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Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Illegal Migration Bill

Alasdair Allan (SNP) [S6O-02029] To ask the Scottish Government what contact it has had with the United Kingdom Government regarding concerns over the potential impact in Scotland of the proposed Illegal Migration Bill.

Reply from the Cabinet Secretary for the Constitution, External Affairs and Culture (Angus Robertson): I wrote to the United Kingdom Government to state unequivocally that the Scottish Government does not support the bill, which will remove offering a place of safety to desperate people who are fleeing conflict and persecution, and I have urged the UK Government not to progress with it. The First Minister has echoed that during First Minister's question time and condemned the

cruel and inhumane provisions in the bill. We have a moral obligation to offer a place of safety to people who are fleeing conflict and persecution because that is enshrined in international law and because that is the fair thing to do.

Alasdair Allan: The bill is proceeding at pace through the House of Commons, and the more we discuss it, the more horrified those of us who believe in a compassionate, global Scotland become. Will the cabinet secretary again confront the Tories on that monstrous bill and the monstrous provisions in it, which could mean that women will have no protection if they have been trafficked and children will be detained for the alleged crime of seeking sanctuary on this island?

Reply from Angus Robertson: The restriction on the provision of support to human trafficking victims would penalise some of society's most vulnerable people—those who have suffered unimaginable trauma, including through sexual exploitation or through being forced, through violence, to work for no pay in absolutely appalling conditions. These shameful proposals would create additional barriers for trafficking victims and tighten the grip of perpetrators by reducing the likelihood that people will seek help. Children will also be left in an appalling position until they turn 18, when they will be detained and removed to a third country in which they have no connections and no family. The bill is totally unacceptable.

Foyso Choudhury (Labour): The UK Government's Illegal Immigration Bill will mean that those arriving in the UK via illegal means will not be eligible for asylum claims and they will be detained on arrival in the UK. Dungavel immigration removal centre is Scotland's only detention centre. It can detain up to 130 men and 12 women. It is likely that there will be a huge increase in the number of people being detained there as the process for securing a successful asylum application will become much harder due to the restrictive rules. What action is the Scottish Government taking to liaise with the UK Government on the issue, as it is likely to completely overwhelm that detention centre in Scotland?

Reply from Angus Robertson: Foyso Choudhury's question is really apposite. We might imagine that, because some of what is being dealt with by the UK Government is very focused on people crossing the English Channel, the issues are far away from here and may not touch us directly. However, raising the point about the Dungavel facility, which is, of course, managed by the UK Home Office, reminds us that the issue is absolutely on our doorstep. It is not just a matter of human rights and supporting the principles of international law, justice and fairness; unfortunately, given the UK Government's plans, we are talking about something that will also be reflected in institutions in Scotland, which, sadly, we have no control over.

We are absolutely opposed to the bill and, if ever a reminder were needed that the Scottish Parliament should be in charge of immigration and human rights, that is it.

We should not leave it up to others to make bad decisions on our behalf.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15217&i=129762#ScotParIOR>

Ukrainian Refugees (Third Sector Support)

Daniel Johnson (Labour) [S6O-02030] To ask the Scottish Government how much financial support it is providing to the third sector across Edinburgh and the Lothians to support refugees from Ukraine in the financial year 2023-24. ...

Reply from the Minister for Culture, Europe and International Development and Minister with special responsibility for Refugees from Ukraine (Neil Gray): The Scottish Government recognises the tireless efforts of the community and voluntary sector in Edinburgh and the Lothians in supporting displaced Ukrainians. We continue to work closely with a number of community and voluntary sector organisations, and we have committed £200,000 to be shared between the Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations Council, Volunteer Edinburgh, Feniks:

Counselling, Personal Development and Support Services Ltd and The Welcoming Association in Edinburgh.

We are operating in a very challenging financial context for the next financial year, particularly given recent cuts to tariff funding that have been made by the United Kingdom Government and the subsequent impact on local government's ability to support displaced people from Ukraine.

Daniel Johnson: ... The issues go beyond purely financial ones. The Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee has heard from refugees who said that the process to apply for English for speakers of other languages—ESOL—support is cumbersome and requires them to fill out detailed application forms in English. That would be ironic if it were not so tragic, given the imperative to provide English language training to people who have recently arrived in this country from places such as Ukraine. Can the minister set out how the Government intends to improve the situation?

Reply from Neil Gray: Obviously, we see support for ESOL classes as a critical element of our response. We continue to work with local authorities that provide those services, our colleges and other training providers, as well as the UK Government in respect of the tariff provisions that it has provided.

