/160870>

The Lammy Review, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf

Railways: Females and Ethnic Groups

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [165646] To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he is taking to increase (a) female and (b) BAME representation in the rail industry.

Reply from Chris Heaton-Harris: In 2016, the Government set ambitions through the Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy (TISS) to increase apprenticeships in road and rail client bodies to help address skills shortages in the transport sector, ensuring that the transport sector has the capacity and capability to deliver planned investment and to increase diversity. These included a 20% increase in BAME representation in line with government targets, and 20% of technical and engineering roles to be filled by women, reaching parity with the working population by 2030.

Reports in 2019/20 demonstrated that the number of BAME representation had exceeded the target at 21% with a slight decrease in representation from females at 12%, down from 14.8% on previous reporting periods.

The Department is committed to ensuring that the transport workforce better reflects our diverse society. As part of the ongoing work to develop a Transport Skills Strategy, the Department has been working with a range of stakeholders leading on the skills and employment agenda, which includes Diversity, Inclusion and Social Mobility. The new Transport Skills Strategy (TSS) will better reflect the challenges currently faced by the transport industry and will aim to help remove barriers to roles by improving diversity and accessibility, ensuring that transport careers are available to everyone.

Further to this, the recent Emergency Recovery Measures Agreements applied to a number of Train Operating Companies, included aspirational targets to encourage the increased recruitment of female and BAME candidates over the term of the contract with a requirement to demonstrate the implementation of specific measures to monitor success.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-09/165646>

Press Releases

New Human Rights Bill

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-human-rights-bill/>

Students need support to succeed in and beyond higher education

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/students-need-support-to-succeed-in-and-beyond-higher-education/>

New Publications

National Taskforce for Human Rights Leadership Report

<https://tinyurl.com/yh9mpat4>

Evaluation of access and participation plan reforms

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/evaluation-of-access-and-participation-plan-reforms/commentary/>

Education: Access and participation data dashboard

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/access-and-participation-data-dashboard/>

In-between Spaces: Inclusion and Representation of Central and Eastern European (CEE) Artists in the UK Creative Economy

<http://centrala-space.org.uk/uploads/editor/files/CEN01-In-Between-Spaces.pdf>

News

Equality body responds to publication of landmark human rights report

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/equality-body-responds-publication-landmark-human-rights-report>

"A new era for human rights": Commission welcomes Scottish Government commitment to ground-breaking new human rights law for Scotland

<https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/news/a-new-era-for-human-rights-commission-welcomes-scottish-government-commitment-to-ground-breaking-new-human-rights-law-for-scotland/>

Attainment gap between white and black university students 'remains too high', watchdog says

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/attainment-gap-black-students-university-ofs-b1815922.html>

Thaddea Graham: If I have a voice, I don't want to waste it

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/thaddea-graham-if-i-have-a-voice-i-dont-want-to-waste-it-b8fx93hjt>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Universities: Antisemitism

Hilary Benn (Labour) [161675] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many English universities have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism; and if he will list the universities that have not yet done so.

Reply from Michelle Donelan: The government has asked all English higher education (HE) providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) to adopt the working definition of antisemitism of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). The IHRA definition is an important tool in tackling antisemitism. Adopting this widely recognised definition sends a strong signal that HE providers take these issues seriously. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, wrote to HE leaders most recently in October 2020 to reiterate the importance of the definition and to urge all providers to consider adopting it.

The government is pleased to report that at least 91 providers have now adopted the definition, with many more preparing to adopt it. We know that other providers are in the process of considering adoption.

The decision on adoption of the definition rests with individual providers, but the government will continue to urge them to adopt the definition and ensure that HE is a genuinely fulfilling and welcoming experience for everyone.

I am proud that so many providers have taken a positive step towards eradicating antisemitism by adopting the definition since the Secretary of State for Education's letter, but further progress is still needed to stamp it out. This is why, in the Secretary of State for Education's most recent strategic guidance letter, the government asked the OfS to undertake a scoping exercise, to identify providers which are reluctant to adopt the definition. The letter asked them to consider introducing mandatory reporting of antisemitic incident numbers by providers, with the aim of ensuring a robust evidence base, which the OfS can then use to effectively regulate in this area.

