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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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The Scottish Parliament will be in recess from 26 June to 29 August 2021.

Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Asylum Seekers (Glasgow City Council)

Paul Sweeney (Labour): The First Minister may be aware of reports that Glasgow City Council intends to extend the ban on asylum seekers coming to Glasgow as a result of the constraints of accommodation. We all know about the inadequacies of the Home Office's policy and its privatised service, but surely that is tantamount to an abdication of responsibility by us as Scots and Glaswegians to some of the most vulnerable people in the world. Does the First Minister agree that we should seek to lift the ban as quickly as possible and explore every possible opportunity to improve quality of life for the 5,000 or so asylum seekers in Glasgow, such as extending concessionary travel to them free of charge?

Reply from the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): I say this in relation to the

current political leadership of Glasgow City Council, but also, to be fair, in relation to its last Labour leadership: Glasgow City Council is probably the last organisation that deserves to be criticised for how asylum seekers are treated. It has been one of the few areas that has welcomed asylum seekers and done everything that it can to support them.

However, there is an issue about the responsibility of taking in asylum seekers when the Home Office and the United Kingdom Government are refusing to put in place adequate provision for accommodation. These are difficult issues, but the target of our criticism—I suspect that Paul Sweeney and I agree more than we disagree on the issue—and the target of demands for change should be the UK Government, not Glasgow City Council.

I want asylum seekers to be welcomed here and I want to make sure that we have provision for asylum seekers that has dignity and support at heart, and that could not be further removed from the very punitive and heartless approach of the Home Office. I genuinely say to Labour that we should be united on the issue and should not seek to blame Glasgow City Council for a problem that is not of its making.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13239>

Scottish Parliament Motions

Maggie Chapman (Green) [S6M-00414] EU Settled Status Tokens – That the Parliament notes the calls from EU citizen rights organisations such as the 3million to better protect the rights of EU citizens living in the UK; further notes the calls for a physical token that provides proof or trusted verification of settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS); believes that the current settled status arrangements disproportionately shift administrative responsibility for verifying the legal residency status of EU-27 migrants in the UK to employers, banks, landlords, healthcare providers and others from 1 July 2021 onwards; understands that, for this purpose, EUSS holders are supplied solely with a digital code, which they must pass to those legally obliged to confirm the legal residency rights of an EU citizen in the UK; considers that updates to this system can take weeks or months to process, are often unreliable and present a similar danger of data loss experienced by the Windrush generation; believes that the administrative burden of this process alone is highly likely to cause discrimination against EU nationals in everyday life in Scotland; understands that the UK Government has yet to accede to the request to provide a physical token in addition to the digital record; regrets the uncertainty that it considers this has caused and expresses both empathy and solidarity with EU citizens adversely affected by the changes to their lives and rights since the UK exit from the EU, and requests that the Scottish Government urgently supplies a physical token, to be made available on request by EU citizens residing in Scotland, which verifies their residency has been confirmed using the UK Government's online platform, in order to enable EU citizens to demonstrate their status has been confirmed at a previous stage, and to alleviate what it sees as the administrative burden placed unduly on Scotland's public-facing bodies, service providers and organisations, and to mitigate the likelihood of discrimination in public life resulting from what it sees as the additional administrative and bureaucratic burden inherent to the EUSS.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-00414>

Paul Sweeney (Labour) [S6M-00367] Giorgi Kakava and Ketino Baikhadze – That the Parliament notes the award of permanent leave to remain for Giorgi Kavava; congratulates him on this outcome, after a three year review of his case by the Home Office; commends the leadership of Reverend Brian Casey, and the congregation of Springburn Parish

Church for spearheading the campaign to prevent Giorgi's deportation; commends Giorgi's school friends and teachers at Elmvale Primary School and Springburn Academy for their solidarity during his struggle, and calls on the Home Office to also extend permanent leave to remain to Giorgi's grandmother, Ketino Baikhadze, who is Giorgi's only kinship carer after the tragic death of his mother, Sopia Baikhadze in 2018.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-00367>

UK Parliament Debate

European Union Settlement Scheme

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-06-16/debates/E1391D96-990A-44F7-85CC-A914C5EA42B5/EuropeanUnionSettlementScheme>

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Local Elections: EU Citizens Living in the UK

The Minister for the Constitution and Devolution (Chloe Smith): [HCWS99] In June 2016, the British people voted to leave the European Union, and this Government were elected in December 2019 on a mandate to get Brexit done.

Now that the UK has left the EU, and with the ending of free movement and introduction of the new points-based immigration system in last year's Immigration and Social Security Co-ordination (EU Withdrawal) Act, there should not be a continued, automatic right to vote and stand in local elections solely by virtue of being an EU citizen.

As I have previously explained to this House (for example, in response to PQ 66206 and PQ 175803 on 8 October 2018), the issue of local voting rights of EU citizens living in the UK needs to be considered alongside the rights and interests of British expatriates living abroad. This did not form part of the withdrawal agreement, as such matters are not within the competence of the European Union and local voting rights are a matter for individual member states. I noted how the Government intended to adopt reciprocal agreements with individual countries within the EU.

Policy position

The Government propose that EU citizens who have been living in the UK prior to the end of the implementation period will maintain their local voting and candidacy rights in England and Northern Ireland, provided they retain lawful immigration status, which goes beyond our obligations in the withdrawal agreement. It also mirrors the stance taken on the EU settlement scheme, which protects the rights of EU citizens who were resident here by the end of the implementation period and provides them with the UK immigration status they need to continue to live, work and access benefits and services here. To 31 May 2021, over 5 million grants of status have been made under the scheme.

EU citizens, who have arrived since 1 January 2021, will move to a position whereby future local voting and candidacy rights are granted where there is an agreement with individual European Union member states to preserve these on a bilateral basis.

This will apply to local elections in England and Northern Ireland, elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly, and police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales. These measures also cover the polls in which EU citizens have been eligible to vote as part of the local franchise: local authority governance referendums, local council tax referendums, neighbourhood planning referendums and parish polls. Other local and devolved elections in Scotland and Wales are within the remit of the devolved Administrations.

The Government have already confirmed that resident EU citizens elected in the May 2021

local elections in England, and the police and crime commissioner elections in England and Wales will be able to serve their full term, and this will also apply to those elected before 2021. An EU citizen elected before these measures come into force, and who otherwise remains eligible, will be able to serve their full term.

Citizens of the Republic of Ireland will not be affected by these changes, as the voting rights of Irish citizens in the UK long predate EU membership. The rights of qualifying Commonwealth citizens will also not be changed by these measures. As such, citizens of Malta and Cyprus—which are both EU member states and Commonwealth countries—will continue to hold voting and candidacy rights in local and national elections.

Voting and candidacy rights agreements

Local voting and candidacy rights for EU citizens who arrived in the UK after 31 December 2020 will therefore rest on the principle of a mutual grant of rights, through agreements with EU member states. We have already secured such agreements with Spain, Portugal, Luxembourg and Poland.

The UK will continue to invite EU member states which are interested in entering into such agreements the opportunity to negotiate treaties.

These measures therefore ensure that British nationals living overseas in the EU benefit from the Government's approach.

Elections Bill

The Government intend to legislate to deliver this policy through the forthcoming Elections Bill. This approach will reflect the fact that we have left the European Union, reflect the settlement arrangements for existing EU citizens resident in the UK, and maximise opportunities for British nationals living overseas.

The Elections Bill will also enfranchise more British citizens living overseas by abolishing the "15 year rule", supporting our vision for a truly global Britain.

Citizenship

The right to vote in parliamentary elections and choose the next UK Government is already rightly restricted to British citizens and those with the closest historic links to our country. Should any EU citizen wish to gain full rights to participate in local and national elections, they may apply for British citizenship, depending on their circumstances.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-06-17/debates/21061757000010/LocalElectionsEUCitizensLivingInTheUK>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Migrants: Coronavirus

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [13112] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the barriers to covid-19 vaccination as a result of immigration status.

Reply from Nadhim Zahawi: Vaccination against COVID-19 is offered to every eligible adult living in the United Kingdom free of charge, regardless of immigration status. Entitlement to free National Health Service treatment is generally based on ordinary residence in the UK. A person who can show they have taken up ordinary residence in the UK can access all NHS services immediately, including COVID-19 vaccinations, based on clinical need. No immigration checks are needed to receive these services and the NHS is not required to report undocumented migrants to the Home Office.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13112>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Migrant Workers: Social Services

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [15234] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department,

what assessment she has made of the impact of the end of free movement on the social care workforce.

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [15235] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to make it easier for care workers to secure visas to work in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Government recognises the vital contribution overseas NHS, health and social care workers have made and continue to make in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. The introduction of the Health and Care visa last August made it quicker and cheaper for regulated health and care professionals – including Senior Care Workers - and their dependants to secure their visa.

Since the start of the pandemic, the Government has also extended the visas of over 10,000 key, frontline regulated health and care professionals, and their eligible family members. Details of the free extension, including the eligible occupations can be found at

www.gov.uk/coronavirus-health-worker-visa-extension

In response to issues raised during the Immigration and Social Security Coordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020, the Government will shortly commission an independent review of the impact of ending free movement on the care sector. This will be published in due course. Yet UK Immigration policy should not be viewed as an alternative to offering hard working care workers the type of rewarding packages and career development opportunities common in other sectors, especially at a time when many UK based workers may be looking for new opportunities as a result of the economic impacts of the global pandemic.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15234>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15235>

Windrush Generation: Compensation

Feryal Clark (Labour) [13244] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department will take to ensure progress on disbursing payments through the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Reply from Priti Patel: Since April 2019 the Windrush Compensation Scheme has offered almost £30 million in compensation, of which more than £20.4 million has been paid. In December we overhauled the Scheme and the changes have had an immediate effect on the speed and value of offers of compensation. Since the end of December we have paid more than six times the total amount paid previously. However, we recognise we still have more to do to speed up the processing of claims and are committed to reducing the time between submission and decision significantly over the coming months, as a result we have taken the following actions:

- We have recruited five additional caseworkers and a further 20 are in the process of being recruited.
- We are directing resources to where they are needed most to maximise final decision output.
- We are reviewing the scheme's guidance, training and letters.