In the most recent budget, there was no additional support for the UK's humanitarian response for Ukraine. There has been a significant cut to the local authority tariff, from £10,500 to £5,900, with no year 2 funding whatsoever. However, the UK Government has placed greater demands on our local authority partners to respond. We will continue to make representations alongside our Welsh Government colleagues and local government partners across the UK for the UK Government to reconsider that, so that we can continue to do the good work around ESOL that we have set out.

Fiona Hyslop (SNP): We can all be proud of the warm Scottish welcome as Ukraine's fight for freedom and democracy continues. However, for our support to be maintained, we need the UK Government to play its part. Can the minister provide more details on what effect the chancellor's budget may have on Scotland's support for Ukraine?

Reply from Neil Gray: The UK budget that was announced last week did nothing to reverse the cuts in funding and support for people who have been displaced by the war against Ukraine. In December, the UK Government announced that tariff funding for local authorities would reduce from £10,500 to £5,900 for those arriving after 1 January this year. It also confirmed that there would be no year 2 tariff funding and that the education tariff was being removed. That is not supporting displaced Ukrainians in the way that anyone in the chamber or, indeed, the wider public, would want.

There is wide acknowledgement that the UK Government has done a significant amount in terms of military aid and support. We have contributed £65 million for that. It is time that the UK Government matched that military support with humanitarian support and matched the actions of the Scottish Government. Scotland has welcomed a fifth of all UK arrivals from Ukraine.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15217&i=129763#ScotParlOR>

UK Parliament Debate

Special Immigration Appeals Commission (Procedure) (Amendment) Rules 2023

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-20/debates/AE14333C-80F0-4D67-BF3C-5A163CC10EF7/SpecialImmigrationAppealsCommission\(Procedure\)\(Amendment\)Rules2023](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-20/debates/AE14333C-80F0-4D67-BF3C-5A163CC10EF7/SpecialImmigrationAppealsCommission(Procedure)(Amendment)Rules2023)

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Illegal Migration Bill: Asylum Seekers

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [904157] What assessment [has the Minister] made of the potential impact of the Illegal Migration Bill on the wellbeing of people claiming asylum.

Reply from the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman): We must stop the misuse of our asylum system so that we can focus our resources upon those who really need our help, not those who can afford to pay people smugglers to transport them from safe countries.

Marsha De Cordova: The Illegal Migration Bill is yet another example of the Tories scapegoating asylum seekers to distract from their incompetence. It will not be compatible with our legal obligations under the Equality and Human Rights Commission and it will leave asylum seekers, such as those from Iran, in limbo so that they will be deemed permanently inadmissible to our asylum system. We need more safe and legal routes now, not after the boat crossings have stopped, as we know that the Bill will never achieve that. Why will the Home Secretary not seek to provide safe and legal routes for everybody now?

Reply from Suella Braverman: We always place a high priority on the wellbeing of asylum seekers, which is why we are also committing to rolling out safe and legal routes as part of our plan. ...

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op): What is more frightening than this toxic Bill that locks up the most vulnerable people who walk this planet, imprisons innocent children and pushes trafficked women back into the hands of their perpetrators, is that this Tory Government are peddling their divisive rhetoric because the Home Secretary has failed to govern or to provide communities with the support they need. Before she others the innocent, will she not admit that she is blaming the destitute to mask her own failures?

Reply from Suella Braverman: The only people who have failed here are Labour and Opposition Members who have failed to stand up for the British people and failed to support our measures to stop the boats. All they want is open borders and unlimited migration.

Andrew Bridgen (Independent): The Government have identified 57 countries deemed safe for the removal of asylum seekers, but there are no actual agreements in place to facilitate that legally. Will my right hon. Friend update the House on when those legal agreements will be in place? They will be good for the welfare of the asylum seekers and very good for the welfare of my constituents, because we can have our hotels back.

Reply from Suella Braverman: The hon. Gentleman is absolutely right that this is about enabling the Government to properly help the most genuine and vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees who come to this country. Currently, because of the influx of illegal migrants, and because our modern slavery and asylum system has been overwhelmed thanks to the efforts of the people smuggling gangs, we are unable to help those genuine victims to whom we owe a clear duty. ...

Stephen Kinnock (Labour): The Government's new asylum legislation is a sham that is set to worsen the backlog, because they do not have the facilities to detain tens of thousands of asylum seekers, or a returns agreement in place with the EU to send back those deemed inadmissible. For all her taxpayer funded photo ops this weekend, the Home Secretary has seemingly failed to bung the Rwandan Government enough money for them to increase the number of asylum seekers they are ready to take this year. For a deterrent to be effective, it has to be credible, yet these plans are just empty threats. Will she tell us where she expects to detain the tens of thousands of asylum seekers forecast to arrive this year, where she expects to remove them to, when Rwanda clearly has no intention of taking more than a very small proportion of those who she expects to arrive this year ...