The Secretary of State for Education also asked the OfS to ensure that, if antisemitic incidents do occur at a provider, they should consider if it is relevant in a particular case whether the provider has adopted the IHRA definition when considering what sanctions, including monetary penalties, would be appropriate to apply.

We will continue to work across the government to ensure that racism and religious hatred of any kind is not tolerated anywhere, including in our world-leading universities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161675>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Social Media: Racial Discrimination

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL13524] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to tackle racism on social media platforms.

Reply from Baroness Barran: Racism online is completely unacceptable in an open and tolerant society. We must do all we can to tackle it.

The Government is committed to tackling racism, including the spread of racist content online. In December 2020, we published the full government response to the Online Harms White Paper consultation, which sets out new expectations on companies to keep their users safe online. Under a new legal duty of care, in-scope companies, including social media, will need to tackle illegal content and activity on their services and take swift and effective action against such material.

Companies providing high-risk, high-reach services will also need to undertake regular assessments of the risk posed to adults by legal but harmful material on their services. These companies will need to set clear terms and conditions which explicitly state what categories of legal but harmful material they accept (and do not accept) on their service. Companies will need to enforce these terms and conditions consistently and transparently and could face enforcement action if they do not. The Online Safety Bill, which will give effect to the regulatory framework, will be ready this year.

The full government response also set out plans to publish an Online Media Literacy Strategy. The Strategy will explore the existing media literacy landscape, and set out the Government's plans to ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to media literacy education for all citizens. This will support users to make informed and safer decisions online, including taking action against online hate such as racism.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13524>

The government response referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper/outcome/online-harms-white-paper-full-government-response>

Press Release

Hate Crime Bill passed

<https://www.gov.scot/news/hate-crime-bill-passed/>

News

MSPs approve Scotland's controversial hate crime law

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56364821>

MSPs vote through controversial hate crime legislation

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19154703.msps-vote-controversial-hate-crime-legislation/>

Hate Crime Bill passes as Humza Yousaf tells of first experience of racism

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/hate-crime-bill-passes-as-humza-yousaf-tells-of-first-experience-of-racism-3163176>

SNP's contentious hate crime laws pass despite free speech fears

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/03/11/snps-contentious-hate-crime-laws-pass-despite-free-speech-fears/>

Hate crime vote delayed after marathon Holyrood debate

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56349995>

Controversial Hate Crime Bill vote delayed after fiery Holyrood debate

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/controversial-hate-crime-bill-vote-delayed-after-fiery-holyrood-debate-3161789>

Eleventh-hour bid to stop controversial Hate Crime Bill

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/eleventh-hour-bid-to-stop-controversial-hate-crime-bill-3160142>

Covid in Wales: Racist incidents 'take your breath away'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-56323775>

Covid and racism: 'Stigma associated with being Chinese'

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-wales-56328044>

Edinburgh council leader apologises for school racism

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-edinburgh-east-fife-56375511>

Bristol mayor receives racist emails after slave reparations plan passed

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-bristol-56377792>

Queen admits concern over racism claims as Buckingham Palace breaks silence on Harry and Meghan interview

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/buckingham-palace-meghan-harry-oprah-b1814739.html>

Meghan's racism claims come as no surprise to Black Britons

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/meghans-racism-claims-come-as-no-surprise-to-black-britons-meghan-markle-harry-david-olusoga-sussex-harold-wilson-b1814575.html>

Of course the UK media has a problem with racism – any other suggestion is propaganda

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/media-racism-meghan-harry-society-of-editors-b1815074.html>

The British press isn't racist, say the editors. That just shows how long the problem will endure

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/mar/09/british-press-racist-editors-problem-endure-meghan>

Naga Munchetty: It's time to talk about race

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/stories-56253480>

Jewish women need more protection from racist abuse

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/jewish-women-need-more-protection-from-racist-abuse-07nx8l0l9>