A particular focus is the application of evidence thresholds and the gathering of evidence by caseworkers to ensure decision making is as straightforward and streamlined as possible.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13244>

Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>

Immigration: Hong Kong

Virendra Sharma (Labour) [12093] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will make an assessment of the potential merits of establishing a separate lifeboat scheme, mirroring Canadian-Australian arrangements, for 18-23 year old non-BN(O)s if they cannot apply for BN(O) visa with their families.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Hong Kong BN(O) route is for those with BN(O) status and their eligible family members including adult children who were born after 1 July 1997 and who live with their parents. We do not currently have any plans to change these requirements.

Those not eligible for the BN(O) route can consider other UK immigration routes. For instance, individuals from Hong Kong can apply under the terms of the UK's new Points Based System, which will enable them to come to the UK in a wider range of professions and at a lower general salary threshold than in the past. There is also the existing youth mobility scheme which is open to those aged between 18 and 30 and offers a two-year grant of leave in the UK. There are 1,000 places currently available each year.

Those applying for the route do not need to travel to the UK on their BN(O) passport but will need another valid travel document in order to travel. This is set out on GOV.UK:

<https://www.gov.uk/british-national-overseas-bno-visa>

The UK will continue to recognise valid BN(O) passports as valid travel and identity documents.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12093>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Angela Crawley (SNP) [15298] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much her Department has spent on (a) outdoor advertising, (b) social media, (c) radio media, (d) television media and (e) print media to advertise the 30 June 2021 deadline of the EU Settlement Scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Since its launch in 2019, the EU Settlement Scheme advertising campaign has encouraged EU citizens and their family members to apply to the scheme and has helped to drive over 5.6 million applications.

In May the Home Office launched the latest £1.8 million wave of UK advertising to ensure EU citizens and their family members apply to the scheme ahead of the 30 June 2021 deadline. This builds on the successful £6.8 million campaign already delivered since launch.

Below is a breakdown of the campaign spend since launch in March 2019 for each requested channel:

- Outdoor advertising £1,313,000
- Social media £1,024,000
- Radio media (including community radio) £1,605,000
- Television media (including video on demand) £2,608,000
- Print media £194,500

The remainder of the total cost has been spent on other paid media channels such as digital advertising and paid search.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15298>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [11527] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government plans to take to encourage groups who are likely to miss the EU Settlement Scheme deadline to apply after the deadline has passed.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office has received more than 5.6 million applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), as of 31 May 2021. We

encourage anyone eligible for the EUSS to apply before the 30 June 2021 deadline for applications by those EU citizens and their family members resident in the UK by the end of the transition period, to secure their rights in UK law.

We launched a further wave of UK advertising in mid-May to ensure EU citizens and their family members are aware of the deadline and know they need to apply. This builds on the successful campaign already delivered – with £7.9 million having now been invested in such activity – with targeted adverts currently appearing on social media, website banners, catch up TV and radio.

Communications activity after 30 June will emphasise the Home Office will accept late applications from those with reasonable grounds for missing the deadline and point to the support available to those who need it.

Engagement with stakeholders, local authorities and employers will continue to raise awareness of the EUSS. In addition, the network of 72 organisations across the UK, funded by the Home Office through to 30 September 2021 with £22 million of funding, will continue to engage with vulnerable groups and help them to apply.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11527>

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

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [12296] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of extending the grace period for EU Settlement Scheme applications for EU citizens who need to make late applications.

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [12297] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of introducing an alternative substantive approach to the EU Settlement Scheme deadline to ensure people who need to make late applications do so.

Reply from Kevin Foster: There are no plans to extend the 30 June deadline for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme by those EU citizens and their family members resident in the UK by the end of the transition period, or to extend the associated grace period during which existing EU law rights remain protected.

The Home Office has invested nearly £8 million in marketing campaigns to encourage EU citizens and their family members to apply to the scheme. We recently launched a new wave of UK advertising to ensure EU citizens and their family members are aware of the deadline and know they need to apply. We are also working closely with employers, local authorities and charities to raise awareness. In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, we have made clear where a person eligible for status under the scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply.

Non-exhaustive guidance on reasonable grounds for submitting a late application was published on 1 April. It includes where there are compelling practical or compassionate reasons why a person may have been unaware of the requirement to apply to the scheme by the deadline or may have failed to do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12296>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12297>

The guidance referred to above can be read under the heading "Reasonable grounds for failing to meet the deadline" at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988540/main-euss-guidance-v12.0-gov-uk.pdf

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Rupa Huq (Labour) [13152] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of (a) postponing the EU Settlement Scheme deadline of 30 June 2021 or (b) automatically granting status to all those eligible.

Reply from Kevin Foster: There are no plans to extend the 30 June 2021 deadline for applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) or to introduce a declaratory system, under which EU citizens and their family members automatically acquired an immigration status and right to stay by Act of Parliament, but with no record of this taken.

The Home Office has invested nearly £8 million in marketing campaigns to encourage EU citizens and their family members to apply to the EUSS. We recently launched a new wave of UK advertising to ensure EU citizens and their family members are aware of the deadline and know they need to apply. We are also working closely with employers, local authorities and charities to raise awareness. We have continued to receive and process thousands of applications a day to the EUSS throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, with over 5.2 million applications concluded to 31 May 2021.

We are committed to making sure everybody eligible for the scheme can apply, including those who are vulnerable or need extra support. There is significant help available from a network of 72 organisations across the UK grant funded by the Home Office with £22 million to help vulnerable people apply to the EUSS, including after the 30 June 2021 deadline.

In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, we have made clear where a person eligible for status under the scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply. Non-exhaustive guidance on reasonable grounds for submitting a late application was published on 1 April 2021, and includes compelling practical or compassionate reasons why a person may have been unaware of the requirement to apply to the EUSS by the deadline or may have failed to do so.

A declaratory system would cause confusion. Employers and service providers would struggle to identify those who benefit from residence rights under the Citizens' Rights Agreements from those moving to the UK after the end of the transition period who do not. This could lead to EU citizens and their family members who have made the UK their home struggling to prove their rights and entitlements here in the future which is not something we can allow to happen.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13152>

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

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Diana Johnson (Labour) [12990] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to amend Appendix EU to allow children to apply late to the EU Settlement Scheme.

Diana Johnson (Labour) [12991] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the right to make late applications to the EU Settlement Scheme extended to children includes a right for their primary carers to also make a late application without giving further reasonable grounds.

Reply from Kevin Foster: In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, we have

made clear where a person eligible for status under the EU Settlement Scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply. The Immigration Rules for the scheme in Appendix EU already make provision for this, including where children are concerned.

Non-exhaustive guidance on reasonable grounds for making a late application to the scheme was published on 1 April 2021. The guidance will underpin a flexible and pragmatic approach to considering late applications in light of the circumstances of each case. This will include where the basis for the applicant's eligibility for the scheme is as a child's primary carer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/12990>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/12991>

The guidance referred to above can be read under the heading "Reasonable grounds for failing to meet the deadline" at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988540/main-euss-guidance-v12.0-gov-uk.pdf

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

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

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [13253] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the guidance on late applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), whether (a) not knowing about the scheme or deadline will be considered a reasonable ground for a late application to the EUSS or (b) an applicant will need to show they had a good reason for not knowing.

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [13254] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the guidance on late applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), for what reasons the right to make a late application extended to people unaware of the need to apply for the EUSS because they have an EU right of permanent residence is limited to those with a document from her Department to certify permanent residence, when that document is not required for an individual to have permanent residence status under the EEA Regulations.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office has received more than 5.6 million applications to the EU Settlement Scheme and issued more than 5 million grants of status, to 31 May 2021. Our focus remains on encouraging those EU citizens and their family members eligible for the scheme who have yet to apply to do so before the 30 June 2021 deadline for those resident in the UK by the end of the transition period.

In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, we have made clear where a person eligible for status under the scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply. The guidance on reasonable grounds for submitting a late application we published on 1 April 2021 includes where there are compelling practical or compassionate reasons why a person may have been unaware of the requirement to apply to the scheme by the deadline or may have failed to do so.

The guidance is non-exhaustive and will underpin a flexible and pragmatic approach to considering late applications in light of the circumstances of each case. This will include where the applicant acquired a right of permanent residence under EU law, but did not obtain a document certifying this.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13253>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13254>

The guidance referred to above can be read under the heading “Reasonable grounds for failing to meet the deadline” at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/988540/main-euss-guidance-v12.0-gov-uk.pdf

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

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

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [13961] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department is making on completing the 300,000 pending applications to the EU Settlement Scheme prior to the deadline of 30 June 2021.

Neil Coyle (Labour) [13963] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to tackle the backlog of applications to the EU Settlement Scheme before the deadline of 30 June 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: We currently have 1,675 UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) European Casework staff in post. We are committed to ensuring our operational teams have the resources they need to run an efficient and effective system, and we actively monitor workflows to ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet demand.

The majority of applications are concluded within 5 working days, but cases may take longer dependent on the circumstances of the case, for example if the applicant is facing an impending prosecution or has a criminal record.

The following link lists the expected processing times for EU Settlement Scheme applications, based upon current performance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13961>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13963>

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

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [13962] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason the Government's original estimate of 3 million EU Settlement Scheme applications has been surpassed by a further 2 million of those applications.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Each application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) is considered on its individual merits.

The Impact Assessment for the EUSS (March 2019) is available at:

[The Immigration and Nationality \(Fees\) \(Refund, Waiver and Amendment\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2019](#)

This discussed the assumptions, risks, uncertainties and exclusions surrounding its estimate of eligible citizens and made clear it should be considered as indicative and not as minimum and maximum estimates. The estimate of EEA citizens and their family members who were potentially eligible for the EUSS, made for the Impact Assessment, was primarily based on ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) data, which estimates the resident population, adjusted to estimate how the resident population would change in the future. It therefore cannot be directly compared to the number applications made to the EUSS.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13962>

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [13966] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average time is from submission to decision for her Department to process an EU Settlement Scheme application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Our aim is to process all applications to the EU Settlement Scheme as expeditiously as possible. Complete applications are usually processed in around five working days.

More information about processing times for applications under the scheme is available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13966>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Immigration: EU Nationals

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [14153] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11534, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than three months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [14154] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11535, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than six months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [14155] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 10 June 2021 to Question 11536, how many applications to the EU Settlement Scheme have waited more than 12 months for a decision as at 1 June 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The latest published information shows the total number of concluded applications to the EU Settlement scheme was 5.27 million up to 31 May 2021 out of a number of 5.61 million applications received.