Reply from Suella Braverman: ... In the last 10 days, the Prime Minister and I have secured a big deal with the French to increase cross-channel co-operation. I have presented and we have voted on measures to detain and swiftly remove illegal

migrants. This weekend, I met refugees who have successfully been resettled in Rwanda and saw the accommodation that people will be using. ...

Alison Thewliss (SNP): Freedom from Torture has talked about the impact on torture survivors of the anti-asylum Bill, calling it “a betrayal of the commitments made following the Shaw Review”.

Seven babies born to mothers in Home Office accommodation since 2020 have died, so it is no surprise that Women for Refugee Women and the Royal College of Midwives have opposed the Home Office’s plans. Scotland’s Children and Young People’s Commissioner has warned that the plans to detain and remove children breach this Government’s obligations under the UN convention on the rights of the child. There is nothing about protecting asylum seekers’ welfare that the Bill will fix, so does the Home Secretary accept the harm that she is causing?

Reply from Suella Braverman: We take very seriously our duties to everybody who is within our care. Our measures will always, of course, ensure that proper wellbeing and welfare provision is available to those who are vulnerable, but let me say this: the hon. Lady has absolutely no right to lecture this Government on how to support asylum seekers when her own nation royally fails to take any or sufficient numbers into Scotland.

Alison Thewliss: That is simply not correct. The Bill is not about helping asylum seekers; it is about banning asylum seekers. What does it say about the Home Secretary’s morals that she believes that Rwanda would be “a blessing” for asylum seekers, but when they come here she calls them a swarm and an invasion?

Reply from Suella Braverman: The problem that the hon. Lady is labouring under is that in opposing our plans, she sides with the people-smuggling gangs. She actively encourages, in effect, co-operation with the evil practice of exploitation of vulnerable people coming into this country. Vote for our measures, stop the people-smuggling gangs and stop the boats!

To read this question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/7AD0FDDC-D3DE-4A8A-A2A2-DA685BF500C2/IllegalMigrationBillAsylumSeekers>

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

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/490782/52532_Shaw_Review_Accessible.pdf

Illegal Migration Bill: Compatibility

Marion Fellows (SNP) [904162] What recent assessment [has the Minister] made of the compatibility of the Illegal Migration Bill with the refugee convention.

Anum Qaisar (SNP) [904170] What recent assessment [has the Minister] made of the compatibility of the Illegal Migration Bill with the European convention on human rights.

Reply from the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman): I refer the hon. Lady to the statement in my name that appears on the front of the Bill. I would add that I am satisfied that the provisions of the Bill are capable of being applied compatibly with the human rights convention and compliant with our international obligations, including the refugee convention.

Marion Fellows: Apparently the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees does not agree with the Home Secretary. They have said that this legislation amounts to an “asylum ban”, adding that it would be a “clear breach of the Refugee Convention”.

Does the Home Secretary not realise that the very nature of human rights is that they are universal and that it is not for Governments to pick and choose which rights apply to which groups of people?

Reply from Suella Braverman: I refer the hon. Lady to article 31 of the refugee convention, which makes it clear that there is not an absolute duty on states to offer provision to asylum seekers, particularly if they have come from a safe country. It

is important to note that the Bill applies to people who have come here illegally from a safe country. It is important that we instil a framework that enables us to detain and swiftly remove them so that we can stop the boats and stop the people smuggling gangs.

Anum Qaisar: When introducing the Bill, the Home Secretary said that she was “confident that this Bill is compatible with international law.”—[[Official Report, 7 March 2023; Vol. 729, c. 152.](#)] She then immediately confirmed that she could not make a declaration of compatibility under section 19 of the Human Rights Act. That followed her previous comments that she thought that it was less than 50% compatible. Can the Home Secretary please confirm to the House today which of these three views she holds?

Reply from Suella Braverman: I do not think the hon. Lady has quite got the point of the Human Rights Act. Section 19(1)(b) is designed for exactly these purposes. Although the Government believe our provisions are capable of being compliant with the Human Rights Act and the European convention on human rights, we are, none the less, testing legal arguments and legal bases, and there is nothing wrong with that. In fact, a previous Labour Administration also introduced legislation carrying such a section 19(1)(b) statement.