Google HR 'suggested medical leave' for racism victims

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/technology-56321568>

Disney+ stops children from seeing 'racist' classics such as Peter Pan and Dumbo

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19149285.disney-stops-children-seeing-racist-classics-peter-pan-dumbo/>

'Imperially nostalgic racists' target Empireland author with hate mail

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/mar/12/imperially-nostalgic-racists-target-empireland-author-with-hate-mail>

Middlesbrough condemn 'vile and unacceptable' racist abuse of Yannick Bolasie

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/football-league/yannick-bolasie-racist-abuse-middlesbrough-b1815738.html>

Middlesbrough condemn 'vile' racist abuse directed to Yannick Bolasie

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2021/mar/11/middlesbrough-condemn-vile-racist-abuse-directed-to-yannick-bolasie-bournemouth-arnaut-danjuma-social-media>

Reece James deletes Instagram account weeks after revealing racist abuse

<https://www.independent.co.uk/sport/football/premier-league/chelsea/reece-james-delete-instagram-racism-b1815770.html>

Human rights commission asked to examine racism in English cricket

<https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2021/mar/10/human-rights-commission-asked-to-examine-racism-in-english-cricket>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

New Publications

Guidance: Organ and tissue donation – authorisation requirements

<https://tinyurl.com/y39mby88>

Guidance: Coronavirus (COVID-19): Scottish Parliament Election 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-scottish-parliament-election-2021/>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

Ministerial Statement

Unauthorised Encampments

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Priti Patel) [HCWS826] Today, I am announcing the Government's response to the November 2019 consultation entitled, "Strengthening Police Powers to Tackle Unauthorised Encampments". The consultation sought views on how to address and prevent the harm and distress caused by some unauthorised encampments and followed a public consultation in 2018 which demonstrated support for more police action.

The vast majority of travellers are law-abiding citizens. As of January 2020, the number of lawful traveller sites increased by 41% from January 2010. However, there continue to be unauthorised encampments that can create significant challenges for local authorities and cause distress and misery to many. Harmful or disruptive encampments can also perpetuate a negative image of travelling communities.

I will therefore introduce legislation to increase the powers available to the police in England and Wales. As we pledged in our manifesto, we will create a new criminal offence to tackle unauthorised encampments. In addition, we will give the police the power to seize vehicles, and we will strengthen existing powers.

The measures complement the ongoing work by MHCLG to strengthen councils' powers to tackle unauthorised developments—building on land that an occupier owns without planning permission.

Introduce a criminal offence of residing on land with a vehicle, causing damage, disruption or distress

- A person will commit an offence if they:
 - Are aged 18 or over and reside or intend to reside on land without the consent of the occupier of the land;
 - Have or intend to have at least one vehicle with them on the land;
 - Have caused or are likely to cause significant damage, disruption or distress; and
- They:
- Fail, without a reasonable excuse, to leave the land with their vehicle and/or property once asked to do so by the occupier, representatives of the occupier or a constable; or
 - They, without reasonable excuse, enter, or re-enter the land with an intention of residing there without the consent of the occupier, and they have or intend to have a vehicle with them, within 12 months of a request to leave and remove their property from an occupier, their representative or a constable.

Give police the power to seize any property including vehicles from those committing the new offence

- The police will be empowered to seize any property including vehicles owned or in the possession of the individual on the land if they reasonably suspect that the person has committed the above offence.

Strengthen existing powers

- Section 61(1)(a) of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 ("CJPOA") sets out the power of the police to direct trespassers away from land. We will amend this section to enable the police to direct trespassers away in a broader range of circumstances, including if there is damage to the environment, such as excessive noise, litter or deposits of waste, and if there is disruption to supplies of water, energy or fuel.
- We also intend to increase the period in which persons directed away from the land under section 61 and 62A of the CJPOA must not return — without reasonable

excuse—without committing an offence or being subject to powers of seizure from three months to 12 by amending section 61(4)(b) 62B(2) and section 62C(2) of the CJPOA.