The latest figures can be found on the Home Office's 'EU Settlement Scheme statistics' web page available at:

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

Applications concluded by month and decision type are published in the detailed quarterly release which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/eu-settlement-scheme-quarterly-statistics-march-2021>

Our aim is to process all applications to the EU Settlement Scheme as expeditiously as possible. It usually takes around 5 working days for completed applications to be processed, but it can take longer if the Home Office needs to request more information, for example: if the applicant has submitted a paper application or if the applicant has a relevant criminal record, including pending prosecutions.

More information about processing times for applications under the scheme is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14153>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14154>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14155>

The answers referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11534>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11535>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11536>

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

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [13255] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the regulations for pending applications after the deadline for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), for what reason someone who submitted their EUSS application before the deadline, but are still waiting for a decision after the deadline passes, must additionally demonstrate that they were exercising a right to reside under the EEA regulations 2016 immediately before IP completion day of 31 December 2020 to continue to have a right to work, rent or access welfare benefits; and whether that requirement means that those EEA nationals are being treated differently as a result of the length of time her Department takes to finish processing their application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: From 1 July, right to work and right to rent checks will change and EEA citizens will be required to demonstrate eligibility through evidence of their immigration status, rather than their nationality.

EEA citizens who make a successful application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) are provided with digital evidence of their immigration status, which they can access and share online.

EEA citizens who have submitted a valid EUSS application by 30 June will be issued with a Certificate of Application. Pending the outcome of their application, they will be able to rely on their Certificate of Application as proof of eligibility to access their right to work or rent when this is verified by the Home Office employer and landlord checking services. The Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue & Customs will also be able to determine an individual's status with the Home Office using existing services.

Consistent with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, the Citizens' Rights (Application Deadline and Temporary Protection) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 protect the EU law rights held at the end of the transition period of a person who has made an application to the EUSS by the 30 June deadline, pending the outcome of the application (and of any appeal against the decision).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13255>

The regulations referred to above can be read at

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2020/1209/data.pdf>

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

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

Immigration: EEA Nationals

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [11525] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether EEA nationals who apply late to the EU Settlement Scheme will be permitted right to work and rent while their applications are pending.

Reply from Kevin Foster: From 1 July, right to work and right to rent checks will

change and EEA citizens will be required to demonstrate eligibility through evidence of their immigration status, rather than their nationality.

Where an EEA citizen, who was resident here before the end of the transition period, has reasonable grounds for missing the EUSS application deadline, they will be given a further opportunity to apply.

We will be updating our guidance and communicating with employers and landlords shortly to set out the support available, and ensure they are clear on the steps they should take from 1 July.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11525>

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

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [15264] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent estimate she has made of the number of people from EU countries who have applied for EU Settled Status who will not be able to work in the UK from July 2021 as a result of a decision on their application having not yet been made.

Reply from Kevin Foster: A person who applies by the 30 June 2021 deadline will have their existing rights protected pending the outcome of their application. This is already set out in the Citizens' Rights (Application Deadline and Temporary Protection) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020.

From 1 July, they will be able to rely on their Certificate of Application as proof to access their right to work or rent, when verified by the relevant Home Office checking service. This means no-one will be unable to work due to their intime application to the EU Settlement Scheme not having being decided before the deadline for applications.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15264>

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

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

Immigration: EU Nationals

Neil Coyle (Labour) [13965] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to support employers whose employees are awaiting EU Settlement Scheme application decisions.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Employers will maintain a continuous statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty if the initial checks were undertaken in line with legislation and published guidance at the time they were undertaken.

Employers will not be required to conduct retrospective checks on existing employees if the initial check was undertaken on or before 30 June 2021.

We will shortly be updating our guidance for employers to ensure they are clear on the steps they should take from 1 July.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13965>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Fleur Anderson (Labour) [13234] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many letters were sent to dual UK nationals in error telling them to apply to the EU settlement scheme.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Government is using every possible channel to encourage everyone who may be eligible for the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to apply. The Home Office is currently working with HMRC and DWP to send letters to EU, EEA and Swiss citizens who receive benefits, but it appears are yet to apply to the EUSS.

In trying to reach as many people as possible, there were a small number of instances where these letters were sent to recipients who are naturalised, or dual British and EEA citizens. The letter may also have been received by a small number of individuals who have already applied to the EUSS, for example because they applied after the initial exercise with DWP or HMRC was completed, but before the letter was sent out. The letter made clear anyone who is a British citizen or already has EUSS status does not need to take any action.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13234>

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

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

Immigration: Afghanistan

Jessica Morden (Labour) [13886] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, for what reason Afghan interpreters who married after moving to the UK cannot bring their spouses to the UK via the Afghan relocations and assistance policy or ex-gratia schemes.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The intention of the relocation schemes for Afghan locally employed staff is to enable eligible local staff to relocate with their existing family members. We will though consider exceptional circumstances on a case by case basis, taking into account the level of risk faced and family dependencies.

Where people choose to marry or start a relationship after relocating to the UK, their partner can apply for a visa to come to the UK under the usual family immigration rules.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13886>

Visas: Fees and Charges

Lyn Brown (Labour) [10288] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of adopting the proposals on costs of visa processes recommended by the report entitled We Are Here: Routes To Regularisation For The UK's Undocumented Population, published by The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in April 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: When setting visa, immigration and citizenship fees the Home Office takes into account a number of factors set by Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014. Full details of which can be reviewed at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/section/68>

These include the cost of processing the application, the wider cost of running the migration, borders and citizenship system, international comparisons and the benefits which are likely to accrue from a successful application.

The Home Office provides exceptions to the need to pay application fees in several specific circumstances to ensure the Home Office's immigration and nationality fee structure complies with international obligations and wider government policy. Fee waivers are available on affordability grounds where the payment of a fee would be incompatible with an applicant's Convention, (ECHR) rights. Where the immigration application fee is waived on affordability grounds, the requirement to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge may also be waived. The detailed guidance can be found via the following link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/967231/Revised_fee_waiver_guidance_-_FINAL.PDF

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10288>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.jcwi.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=5467543a-6e30-4e28-a39f-db48ffad6d3a>

Immigration

Lyn Brown (Labour) [10289] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of adopting the proposals on responsiveness to human circumstances in the immigration system recommended by the report entitled *We Are Here: Routes To Regularisation For The UK's Undocumented Population*, published by The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in April 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Fairness is at the heart of Home Office's new plan for immigration. It is also at the heart of our response to the Windrush Lessons learned review where our Comprehensive Improvement Plan sets out a more compassionate approach which sees the "face behind the case".

Our ambition is to create a fundamental shift in the culture of the department to ensure the interests of the communities and individuals we serve underpin how we work every day. We have been improving our culture and the way we work, as well as changes to be made on, for example, the use of discretion, ethics, the burden of proof, our service standards and our approach to supporting vulnerable customers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10289>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.jcwi.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=5467543a-6e30-4e28-a39f-db48ffad6d3a>

The Lessons Learned Review, referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874022/6.5577_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_WEB_v2.pdf

The Comprehensive Improvement Plan referred to above can be read at

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

Immigration

Lyn Brown (Labour) [10291] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of adopting the proposals on routes to regularisation of immigration status recommended by the report entitled *We Are Here: Routes To Regularisation For The UK's Undocumented Population*, published by The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in April 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: There are already several options available for those in the UK without lawful leave to regularise their status.

The Immigration Rules set out the requirements to be met to qualify for a right to remain which provides clarity for applicants and decision makers alike. There are also discretionary policies for leave to be granted outside the Immigration Rules in exceptional circumstances.

We welcome feedback and regularly engage with our partners and stakeholders on a wide range of issues, including regularisation of undocumented migrants. We note the recommendations made by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10291>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.jcwi.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=5467543a-6e30-4e28-a39f-db48ffad6d3a>

Migrants and Undocumented Workers

Lyn Brown (Labour) [10292] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the implications for her policies on (a) no recourse to public funds, (b) right to work checks and (c) the offence of illegal working under section 34 of the Immigration Act 2016, of the findings of the report entitled *We Are Here: Routes*

To Regularisation For The UK's Undocumented Population, published by The Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants in April 2021.

Reply from Kevin Foster: No recourse to public funds (NRPF) has been a long-standing condition applied to those staying here with temporary immigration status and those without lawful status in order to protect public funds. This reflects the need to maintain the confidence of the general public migration to the UK is not based on access to public services and welfare benefits paid for by UK taxpayers. The ability to work illegally is a key driver of illegal migration; it encourages people to break our immigration laws and provides the practical means for people to remain in the UK without status. It encourages people to take risks by putting their lives in the hands of unscrupulous people smugglers and leaves them vulnerable to exploitative employers. Right to work checks are an important part of our efforts to tackle illegal working.

We welcome feedback and regularly engage with stakeholders on a wide range of issues, including regularisation of undocumented migrants. We have therefore noted the recommendations made by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10292>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.jcwi.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=5467543a-6e30-4e28-a39f-db48ffad6d3a>

Free School Meals: Undocumented Migrants

Stephen Timms (Labour) [12057] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if his Department will publish data on the take-up of free school meals from children from families with No Recourse to Public Funds during the temporary extension period.

Reply from Vicky Ford: We have temporarily extended our eligibility for free school meals during the COVID-19 outbreak to include children of Zambrano carers, families with leave to remain under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, families receiving Section 17 support who also have a no recourse to public funds condition and to families receiving Section 4 support.

The department does not plan to publish data regarding the take-up of free school meals from children from families with no recourse to public funds during the temporary extension.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12057>

Refugees: Resettlement

Alyn Smith (SNP) [10651] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what her target number is for refugees to be resettled in the UK under the global UK Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Chris Philp: Through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS) we continue to welcome vulnerable refugees in need of protection to the UK as well as through other safe and legal routes such as Refugee Family Reunion. Since 2015 we have resettled over 25,000 refugees through our resettlement schemes, in addition to granting over 29,000 Refugee Family Reunion visas in the last 5 years. The number of refugees we resettle every year depends on a variety of factors including local authorities' capacity for supporting refugees and the extent to which Community Sponsorship continues to thrive. This year the recovery from the pandemic will clearly be a significant factor affecting capacity. We have been working closely with our partners to assess the capacity for resettlement in the months ahead and will continue to welcome those in need in the years to come.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10651>

Asylum: Military Bases

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [13850] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many former barracks sites are being used to house asylum seekers in the UK.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Asylum seekers are currently being accommodated in Napier Barracks. There are no other Ministry of Defence sites being used.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13850>

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Rupa Huq (Labour) [14183] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to publish all the advice it received from Public Health England in relation to the Napier barracks asylum accommodation.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Napier is providing safe, coronavirus (COVID-19)-compliant conditions, in line with the law and Public Health England (PHE) guidance on social distancing requirements, including recommendations when using dormitories. The accommodation has been adapted to ensure social distancing can be maintained and occupancy in dormitories is limited to ensure a minimum distance between beds of at least two metres. This is complemented by a range of additional safety measures including increased cleaning, availability of personal cleaning products and hand sanitisers, twice weekly lateral flow tests for all residents, staff and visitors and a track and trace system.

Our service providers have robust plans in place to minimise the risk of an outbreak of COVID-19 and an action plan should a COVID-19 outbreak occur.

We have established links to the appropriate leads from the local authority, PHE and statutory bodies and are committed to working with them to support the people who we accommodate and the communities where they live. Regular Multi-Agency Forums are held to ensure concerns are understood, so issues are managed and resolved accordingly.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14183>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Napier Barracks

Zarah Sultana (Labour) [12317] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people were accommodated at Napier Barracks (a) in total and (b) in each dormitory at the site on 8 June 2021.

Zarah Sultana (Labour) [12318] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her oral answer on 7 June 2021, Official Report, column 664, if she will publish (a) a list of the wide range of covid-compliant measures that were taken at Napier barracks and (b) the dates on which those measures were implemented.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The following covid-compliant measures have been implemented at Napier Barracks:

- 2 metres distance between beds since it opened.
- Strengthened cleaning regime in March.
- Personal cleaning equipment is provided to service users.
- 3 lateral flow tests a week from June having risen from 2 weekly lateral flow tests in April.
- Participant of Test and Trace.
- Staggered access to communal areas including the canteen since communal areas re-opened in May.
- Provision of hand sanitiser around the site since it opened.
- Signage on covid compliance around the site in various languages and pictogram.

- Reduction in overall capacity from 399 to 337 from April.

Due to the temporary and transient nature of Initial Accommodation, we publish stats which show how many asylum seekers are accommodated in each Local Authority, rather than by individual location:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12317>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12318>

Asylum: Housing

Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op) [13851] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that people seeking asylum in the UK are housed in covid-19 compliant conditions.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The Home Office and their accommodation providers have been working with Public Health bodies throughout the pandemic to put in place a number of measures to support people in the asylum system who are affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, including working closely with providers to make sure the most vulnerable people within the system receive the support they need.

Our Initial Accommodation (IA) has been reconfigured to meet local and national health guidance. People accommodated in hostel-based accommodation receive translated guidance in relation to social distancing, potential symptoms, self-isolating and hygiene requirements. Onsite assistance and guidance are provided by support staff.

In Dispersed Accommodation, which is commonly family houses or homes of multiple occupancy accommodating small numbers, our asylum accommodation providers have put in place a range of measures and additional support to enable households to comply with public measures on social distancing and self-isolation. This has included food parcels and other items for people who are unable to leave the house, provision of telephony for those who are isolating and do not have a telephone, as well as increased welfare contact for those who are isolating. Additionally, service user essential living needs -including for cleaning and sanitary items - are met through a weekly cash allowance.

All asylum seekers in our accommodation have access to our Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service provider, Migrant Help. They can contact Migrant Help 24 hours a day if they need assistance or guidance on COVID-19 or other issues – including reporting any concerns with accommodation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/13851>

Asylum

Damien Moore (Conservative) [12291] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of further submissions following the refusal of an asylum application are decided (a) within six months and (b) within one year of submission.

Reply from Chris Philp: Home Office records indicate that a) 68% of Further Submissions lodged following refusal of an asylum application are decided within 6 months and b) 79% of Further Submissions lodged following refusal of an asylum application are decided within 12 months.

Where people who have previously been refused asylum in the UK wish to make representations in support of a fresh asylum application these are recorded as Further Submissions.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12291>

Asylum: Finance

Kim Johnson (Labour) [11698] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to compensate people who had no access to asylum support payments during the recent Aspen card transition; and what steps she is taking to ensure people do not temporarily lose access to asylum support payments in the future.

Reply from Kevin Foster: A significant majority of service users have received their new Aspen card and they have successfully activated and started using the card.

Those who have experienced issues have been supported via the provision of emergency cash payments until their issue has been resolved. Due to this, there has always been some form of access to asylum support payments for the user population (even without an ASPEN card).

The provision of emergency cash payment has been in place for some time and will continue to be in place where emergency access to asylum support is required.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11698>

Asylum: Finance

Stuart C McDonald (SNP) [13088] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to ensure that any asylum seekers who have been adversely affected in the ongoing Aspen payment card transition will (a) have all back-payments due from 24 May 2021 automatically paid in full and (b) not suffer over-payment claw-backs of emergency payments given as a consequence of the payment card transition.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Weekly payments are continuously accruing on Aspen cards for eligible asylum seekers, even if they have not yet received or activated their new card. Once successfully activated, service users can access their accrued funds, therefore no back-payments will be required.

The vast majority of cards have been activated and payments were available for those without ASPEN access.

The position on emergency cash payments and reconciliation of balances will be reviewed in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13088>

Asylum: Finance

Martyn Day (SNP) [10514] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment her Department has made of the (a) adequacy and (b) effectiveness of the operation of ASPEN cards; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Kevin Foster: The PrePaid Financial Services (PFS) solution is a well-established Mastercard pre-paid card used by organisations across the UK as well as abroad and has undergone over 5 months of rigorous testing to integrate with Home Office systems.

Service users were notified of the transition in advance and a significant majority of service users have received their Aspen card and successfully activated them.

The service is functioning as expected. The cards are working, withdrawals and purchases are being made and the automated IVR activation line is operating well.

Transitions of this nature are complex, and plans to mitigate anticipated issues were, and remain, in place. Cash payments were made available in emergencies.

We will continue to work with the remainder of service users to activate their cards and ensure they are supported throughout.

Our main focus is to ensure all remaining service users have an activated card so the new service can be accessed and support payments received. As part of our management of service contracts continuous improvement assessments will be factored in throughout the contract term and implemented accordingly.

The following five questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Finance

Helen Hayes (Labour) [10538] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of asylum seekers who have (a) not received new Aspen cards and (b) experienced problems activating or using the new Aspen cards; and how many of those affected were (i) pregnant, (ii) children and (iii) disabled.

Helen Hayes (Labour) [10539] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what piloting or testing of the new Aspen Card her Department undertook prior to its roll out on 24 May 2021.

Helen Hayes (Labour) [10540] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what due diligence checks her Department carried out on Prepaid Financial Services prior to the award of the Aspen card contract; and how many other applicants there were for that contract.

Helen Hayes (Labour) [10541] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she is having with Prepaid Financial Services on the difficulties asylum seekers have experienced in using the new Aspen card; and what steps are being taken to improve those services.

Helen Hayes (Labour) [10542] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support she is making available to asylum seekers who have experienced hardship as a result of the rollout of new Aspen cards.

Reply from Kevin Foster: Service Users were notified of the transition to the new Aspen cards well in advance of the transition and a significant majority of service users have now successfully received and activated their new card. For those who are not in receipt of an activated card and for any service user who required an emergency cash payment, funds were issued to cover the period until a new card arrives and / or it is successfully activated.

Additionally, accommodation providers are conducting welfare checks in which they will ensure those eligible for asylum support payments have received their new card and they understand how to activate it. We will continue to share data with our providers to ensure they prioritise the appropriate welfare/safeguarding checks.

Prepaid Financial Services (PFS) continue to support the Home Office in rolling out new ASPEN cards to asylum accommodation addresses. They have recently amended processes to ensure service users have increased opportunities to activate cards or avoid card cancellations. They have also agreed to facilitate bulk issue of cards to accommodation blocks to ensure activation for particular user groups.

Prepaid Financial Services (PFS) were awarded the contract for a new prepaid card service following an open and competitive tendering process which included due diligence checks. The Home Office utilised a Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework with 4 suppliers to conduct the tendering exercise and in total, three suppliers on the Framework (including Prepaid Financial Services) made a bid for the Support Payments Card (SPC) contract.

The Prepaid Financial Services (PFS) solution is a well-established Mastercard prepaid card used by organisations across the UK as well as abroad in schemes involving refugees and vulnerable persons. The Home Office systems underwent 5 months of rigorous testing to integrate with Home Office systems incorporating technical and operational scenarios.

The programme utilised a number of data sources and the operation is managing implementation through internal databases therefore we do not currently have the people we support broken down by a particular category. Whilst, we are satisfied

the majority have activated cards, we continue to provide direct access to the Home Office for local authorities via Strategic Migration Partnerships and third sector partners to ensure payments to those with vulnerabilities are prioritised.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10538>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10539>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10540>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10541>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10542>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: LGBT People

Lloyd Russell-Moyle (Labour Co-op) [13176] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals seeking asylum in the UK from homophobic, biphobic or transphobic persecution abroad are (a) treated fairly and with dignity and (b) protected from persecution and harassment during their application.

Lilian Greenwood (Labour) [15219] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure LGBTQ+ individuals seeking asylum in the UK from homophobic, biphobic or transphobic persecution are (a) treated fairly and with dignity and (b) protected from persecution and harassment during their application.

Reply from Kevin Foster: All LGBTQ+ individuals seeking asylum in the UK are given every opportunity to disclose information relevant to their claim before a decision is taken, including where it may be sensitive or difficult to disclose.

Each case is considered on its individual merits by caseworkers who receive extensive training. All available evidence is carefully and sensitively considered in light of published country information ensuring all individuals are treated fairly and with dignity.

The Home Office work closely with a range of organisations specialising in asylum and human rights protection to trans and LGB communities.

We ensure LGBTQ+ asylum seekers are signposted to relevant NGOs specialising in the support of these individuals. This is done through an information leaflet given to all asylum claimants at the point of claim which includes sections on legal advice, additional help and assistance with links to relevant legal bodies and support organisations.