- We will in addition strengthen measures to tackle unauthorised encampments on roads by amending section 61(9)(b) to allow police to direct trespassers to leave land that forms part of a highway.

I am grateful to everyone who took the time to respond to the two consultations carried out by the Government on this issue. The views expressed in response have all been considered and have informed the decisions we have made.

The measures I intend to introduce are a proportionate increase in powers for the police. I hope they will deter unauthorised encampments from being set up in the first instance but, where that is not the case, they will allow the police to take more effective action in response to an encampment causing damage, disruption or distress, in support of those communities living with or near them.

I am confident that we have taken steps to ensure those wishing to exercise their rights to enjoy the countryside are not inadvertently impacted by these measures.

The response to the consultation will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and will also be available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/strengthening-police-powers-to-tackle-unauthorised-encampments>.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-03-08/debates/2103082000007/UnauthorisedEncampments>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Forced Marriage

The Lord Bishop of St Albans: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were (1) charged, and (2) convicted, with (a) forcing someone to marry, and (b) breaching a forced marriage protection order, under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, in (i) 2016, (ii) 2017, (iii) 2018, (iv) 2019, and (v) 2020.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office does not hold information on the number of people that were charged with forced marriage offences or breaching a forced marriage protection order.

The number of convictions for forced marriage offences is held by the Ministry of Justice.

The number of convictions for offences relating to forced marriage and breaching forced marriage protection orders for calendar years 2016-2019 can be found in the table below.

Found Guilty	2016	2017	2018	2019
36.1 Forced marriage	0	0	3	0
66.6 Breach of a forced marriage protection order	5	1	4	2

Data for 2020 is due to be published in May 2021.

The figures given in the table relate to defendants for whom these offences were the principal offences for which they were dealt with. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed. Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13499>

Forced Marriage

The Lord Bishop of St Albans: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they

have made of the effectiveness of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 in dealing with the issue of forced marriage.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is a world-leader in the fight to end the practice of forced marriage, with our dedicated Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) leading efforts to combat it both at home and abroad.

The Government made forced marriage a criminal offence under the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 to better protect victims and send a clear message that this practice is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the UK. That Act also makes it a criminal offence to breach a Forced Marriage Protection Order, and provides anonymity for victims of forced marriage.

Those provisions sit as part of the Government's wider approach to tackling forced marriage. We are committed to ensuring that professionals understand that forced marriage is a criminal offence and have the training and guidance they need to provide effective advice and support on this issue. The Government has published statutory multi-agency guidance and made available free e-learning to help professionals to recognise the warning signs and ensure that the right action is taken to help protect those at risk. The FMU also provides regular training on forced marriage to police officers and social workers.

In 2019 the FMU provided advice or support in 1,355 cases related to a possible forced marriage. Over 2,600 Forced Marriage Protection Orders have also been issued since they were introduced.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13500>

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Health Information: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

NHS

Scottish COVID-19 vaccination helpline and booking service

The Scottish COVID-19 vaccination helpline and booking service is available from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week on 0800 030 8013.

<https://nhs.uk/services/our-covid-19-response/covid-19-vaccination-helpline-and-booking-service>

Coronavirus helpline

People living in Scotland who don't have any symptoms but are looking for general information can call the coronavirus helpline. If you're a non-English speaker you can still use this service. Phone 0800 028 2816, tell the call handler that you need an interpreter, give the name of your preferred language and you will be connected to a Language Line interpreter. You will not have to pay for this.

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.nhs.uk/inform/scotland/coronavirus>

Protect-Scot contact tracing app

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

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

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Ruth Cadbury (Labour) [161790] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he plans to take to support local authorities who did not receive funding through the Community Champions scheme to support the rollout of the covid-19 vaccine to BAME people in those boroughs.

Reply from Eddie Hughes: All English local authorities will be reimbursed via local NHS partners (or by DHSC) for unfunded and additional costs needed to support Covid vaccination, including those related to increasing uptake in the BAME or other low uptake cohorts.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-02/161790>

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [129104] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, with reference to the disproportionate effect of covid-19 on Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities, whether he plans to collect ethnicity data on people who are vaccinated against covid-19; and what his Department's reasons are for that data collection decision.

Reply from Jo Churchill: Data on a patient's ethnicity is recorded on the National Immunisation Management System and on a patient's general practitioner record at the point of vaccination. There is clear evidence that certain black, Asian and minority ethnic groups have higher rates of infection and higher rates of serious disease, morbidity and mortality. Whilst there is no strong evidence that ethnicity is the sole explanation for this, it is important to capture ethnicity data to understand the level of uptake in different groups.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-12-14/129104>

Coronavirus: Vaccination

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [155153] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what data is being shared with local authorities on local take-up of covid-19 vaccines, by ethnicity.

Reply from Nadhim Zahawi: Public health teams have access to vaccination event data for the sustainability and transformation partnerships (STP) for their local authority. This is presented in the validated vaccination events dashboard and the COVID-19 vaccination equalities tool.

The dashboard provides views of all vaccination activity at all sites within a STP by delivery model, site, dose, vaccine type and vaccination uptake across ethnicity,

age and other key Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation cohorts. The tool allows local authorities to track age cohort by ethnicity and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) compared to a national average and an adjustable uptake target. It also identifies gaps between uptake targets and current vaccinations in each age cohort, both by ethnicity and IMD group. Additionally, local authorities can access a daily dataset to view testing and case data. This data is only available for age cohorts over 70 years of age and for lower tier local authorities includes data by detailed ethnic group.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-19/155153>

Scottish Government Press Releases

Changes to Level 4 restrictions

<https://www.gov.scot/news/changes-to-level-4-restrictions/>

Under 60s to begin receiving vaccination invitations

<https://www.gov.scot/news/under-60s-to-begin-receiving-vaccination-invitations/>

Launch of new vaccination campaign

<https://www.gov.scot/news/launch-of-new-vaccination-campaign/>

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/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: Health Secretary's statement - 12 March 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-health-secretarys-statement-12-march-2021/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's statement - 11 March 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-11-march-2021/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's statement - 9 March 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-9-march-2021/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: Deputy First Minister's statement - 8 March 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-deputy-first-ministers-statement-8-march-2021/>

UK Government Press Release

Confirmed cases of COVID-19 variants identified in UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/confirmed-cases-of-covid-19-variants-identified-in-uk>

UK Government Publication

PM statement at coronavirus press conference: 8 March 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-at-coronavirus-press-conference-8-march-2021>

Other Organisation

Office of National Statistics

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsongreatbritain/12march2021/pdf>

News

Churches in Scotland to reopen in time for Easter, Nicola Sturgeon announces

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/scotland-lockdown-churches-reopen-nicola-sturgeon-b1814592.html>

Scottish Ministers accused of 'double-speak' over lockdown church closures

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19157883.scottish-ministers-accused-double-speak-lockdown-church-closures/>

Coronavirus in Scotland: 28 faith leaders head for court over government decision to close churches

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/coronavirus-in-scotland-28-faith-leaders-head-for-court-over-government-decision-to-close-churches-3161418>

SNP ban on communal worship has caused 'irreconcilable conflict' for Christians, court hears

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/03/11/snp-ban-communal-worship-has-caused-irreconcilable-conflict/>

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Other News

Brexit: Jewish community in Northern Ireland struggling to get kosher meat in time for Passover, says DUP

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/brexit-jewish-community-passover-northern-ireland-b1814465.html>

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Scottish Parliament

Children (Scotland) Bill

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

**** Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill>

Scottish Parliament Information Centre briefing prior to Stage 3

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/2021/3/10/1e1b5a44-7473-485c-8672-2127b442de84/SB%2021-18.pdf>

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

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

Delegated Powers and Law Reform Committee Report on the Bill at Stage 2

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/DPLR/2021/3/5/6c52201e-4726-41de-bfdb-7ab3501df64c/DPLRS052021R14.pdf>