LGBTQ+ claimants can access specialist support upon claiming asylum from Rainbow Migration (formerly known as the UK Lesbian & Gay Immigration Group (UKLGIG)) who will guide them through the asylum procedure, including providing relevant information. They also offer one-to-one and group peer support to claimants.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13176>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15219>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Hassockfield Immigration Removal Centre: Equality

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [14169] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the equality impact assessment on the opening of the Immigration Removal Centre at the former Hassockfield Secure Training Centre in County Durham.

Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre: Equality

Alison Thewliss (SNP) [14170] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish the equality impact assessment on the repurposing of Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.

Reply from Chris Philp: Hassockfield immigration removal centre (IRC) will open as an IRC for women by the autumn. Yarl's Wood is expected to begin operating as a predominantly male IRC, at a similar time. To ensure that decisions about the development of both sites have due regard to eliminating discrimination and inequality, equality impact assessments (EIAs) will remain ongoing as plans progress to completion. The Home Office will publish both completed EIAs in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14169>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-11/14170>

Migrants: Detainees

Claire Hanna (SDLP) [13249] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to investigate and review working practices where individuals are detained and processed for deportation despite having lodged a formal appeal of their recent immigration status decision.

Reply from Chris Philp: We make every effort to ensure that a foreign national offenders removal by deportation coincides, as far as possible, with their release from prison on completion of sentence. Those who have no right to remain in the UK and do not return home voluntarily should be in no doubt of our determination to remove them.

Regular reviews of detention will consider if it remains appropriate and will take account of whether an appeal is a barrier to removal, or it is non-suspensive. The lodging of a suspensive appeal, or other legal proceedings that need to be resolved before removal can proceed will not lead to automatic release in such circumstances: there may be other grounds justifying a person's continued detention, for example a risk of absconding, risk of harm to the public or the person's removal may still legitimately be considered imminent if the appeal or other proceedings are likely to be resolved reasonably quickly.

Foreign national offenders held in detention have the option to apply to an independent immigration judge for bail at any point.

Our New Plan for Immigration will make it easier to deport foreign criminals with no right to be in the UK and keep our citizens safe.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13249>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Napier Barracks Asylum Accommodation

The following Answer to an Urgent Question was given in the House of Commons on Thursday 10 June. ...

Covid-19 has had a major and unprecedented impact on the asylum system. We make absolutely no apologies for doing everything in our power to provide shelter to those in need during these exceptional times.

Between March and October last year, nearly 12,000 extra people needed to be housed as a result of the pandemic, nearly 10,000 of whom ended up in hotels, at huge public expense. Every accommodation option had to be considered.

Those accommodated at Napier barracks are catered with three nutritious meals per day, with options for special dietary or religious requirements. There is a recreational building

with a library. Prayer rooms are available and scheduled activities now include yoga, English conversation and art. There is a nurse on site and access to a GP. All asylum seekers housed at Napier have access to a 24/7 advice service, provided for the Home Office by Migrant Help. ... While we are disappointed by some of the judgment, the High Court found in the Home Office's favour in a number of areas. It rejected the claim that conditions at Napier amounted to 'inhuman or degrading treatment.' ...

Furthermore, the judgment was based on conditions in the past, before several significant improvements. ...

Lord Rosser (Labour): The judgment found that the Napier Covid arrangements were "contrary to the advice of PHE", with precautions being "completely inadequate to prevent the spread of Covid-19", with people in dormitory blocks having shared facilities for up to 28 people. PHE advice was that "dormitories are not suitable" but that, if the Home Office proceeded, the number of beds should be limited to six with people kept in bubbles. Even that did not apply at Napier, where 200 people got Covid.

The Home Secretary told the Commons Home Affairs Committee in February that "the use of the accommodation was all based on Public Health England advice" and that "we have been following guidance in every single way."

That claim was demolished by the judgment and by the Commons Minister last Thursday, who said that "Where possible we have followed"—[[Official Report, Commons, 10/6/21; col. 1118.](#)] PHE guidelines, with "where possible" determined by the Home Secretary. Why did the Home Secretary tell the Home Affairs Committee that PHE guidance had been followed "in every single way", when that was not the case?

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

My Lords, we believed we were taking reasonable steps to give effect to the PHE advice on the steps to be taken to make dormitory accommodation as safe as possible. It was on that basis that the Home Secretary and the Permanent Secretary appeared before the committee. We acknowledge the court's findings that the measures were not adequate and are considering our next steps. Throughout the set-up and operation of the site, the Home Office has engaged with health officials in various organisations to ensure that it is aware of up-to-date advice. While the advice to officials from PHE was that dormitory-style accommodation was not suitable, it also set out how congregate residential settings should be used if other accommodation was not available. We have been working very constructively with PHE for more than a year now.

Lord Paddick (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the Minister just said "we believed we were taking reasonable steps", but the Home Secretary told the Home Affairs Committee, in answer to question 120, that "we have been following guidance in every single way."

Does the Minister agree that there is a significant difference between what she has just said and what the Home Secretary said to the Select Committee? Who is telling the truth?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: As I said to the noble Lord, Lord Rosser, we believed that we were taking reasonable steps to give effect to the PHE advice on the steps to make accommodation as safe as possible. The advice that PHE set out was that self-contained accommodation should be used where available but, if not, how non-self-contained accommodation should be used. I have to say that we acted in an unprecedented health pandemic to ensure that asylum seekers were not left destitute. We took steps, in response to advice from health authorities, and have continued to make improvements throughout. In its letter to the chair of the Home Affairs Select Committee, the PHE set out that we have been working with it on Covid matters since spring last year.

Lord Davies of Gower (Conservative): My Lords, we have heard that the High Court found in the Home Office's favour in a number of areas, not least in rejecting the claim that conditions at Napier amounted to inhuman or degrading treatment. Surely Napier barracks is nothing less than a distraction from the real issue of the French authorities failing

dismally in their duty to protect seaborne migrants by preventing them leaving the safety of French shores. Given the enormous contribution that the British taxpayer is making towards this effort in France, can the Minister give an explanation that I can take back to the many people who are, frankly, baffled by the inadequacies of French law enforcement in preventing migrants crossing the channel?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I fully concur with my noble friend that any journey across the channel is perilous and, as we have seen on many occasions, leads to people who take those journeys dying or ending up in the sea. The only people who benefit from those journeys are the criminals who facilitate them. We continue to work with the French to ensure that people do not take those journeys from the French coast. To that extent, we hope that things will improve.

Lord Kerr of Kinlochard (Crossbench): I declare my interest as a trustee of the Refugee Council. Asylum seekers in Napier barracks, who came via continental Europe, are now being told by the Home Office that before their cases can even be considered, they must spend six months in limbo—six months before they join the queue, lengthening steadily since 2015 and, by March, a record and scandalous 40,000 strong, of those awaiting an initial decision on their claim, not allowed to work and subsisting on £5 a day. Will the Minister answer two questions? First, will she explain how the new limbo is consistent with our refugee convention obligations, given that there is no convention rule requiring applications in a safe transit country? Secondly, will she tell us how sending these people back to continental Europe could be contrived, given that we have left the Dublin convention and have no replacement bilateral agreements in place?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The key phrase used by the noble Lord is “continental Europe”. These people are coming from safe countries; Europe is a safe set of states. We believe that the inadmissibility rules are consistent with the refugee convention. They have not been dreamt up by us recently, but are long standing. We are currently in discussions with other countries on sending people back who should not have applied for asylum, coming from a safe country.

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top (Labour): My Lords, this has been a sorry tale, which, more than anything else, has exposed that the Government either did not know or were avoiding telling Parliament what was happening. Part of the next phase is the opening of a detention centre—I think that is what it is being called—in Medomsley, County Durham. The site is beautiful, but has a very sorry history from when it was a detention centre and then the Hassockfield youth offending facility. There are still outstanding cases of alleged abuse relating to Medomsley. It is a very strange place to put people from very different cultures with probably very different language needs from those in the local community. How will the Government ensure that the system, which already looks fairly broken, does not become even more broken by there being insufficient people with language or cultural knowledge to work there, and ensure that we fulfil our international obligations, as we ought to?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, any accommodation, be it detention or reception accommodation, will be scoped and checked to make sure that it meets service standards. I understand the point that the noble Baroness makes about that particular detention centre because the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Durham brought it to my attention. We are currently scoping through various options for detention, but if someone has no legal right to be here and we cannot effect their removal, we unfortunately have to place them in detention, but the detention estate has declined somewhat over the last few years.

Viscount Trenchard (Conservative): My Lords, if the High Court considers that Napier barracks cannot provide acceptable accommodation for asylum seekers under current conditions, does my noble friend agree that the court’s judgment is considered extraordinary and absurd by a large majority of the public? Does she not further agree that the judgment strengthens the case to identify suitable offshore centres to house asylum

seekers, which might eventually damage the illusion of nirvana—as the people smugglers portray life after illegal entry into the UK?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The judgment found explicitly that the conditions of the barracks were not inhumane or degrading, as has been reported, but I concur with my noble friend that anyone who has no right to be here, whether through criminality or a failed asylum judgment, should be removed from this country. The Government are looking at various ways in which that can be effected.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-06-14/debates/C05A9E4C-FB19-4A21-8E7B-6AC0B89F1992/NapierBarracksAsylumAccommodation>

UK Parliament Early Day Motions

Helen Hayes (Labour) [215] Windrush Day 2021 – That this House notes that 22 June 2021 will be the 73rd anniversary of the arrival of HMT Empire Windrush at Tilbury Dock and the fourth annual Windrush Day; supports the commemorations across the country recognising the immense impact that the Windrush generation has had on the UK's society and culture since 1948; further notes that during the covid-19 outbreak the important role of Windrush citizens and their descendants in the NHS; deeply regrets the Windrush scandal and condemns the suffering caused by the Home Office to Windrush citizens, which led to many being wrongfully deported, losing their homes and livelihoods and being denied access to healthcare and public services; notes the excessive delays in the Windrush Compensation Scheme and the tragic deaths of at least 21 people before their compensation was paid; notes that many Windrush citizens continue to face extreme hardship and trauma as a consequence of their treatment by the Home Office; and calls on the Government urgently to speed up the processing of claims and fully implement the recommendations of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review to provide justice for the Windrush generation and deliver the change in culture, practice and policy that is needed to prevent any future similar scandal.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58659>

Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat) [192] Refugee Week 2021 – That this House supports Refugee Week 2021, which takes place from 14 to 20 June with the theme entitled We Cannot Walk Alone; notes that there are an estimated 26 million refugees and 4 million asylum seekers around the world today; further notes that the UK has a proud history of providing sanctuary to those in need, and believes that this tradition must be upheld; further believes that providing refugees with safe and legal routes to the UK is the best way to combat people smuggling and human trafficking and to prevent desperate people from making dangerous attempts to cross the Channel or the Mediterranean; notes with concern that only 353 refugees were resettled in the UK in 2020-21, 93 percent fewer than the previous year; regrets that the Government has not made a new commitment to relocate unaccompanied refugee children from elsewhere in Europe following the closure of the scheme under Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 in July 2020; and calls on the Government to urgently make a new long-term commitment to resettle 10,000 vulnerable refugees in the UK each year, as well as a further 10,000 refugee children from elsewhere in Europe over the next 10 years.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/58636>

Press Release

Celebrating refugees across the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/celebrating-refugees-across-the-uk>

New Publications

Overview of the immigration system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/overview-of-the-immigration-system>

Summary of latest statistics

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/summary-of-latest-statistics>

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/how-many-people-come-to-the-uk-each-year-including-visitors>

Why do people come to the UK? To work

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-work>

Why do people come to the UK? To study

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-to-study>

Why do people come to the UK? For family reasons

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/why-do-people-come-to-the-uk-for-family-reasons>

How many people do we grant asylum or protection to?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/how-many-people-do-we-grant-asylum-or-protection-to>

How many people continue their stay in the UK or apply to stay permanently?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/how-many-people-continue-their-stay-in-the-uk-or-apply-to-stay-permanently>

How many people are detained or returned?

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-year-ending-march-2021/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned>

Freedom of Information release: Correspondence with Home Office officials relating to immigration raids

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/foi-202100202063/>

International Jobseeker Interest in Britain is Changing After Brexit

<https://www.hiringlab.org/uk/blog/2021/06/17/international-jobseeker-interest-changing-post-brexit/>

News

Number of EU citizens seeking work in UK falls 36% since Brexit, study shows

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/jun/17/number-of-eu-citizens-seeking-work-in-uk-falls-36-since-brexit-study-shows>

Home Office condemned for forcing migrants on bail to wear GPS tags

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2021/jun/14/home-office-condemned-for-forcing-migrants-on-bail-to-wear-gps-tags>

Ban on new asylum seekers to Scotland 'could last for years'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-57448267>

Migrant Channel crossings set to hit a new high this summer

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/twice-as-many-migrants-make-channel-crossing-as-numbers-hit-5-000-r3hrmcqk9>

Prosecutors drop charges against 11 migrants for steering small boats across English Channel

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/english-channel-crossings-migrants-charges-b1868683.html>

Channel migrants' four-year journey to reach Britain from France

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/channel-migrants-four-year-journey-britain-calais-france-9tmqk3b6c>

Priti Patel's new Borders Bill is cruel and won't stop dangerous Channel crossings

<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/refugees-asylum-seekers-priti-patel-channel-crossings-b1867270.html>

Migrant centres must be ready for 14,000 a year, ministers told

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrant-centres-must-be-ready-for-14-000-a-year-ministers-told-b5gxhm60w>

Resettled refugees speak of new life in the UK – and why Britain must do more

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/refugee-resettlement-families-uk-b1866135.html>

Under the UK's proposed two-tier asylum system, I could never become a doctor

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jun/18/asylum-home-office-plan-doctor-nhs>

UK must resettle specific number of refugees after target scrapped, UN and campaigners warn

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/refugee-resettlement-home-office-uk-b1867201.html>

1,000 Dreams to mark World Refugee Day

<https://www.bbc.com/news/in-pictures-57488050>

The UK's 'proud history' of welcoming refugees is disputable

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/19381113.opinion-uks-proud-history-welcoming-refugees-disputable/>

Record number of people displaced globally over last year

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/record-number-of-people-displaced-globally-over-last-year/>

First child refugees have surgery in operation room set up by Edinburgh charity

<https://www.scotsman.com/health/first-child-refugees-have-surgery-in-operation-room-set-up-by-edinburgh-charity-3274701>

From political refugee to Dundee surgeon, one woman tells of her journey into a new life

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/from-political-refugee-to-dundee-surgeon-one-woman-tells-of-her-journey-into-a-new-life-3278815>

Refugee Kindness charity struggling to find funding

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-57487084>

Home Office abandons plans to deport Osime Brown to Jamaica

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/15/home-office-abandons-plans-deport-osime-brown-jamaica>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Contraceptives: Ethnic Groups

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [11655] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle disparities in access to contraception experienced by Black, Asian and ethnic minority communities.

Reply from Jo Churchill: The Department are developing a new Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy, which will be published in 2021. We will consider issues relating to disparities in access to contraception experienced by black, Asian and ethnic minority communities and health inequalities in relation to sexual and reproductive health more broadly, as part of the process to develop the Strategy.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11655>

New Publication

BME workers on zero-hours contracts

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/RotAreport.pdf>

News

BME women almost twice as likely to be on zero-hours contracts as white men, TUC and ROTA find

<https://www.tuc.org.uk/news/bme-women-almost-twice-likely-be-zero-hours-contracts-white-men-tuc-and-rot-a-find>

Mother designs cards for babies of colour due to 'lack of representation'

<https://www.bbc.com/news/av/uk-england-london-57444540>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Racism in Schools

Alexander Stewart (Conservative): To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to a recent survey, which records that more than 2,000 incidents of racism have been reported in schools over the last three years. (S6T-00075)

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills (Shirley-Anne Somerville): The Scottish Government is clear that there is no place for racism in our schools and is committed to addressing and tackling all forms of bullying, including on the grounds of race. In 2019, in partnership with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, local authorities and teaching unions, we developed and implemented a national approach to the recording and monitoring of bullying in Scottish schools.

That national approach enables schools and local authorities to monitor all reported incidents of racist bullying and take all appropriate actions. Diversity and equality are at the heart of the policies that underpin education in Scotland and we are working with key anti-racist organisations to address how schools can be further supported.

The race equality and anti-racism in education programme is leading work to strengthen support for schools in tackling racist incidents and racist bullying while enhancing professional learning and leadership, diversifying the education workforce and reforming the curriculum.

Alexander Stewart: Data from Show Racism the Red Card's consultation shows that 48 per cent of teachers are aware of a pupil or pupils expressing negative attitudes relating to skin colour, 38 per cent relating to religion and 37 per cent relating to nationality. Although 61 per cent of teachers expressed a lack of confidence about educating pupils on anti-racism, only 24 per cent have received training on the subject.

Those are serious and worrying statistics. Given that 85 per cent of respondents said that tailored anti-racism workshops would be beneficial for all concerned, what urgent action can the Government take to ensure that that happens?

Reply from Shirley-Anne Somerville: That is a very important issue, and the Government takes it very seriously. As I mentioned, the race equality and anti-racism in education programme is leading that work, which includes school leadership and professional learning as one of its four strands. It aims to ensure that Scotland's professional educators are confident and empowered to promote equality and foster good relations and, importantly, to identify, prevent and proactively deal with racism if they see examples of it.

It is important that we ensure that school leadership and professional learning is further developed and that we also increase the diversity in the teaching profession so that it further reflects the Scottish population, just as we wish to see in the Parliament.

Alexander Stewart: Show Racism the Red Card's chair wrote to the Scottish Government to call for anti-racism to be included in the national curriculum following announcements about a similar move in Wales earlier this year. Given that 93 per cent of respondents to Show Racism the Red Card's consultation said that "anti-racism must be included within the curriculum", will the cabinet secretary confirm that the Scottish Government will seriously consider that request in order to further protect children from harm?

Reply from Shirley-Anne Somerville: I go back to the work of the race equality and anti-racism in education programme, because one of its other strands is curriculum reform. That is being looked at very closely to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive, that it recognises, for example, Scotland's colonial past, and that it

respects the identities of young people and supports them on their journey through school. Work is on-going to ensure that our curriculum gives confidence to our learners—in my original answer I spoke about giving confidence to teachers—so that they can discuss the issue and tackle it when they see it, and so that everyone in our schools can reach their potential without being blighted by any racist activity towards them or anyone else in their classroom settings.

Pam Duncan-Glancy (Labour): The Government has previously backed and agreed to implement the incredible work of the Time for Inclusive Education initiative, which aims to combat homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools with lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender inclusive education. In addition to what the cabinet secretary has already outlined, will the Scottish Government back a similar programme to tackle racism and disablism in schools?

Reply from Shirley-Anne Somerville: The Government is looking closely at racism and all forms of bullying develop the right solutions. We take that approach with any type of bullying or harassment in schools.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=13237&i=119969#ScotParIOR>

Information about data from the consultation referred to above can be read at

<https://www.theredcard.org/news/overwhelming-pleas-anti-racism-education-scotland>

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Universities: IHRA working definition of antisemitism

Monica Lennon (Labour) [S6W-00480] To ask the Scottish Government which universities have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism

Reply from Jamie Hepburn: The Scottish Government, Universities Scotland, College Development Network and Colleges Scotland are clear that there is no place for any form of hatred or prejudice, including antisemitism, in further and higher education.

Universities, as autonomous institutions, are aware of the IHRA definition of antisemitism. Many are actively and presently consulting within their diverse communities and stakeholder interests on the definition, with three (University of Glasgow, University of Edinburgh and Abertay University) having adopted it to date. Universities UK is working with the Union of Jewish Students to raise awareness and understanding of antisemitism and to share best practice in tackling and eliminating it. Universities and colleges are also addressing antisemitism through their ongoing engagement with the Scottish Funding Council to address discrimination and harassment on the grounds of race.

The SFC, in response to the recommendations of the EHRC report, Universities Challenged, published in October 2019, has developed resources to support challenging conversations on all aspects of racial discrimination, including antisemitism. These were developed with input of staff and students and were launched on 16 March 2021.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/written-questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-00480>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/tackling-racial-harassment-universities-challenged.pdf>

The resources referred to above can be read at

<http://www.sfc.ac.uk/access-inclusion/equality-diversity/race/race-equality.aspx>

Scottish Parliament Motion

Colin Beattie (SNP) [S6M-00417] British Born Young Talent Association Seminar on "Conversations on Anti-Asian Hate" – That the Parliament congratulates the British Born Young Talent Association (BBYTA) on holding its recent seminar, "Conversations on Anti-Asian Hate"; appreciates BBYTA raising awareness on such an important matter; notes from the seminar that many of Scotland's Asian communities, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, have experienced an increase in hate crime; condemns such racism, and encourages people to report such incidents to Police Scotland.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/votes-and-motions-search/S6M-00417>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

The following two questions both received the same answer

Hate Crime

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [12324] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of hate crime were reported in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019 and (e) 2020.