Stage 3 consideration of amendments

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13188&i=119416#ScotParlOR>

Stage 3 Debate

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13191&i=119442#ScotParlOR>

Bill passed

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13191&i=119467&c=2329613#ScotParlOR>

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 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

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/>

Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS): Documenting the Lives of Ethnic and Religious Minorities in a Time of Crisis (closing date 11 May 2021)

bit.ly/evensurvey

Glasgow Museums Legacies of Slavery & Empire Questionnaire (closing date not stated)

<https://surveys.glasgowlife.org.uk/s/legacies/>

Racial inequality in health and social care workplaces (closing date not stated)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/inquiries-and-investigations/inquiry-racial-inequality-health-and-social-care-workplaces>

Black Lives in Scotland (closing date not stated)

<https://blacklivesinScotland.typeform.com/to/YFrnnHSC>

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19

(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

Experiences of people with refugee status who are renting private property in Scotland

(closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YDR67MN>

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>

Adapt and Thrive

Running until March 2021 (still open)

This programme, which is part of the Scottish Government Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme, offers grants of up to £75,000, loans, and specialist advice to organisations across the third sector to adapt to the challenges presented by COVID-19 and build back better to thrive in the future. For information see

<https://scvo.scot/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery/atf>

Resilient & Inclusive Communities Fund

Running until March 2021 (still open)

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/>

Equality and Human Rights Fund

Closing date 14 May 2021

Scottish Government funding to support work which advances human rights, promotes equality and tackles discrimination around age, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability and race. Grants will support projects over the next three years, and there is no minimum or maximum amount that can be applied for. For information and to apply see <https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/our-funds/equality-and-human-rights/>

Vaccine Information Fund

Running until August 2021

Grants of up to £1,000 are available to eligible organisations to create appropriate resources and activities to ensure that all people in Scotland have informed and equal access to information about the vaccine. For information see <https://bemis.org.uk/vif/>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

No Recourse to Public Funds

17 March 2021 (online, 10.00–12.00)

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

**** this week!**

Scottish Elections May 2021

17 March 2021 (online, 6.30–7.30)

Electoral Commission/CEMVO Scotland session to provide information and resources to empower people to have their say in the Scottish Parliament elections on 6 May. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y8yfssfl>

**** this week!**

Online Security + Hate crime and your community

17 March 2021 (online, 7.00)

Community Security Trust webinar covering Online Security (how to protect yourself and your community from online threats) combined with Hate Crime and your Community (how to deal with racial and religious hatred – especially in the digital age). For information see <https://tinyurl.com/yykp38wb>

Scotland's Human Rights Report Card: Getting Involved

24 March 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

Scottish Human Rights Commission event to enable people to contribute to Scotland's 'Human Rights Report Card' which is sent to the United Nations every few years as part of the Universal Periodic Review, to help other countries around the world make recommendations back to our governments. For information and to register contact events@scottishhumanrights.com

Online Security + Hate crime and your community

24 March 2021 (online, 2.00)

Community Security Trust webinar about the phases of an attack and how we can learn from past incidents to foil future attacks. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y4ctbg6m>

SAFE by CST: Q & A Session

31 March 2021 (online, 7.00)

Community Security Trust question and answer session about the safety of your community. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y6js3ax2>

Basic security for your place of worship

7 April 2020 (online, 2.00)

Community Security Trust webinar providing an introduction to security for places of worship and faith communities. For information about the March event see <https://tinyurl.com/y4gakb6y> and for the April event <https://tinyurl.com/y23d82hn>

Organising security for your place of worship

12 April 2021 (online, 7.00)

Community Security Trust webinar about security and risk management, and how to develop a security plan for places of worship. For information about the February webinar see <https://tinyurl.com/yxdc7kwg> and for April see <https://tinyurl.com/y329uhx7>

Event security for your community

20 April 2021 (online, 7.00)

Community Security Trust webinar about appropriate security measures to ensure the safety of large numbers of people. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y5ahbbgu>

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



BEMIS is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. (Scottish Charity, no. SC027692) <http://www.bemis.org.uk/>



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

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