Hate Crime: Ethnic Groups

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [12325] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many instances of hate crime towards people of Indian heritage were reported in (a) 2016, (b) 2017, (c) 2018, (d) 2019 and (e) 2020.

Reply from Victoria Atkins: The Home Office collects and publishes statistics annually on the number of hate crime offences recorded by the police in England and Wales by five centrally monitored strands: race, religion, sexual orientation, disability and transgender.

Information on the number of hate crime offences recorded by the police can be found in 'Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2019/20' statistical bulletin, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2019-to-2020>

Information has not previously been collected on the race or ethnicity of victims but will be during 2021/22 and published in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12324>
and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-08/12325>

Urban Areas: Racial Discrimination

Rachael Maskell (Labour) [8670] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether he plans to support cities establish anti-racism charters.

Reply from Luke Hall: The Government is clear that no one in this country should have to endure racism and we are committed to building a fairer Britain and taking the action needed to address disparities wherever they exist.

The Government welcomes community-led action which tackles racism. It is for local leaders, including local authorities and other local partners, to decide how best to take this forward in their communities.

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities was appointed by the Prime Minister to conduct a detailed, data-led examination of inequality across the entire population, and to set out a positive agenda for change.

The Commission reported at the end of the March and the Government will respond to this in due course.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-27/8670>

The report referred to above can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331 - CRED Report - FINAL - Web Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

The following three questions all received the same answer

Racial Discrimination: Technology

Chi Onwurah (Labour) [13053] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2021 to Question 3857 on Racial Discrimination: Technology, whether she has made a further assessment of the feasibility of defining fairness mathematically as referred to in the The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities published on 31 March 2021, other than in the research cited in footnotes 101-105 of that report.

Chi Onwurah (Labour) [13054] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2021 to Question 3857 on Racial Discrimination: Technology and with reference to the conclusions report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report, published on 31 March 2021, whether it is her policy (a) that before dismissing any system, it should be compared with the alternative, (b) that an automated system may be imperfect, but a human system may be worse, and (c) to make a comparative assessment of the potential merits of using (i) automated and (ii) human systems.

Chi Onwurah (Labour) [13055] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2021 to Question 3857 on Racial Discrimination: Technology, whether the research referred to in that Answer is limited to the research cited in footnotes 101-105 of The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' report dated 31 March 2021.

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: The independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities published its findings on 31 March 2021. The report took an evidence-led approach drawing on academic research, expert views and over 2,300 submissions to the call for evidence. The Employment and Enterprise chapter of the report summarises the Commission's research about Artificial Intelligence systems and bias in technology.

The Commission recommended that the government issue guidance that clarifies how to apply the Equality Act to algorithmic decision-making and require transparency for public sector bodies when this is applied to decisions concerning individuals. The government is still carefully considering the report's findings and recommendations and will respond in full this summer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13053>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13054>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13055>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-19/3857>

The report referred to above can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331 - CRED Report - FINAL - Web Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

Antisemitism

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [13041] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he plans to take in response to the latest figures published by the Community Security Trust on anti-semitism.

Reply from Eddie Hughes: The recent rise in antisemitic attacks is completely

unacceptable and we condemn it. Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we're taking a strong lead in tackling it in all its forms. Since May, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has met with Jewish communities affected by the recent increase in hate crime and has met with Lord Mann, the Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, who is providing independent advice on the most effective methods to tackle antisemitism.

This Government has an excellent track record of taking action to prevent antisemitism.

We have provided funding to a number of innovative projects to reinforce messages of tolerance for our young people and teach them about the dangers of hate and we are providing £14 million this year for the Protective Security Grant to protect Jewish schools and community buildings.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13041>

The data referred to above can be read at

<https://cst.org.uk/data/file/7/2/Incidents%20Report%202020.1615559608.pdf>

Antisemitism

Andrew Rosindell (Conversative) [10195] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with the Home Secretary on the recent increase in antisemitic attacks.

Reply from Luke Hall: There is no place in our society for antisemitism and we condemn it whole-heartedly. The Home Secretary and the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government have published a joint letter in the Jewish Chronicle reassuring the Jewish Community of the Government's steadfast commitment to combatting antisemitism. This was accompanied by a visit to Golders Green and Finchley Road, with police and community representatives and we remain in dialogue with leaders of the Jewish community.

We are providing £14 million this year to the protective security grant to protect Jewish schools and community buildings. We were also the first country to take the important step of adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism in 2016; and, following our encouragement, over three quarters of local councils have adopted the definition.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-04/10195>

The letter referred to above can be read at

<https://www.thejc.com/comment/opinion/an-open-letter-to-the-jewish-community-1.516805>

Community Relations: Antisemitism

Steve Reed (Labour Co-op) [15254] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what discussions he has had with Jewish and Muslim community groups to bring their communities together to help tackle antisemitism.

Reply from Eddie Hughes: Antisemitism has absolutely no place in our society, which is why we are taking a strong lead in tackling it in all its forms. Since May, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has met with Jewish communities affected by the recent increase in hate crime and has met with Lord Mann, the Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, who is providing independent advice on the most effective methods to tackle antisemitism. We recognise that tackling the scourge of antisemitism requires the commitment of all communities and we are working with civil society partners to explore how best to tackle this, as well as anti-Muslim hatred. In doing so we are ensuring a range of views are taken into consideration including from both Jewish and Muslim communities.

Community Relations: Antisemitism

Steve Reed (Labour Co-op) [15255] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what initiatives he is undertaking to bring Jewish and Muslim community groups together to help tackle the growth in antisemitism.

Reply from Eddie Hughes: This Government has an excellent track record of taking action to prevent antisemitism.

We have provided funding to a number of innovative projects to reinforce messages of tolerance for our young people and teach them about the dangers of hate.

This includes work we have funded in schools and with young people such as Solutions not Sides, which aims to tackle Antisemitism, Islamophobia and polarisation of the issue of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the UK. We have also supported organisations working to tackle the root causes of all discrimination and prejudice including antisemitism, such as Anne Frank Trust and the Union of Jewish Students which both work to tackle antisemitic attitudes and incidents in universities.

We have also provided £500k over three years (2020-23) to the Holocaust Education Trust in partnership with the Union of Jewish Students for the Lessons from Auschwitz Universities Project, which will bring together almost 450 student leaders and reach 8000 students through education on the Holocaust, anti-racism work, British values and faith values.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-14/15255>

Public Transport: Antisemitism

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [13039] To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what actions are being promoted by the British Transport Police to tackle anti-semitism on public transport.

Reply from Chris Heaton-Harris: BTP's anti-hate crime campaign, #WeStandTogether, has been in place since 2016 and aims to educate, raise aware of hate crime and increase confidence and encourage victims of hate and intolerance to report all forms of hate, including antisemitism. BTP also works in partnership with the Community Security Trust (CST) on this campaign and signposts victims of antisemitism to them as an alternative third-party hate crime reporting organisation.

BTP carry out regular 'Hate Crime Days of Action' across the railway network, which involves an enhanced presence at stations and on the network, with a focus on raising awareness of hate and intolerance and encouraging the reporting of hate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/13039>

News

Neo-Nazi ex-Ukip member jailed for 18 years for terror offences

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/jun/14/ex-ukip-member-dean-morrice-given-23-year-sentence-for-terror-offences>

BTP six times more likely to use force on black people

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-57261371>

Anti-Semitic reports in London hit new high, charity says

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-57439688>

Black and ethnic minority students can use 'racial trauma' to defer exams

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/06/17/black-ethnic-minority-students-can-use-racial-trauma-defer-exams/>

Waitrose changing name of Kaffir lime leaves over links to apartheid-era racial slur

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/anti-black-racism-product-waitrose-b1867121.html>

Waitrose renames kaffir lime leaves after complaints about racist connotations

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/06/16/waitrose-changes-name-kaffir-lime-leaves-complaints-derogatory/>

English Heritage acknowledges Enid Blyton's work as 'racist and xenophobic'

<https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/books/news/enid-blyton-racist-english-heritage-b1867577.html>

English Heritage recognises Blyton and Kipling's racism – but blue plaques to stay

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2021/jun/17/english-heritage-racism-kipling-blyton-blue-plaques>

English Heritage labels Enid Blyton's work 'racist and xenophobic'

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/06/16/english-heritage-links-enid-blytons-work-racism-xenophobia/>

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Health Information: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

NHS

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.nhsinform.scot/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: Disadvantaged and Ethnic Groups

Rachael Maskell (Labour) [14009] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether levels of covid-19 infections are higher in (a) minority ethnic groups and (b) areas of greater deprivation.

Reply from Jo Churchill: Public Health England monitors COVID-19 case rates by a range of demographics including ethnicity and Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). As of 3 June 2021, case rates were highest in 'other ethnic' and Pakistani ethnic groups. By IMD, case rates were highest in the most deprived group in the 10 to 16 years old and 20 to 39 years old age groups and highest in the least deprived group in the 17 to 19 years old age group.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-10/14009>

Health: Disadvantaged

Mark Hendrick (Labour Co-op) [12951] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to tackle health inequalities highlighted by the covid-19 outbreak.

Reply from Jo Churchill: The Minister for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch MP) has been leading work on the response to tackle COVID-19 disparities experienced by individuals from an ethnic minority background. The 'Third quarterly report on progress to address COVID-19 health inequalities' was published in May 2021 and is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/third-quarterly-report-on-progress-to-address-covid-19-health-inequalities/third-quarterly-report-on-progress-to-address-covid-19-health-inequalities>

The focus over the last quarter has been on those ethnic minority groups worst affected by the second wave of the pandemic.

Widespread vaccination could potentially combat inequalities in the impact of COVID-19 between ethnic groups. The Community Champions scheme announced in the first quarterly report has continued to engage with a wide variety of communities to help dispel myths around vaccines. Funding was also provided to Strengthening Faith Institutions and Near Neighbours in order to utilise their networks with at-risk communities. Both organisations are partnering with a host of community organisations as well as Community Champions across England to increase vaccine uptake. Broader health inequalities work will be led by the Office for Health Promotion under the direction of the Chief Medical Officer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-09/12951>

Coronavirus: Ethnic Groups

Janet Daby (Labour) [4701] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what (a) assessment he has made of the additional risk of the covid-19 virus to South Asian communities and (b) additional support will be provided to improve South Asian communities access to vaccines and health care.

Reply from Jo Churchill: Across the pandemic period to date, the cumulative

mortality and hospital admission rates were highest in the Black and Asian groups. Among the Black and Asian groups, the Other Black, Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups had the highest rates. The hospital admission rate for the Black and Asian groups was three times higher than the rate for the White group. The mortality rate for the Black and Asian group was two times higher than the White group.

These differences are reduced when looking at survival following infection. In the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in England, after adjusting for pre-existing conditions, age, sex, region and deprivation, the Bangladeshi ethnic group had the poorest survival and had 1.88 times the odds of dying once infected when compared with the White ethnic group. The Pakistani, Chinese, and Black Other ethnic groups had 1.35 to 1.45 times the odds of dying once infected and the Indian group 1.16.

Clear, informative communications explain how, at any possible opportunity, to access the vaccine. Our communications include information and advice via television, radio and social media and have been translated into 13 languages, including Bengali, Chinese, Filipino, Gujarati, Hindi, Mirpur, Punjabi and Urdu. Temporary vaccination sites are in place at targeting areas with low vaccine uptake within inclusion groups and ethnic minorities.

The Government has provided up to £23.75m to local authorities and the voluntary and community sector to improve the reach of official public health guidance and other messaging or communications about the virus into specific places and groups most at risk from COVID-19.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-20/4701>

Travel: Quarantine

Apsana Begum (Labour) [7956] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps are being taken to ensure adequate provision of appropriate food during mandatory covid-19 hotel quarantine for people with strict dietary requirements; and what processes are in place to determine the appropriateness and adequacy of food for those people.

Reply from Jo Churchill: It is specified at the induction stage for managed quarantine hotels that the catering requirements must include the delivery of menus to rooms and an understanding of individual needs for each meal; a variety of meals to meet nutritional, dietary, religious, and cultural needs; and the ability for guests to order additional food and beverage from a 24-hour room service menu.

A review is carried out with hotels at two and 21 days following the induction process. Each hotel has a liaison officer available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to escalate any issues, in addition to the hotel's own customer service channels.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-05-26/7956>

Travel: Quarantine

Virendra Sharma (Labour) [11528] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment and provision has been made to ensure that travellers from red list countries who are staying in quarantine hotels are provided with meals which are appropriate to their religious or ethical beliefs.

Reply from Jo Churchill: It is specified at the induction stage for managed quarantine hotels that the catering requirements must include delivery of menus to rooms and an understanding of individual needs for each meal; a variety of meals to meet nutritional, dietary, religious, and cultural needs; and the ability for guests to order additional food and beverage from a 24-hour room service menu.

Following the induction process, reviews are carried out with the hotels after two and 21 days. Every hotel has a 24 hours a day, seven days a week liaison officer

to escalate any issues, in addition to their own customer service channels.
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-06-07/11528>

Scottish Government Press Release

First doses booked in for all adults ahead of schedule

<https://www.gov.scot/news/first-doses-booked-in-for-all-adults-ahead-of-schedule/>

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: First Minister's statement - 18 June 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-18-june-2021/>

Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's statement - 15 June 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-15-june-2021/>

UK Government Press Releases

Vaccination programme accelerated as Step 4 is paused

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/vaccination-programme-accelerated-as-step-4-is-paused>

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 Publications

The R value and growth rate

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-value-and-growth-rate>

PM statement at coronavirus press conference: 14 June 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-at-coronavirus-press-conference-14-june-2021>

Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain: 18 June 2021

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing/bulletins/coronavirusandthesocialimpactsongreatbritain/18june2021/pdf>

Other Organisations

Inequalities in healthcare disruptions during the Covid-19 pandemic: Evidence from 12 UK population-based longitudinal studies

<https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.06.08.21258546v1.full-text>

News

UK health inequalities made worse by Covid crisis, study suggests

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jun/14/uk-health-inequalities-made-worse-by-covid-crisis-study-suggests>

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Other News

Police Scotland partner with Black Professionals Scotland

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2021/june/police-scotland-partner-with-black-professionals-scotland/>

The black Scotland captain whose team trounced England

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-57520338>

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Bills in Progress

** new or updated this week

UK Parliament

Online Safety Bill (Draft)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2883>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) (closing date 30 June 2021)

<https://evensurvey.co.uk/>

Protect Duty (closing date 2 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/protect-duty>

Immigration Costs for Armed Forces Personnel (closing date 7 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/immigration-fees-public-consultation>

Possible changes to the immigration and asylum rules in relation to tribunal reform [in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland] (closing date 14 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/possible-changes-to-the-immigration-and-asylum-rules-in-relation-to-tribunal-reform>

Black Lives in Scotland (closing date not stated)

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

Experiences of people with refugee status who are renting private property in Scotland (closing date not stated)

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

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>

Public Confidence in Policing: Seldom Heard Communities

Closing date 1 July 2021

Police Scotland, the Scottish Institute for Policing Research and Scottish Police Authority funding for projects and activities which will meet genuine evidence gaps and support Police Scotland to further contact and engagement with all elements of communities in Scotland, particularly those groups which are seldom heard. For information see <http://sipr.ac.uk/research-activities/seldom-heard-communities-grants>

Fife Equality Community Grants

Closing date 9 July 2021

Fife Centre for Equalities small grant programme (between £100 and £300) to help community-led groups to build their capacity to engage with wider diverse communities and to improve public's awareness about their activity. For information see <https://bit.ly/FifeEqGrants>

**** Adapt and Thrive**

Deadline extended into July – no closing date given

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>

Hate Crime Security Fund for Places of Worship

Closing date 21 July 2021

This fund aims to reduce the vulnerability to hate crime that some places of worship across Scotland face. The Scottish Government has made £500,000 available for the provision of capital security measures and improvements. These measures are intended to reduce the risk of hate crimes to places of worship in Scotland and provide reassurance for faith communities who worship at them. ...

Applications are welcomed from individual places of worship of all faiths who can demonstrate their vulnerability to hate crime, whether or not a crime has been committed or reported to the police. ...

Up to 100% grants are available for the installation of up to three security measures and improvements,

You can apply for a maximum of £20,000 to cover all or part of your proposed security measures and improvements. ...

<https://www.impactfundingpartners.com/open-applications/hate-crime-security-fund>

and

<https://tinyurl.com/4ujukfuf>

Henry Duncan Grants for mental health and wellbeing

Closing date 21 July 2021

The health, economic and social impacts of the coronavirus pandemic are likely to increase people's need for mental health support. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities have been among those most impacted by the coronavirus pandemic. This is likely to affect people's mental health, for example through fear and anxiety, experience of illness or loss of loved ones. Research has shown that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities are disadvantaged when accessing mental health and well-being services, including the quality of care they receive. This is due to racism, structural and institutional inequalities, fear, stigma and discrimination. For these reasons, Henry Duncan Grants 2021 includes a strand focused on Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities. For information see

<https://www.corra.scot/grants/henry-duncan-grants/>

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**

No Recourse to Public Funds

30 June 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

27 October 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

26 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH workshop 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 see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

Introduction to Working with Religious Diversity

15 July 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

Interfaith Scotland workshop on improving confidence in discussing and responding to the religion and belief of those we work with. The event will explore guiding principles behind working with religion and belief diversity, and take a closer look at the core beliefs and cultural practices of Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/fsbvp2ac> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Advantage Is Invisible – Understanding Unintentional Discrimination

29 July 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

Interfaith Scotland course exploring the nature and patterns of discrimination, focussing on unintentional discrimination, and exploring its prevalence. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/u6tb4ext> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

4 August 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

6 October 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

12 January 2022 (online, 10.30–12.30)

2 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH training on fundamental issues of housing, homelessness and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals, and look at how service users might prepare themselves to avoid the threats of Brexit. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

18 August 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

20 October 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

19 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

9 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH course to explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant and the process involved in making a claim for asylum. The course will also explore the barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers building a new life in Scotland and their respective entitlement to services. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

Intention Versus Impact – Exploring Challenges Around Group Labels And Unintended Offence

25 August 2021 (online, 13.30–15.30)

Interfaith Scotland workshop exploring the terminology used to describe groups, particularly in relation to protected characteristics such as race, disability, religion and belief. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/z7wcfh46> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Debiasing Our Systems, Debiasing Ourselves – An Introduction To Tackling Unconscious Bias

14 September 2021 (online, 10.30–1.30)

Interfaith Scotland session exploring the evidence of unconscious bias, methods for reducing its impact on decisions and behaviour, and describing the steps that we can take to become more aware of potential bias and how to reduce its impact. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/tamy4rv> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Interpreting Culture – Improving Cross-Cultural Communication

14 October 2021 (online, 10.30-13.00)

Interfaith Scotland course to explore how culture forms a lens through which we interpret behaviour, and learn how to improve our inter-cultural communication. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/27mj9h3b> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Scottish Interfaith Week 2021

31 October to 7 November 2021 (Scotland-wide)

Scottish Interfaith Week will coincide with COP26 (United Nations Climate Change Conference 2021), and the theme for 2021 is Together for Our Planet. Event submissions are now open and can be registered on the [Scottish Interfaith Week website](#). Sign up to the [Scottish Interfaith Week newsletter](#) to receive updates.

3 Mottos For Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

17 November 2021 (online, 13.00–16.30)

Interfaith Scotland course considering diversity in its widest sense, looking at three models which provide insight on our experience of difference: the role of the dominant identity in shaping organisations; why some people overlook the disadvantages that others experience; and how to respond to misunderstandings or offence. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/b762err8> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

Working With People From Diverse Religion & Belief Identities

14 December 2021 (online, 13.00–16.30)

Interfaith Scotland course on improving confidence in discussing and responding to the religion and belief of those we work with. The event will explore the core beliefs and cultural practices of the main faiths, and individual needs that may arise from a person's faith or belief identity. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/83rwadrb> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie@interfaithscotland.org

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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/disclosure-types>

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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