The SNP is all talk and no action. Although Scotland makes up 8% of the UK population, only 1% of the UK’s asylum seekers are housed in contingency accommodation in Scotland. It is very easy for the SNP to make all the right noises, but it has taken zero action to stop the boats.

Richard Fuller (Conservative): The 1951 convention and the 1967 protocol are fundamental foundations of how humanity deals with refugees at times of crisis, but there are questions to be asked about whether the convention and the protocol remain robust enough, effective enough and sufficient to meet the challenges of refugees in the decades to come. Will my right hon. and learned Friend have the courage, as Home Secretary of the United Kingdom, to lead international discussions on this topic?

Reply from Suella Braverman: My hon. Friend makes an incredibly powerful point, and I agree with his sentiment. The historic conventions to which we subscribe are fundamentally challenged by modern travel and a global migration crisis in which more than 100 million displaced people are on the move today. It is right that western and democratic nations, which take pride in our duty and track record of offering refuge to vulnerable people, start a conversation to ensure that we strike the right balance.

Aaron Bell (Conservative): I am a strong supporter of the Illegal Migration Bill, on the grounds that it is the only practical solution to stop the wicked people-smuggling trade across the channel. Does the Home Secretary agree not only that those who compare this Government’s policies to those of 1930s Germany are appallingly ill-informed, but that it represents a grotesque slander against the victims and survivors of the holocaust?

Reply from Suella Braverman: Many people have commented on this. All I will say is that people who resort to such analogies have already lost the argument.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/68DFBD9A-ACB6-453F-B9E5-F90B5572467E/IllegalMigrationBillCompatibility>

The Home Secretary’s statement on the front of the Bill, referred to above, can be read at <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0262/220262.pdf>

The Refugee Convention, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-relating-status-refugees>

The Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-relating-status-refugees>

Section 19 of the Human Rights Act, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/42/section/19>

Illegal Migration Bill

Chris Stephens (SNP) [904165] What recent assessment [has the Minister] made of the potential impact of the Illegal Migration Bill on levels of (a) modern slavery and (b) sex trafficking.

Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick): Let me be clear: the UK Government are committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern slavery and to supporting victims. We continue to invest in the police to support them to improve the support they offer victims, and to drive up prosecutions. A total of £16.5 million has been provided by the Home Office since 2016, including £1.4 million last year for the modern slavery and organised crime unit.

Chris Stephens: ... Is the Salvation Army correct when it points out that detaining trafficking victims as they arrive and then removing them will simply deliver vulnerable people back into the hands of the criminal gangs that exploited them in the first place, and that that does nothing to break the cycle of exploitation but only further fuels the profits of these criminal gangs?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: No, the hon. Gentleman is wrong. The Illegal Migration Bill makes it clear that we want to break the cycle of the human traffickers. We will do that by carefully considering cases and returning those people who can be returned to their home country, where it is safe to do so. In cases such as Albania, we have worked closely with the Government to put in place the procedures necessary to ensure that those people are carefully looked after and not at risk of re-trafficking. If that is not the case, they will be taken to a safe third country such as Rwanda where, once again, their needs will be looked after. ...

Jess Phillips (Labour): Just to correct the Minister, it was not the hon. Member for Glasgow South West (Chris Stephens) who made that criticism, but the Salvation Army, which the Home Office employs as its main contractor on trafficking.

I asked the Prime Minister this, and I got no answer, so I am trying again. When I worked on a Home Office contract, I met many women and children who had been brought here illegally to be repeatedly raped as sex slaves. The Prime Minister tweeted that such victims would be denied access to support from our modern slavery system—a tweet that will be an absolute delight to traffickers. How will we help to prevent a woman who is brought here illegally from being repeatedly raped if she is denied access to our modern slavery system?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The hon. Lady and I agree that we want to do everything we can to support the victims of human trafficking, but we disagree on how we do that. She is content for people to be brought across the channel in small boats at the behest of human traffickers. We want to break that cycle once and for all, and we believe that that is the fair and the moral thing to do. Today, a majority of the cases being considered for modern slavery are people who are coming into the country—for example, on small boats. We are seeing flagrant abuse, which is making it impossible for us to deal appropriately with the genuine victims, to the point that 71% of foreign national offenders in the detained estate, whom we are trying to remove from the country, are claiming to be modern slaves. That is wrong, and we are going to stop it.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/0D2743BB-4E97-4EF4-AAE3-A62A151268F9/IllegalMigrationBill>

Asylum and Immigration Applications Backlog

Hannah Bardell (SNP) [904158] What steps [is the Minister] taking to tackle backlogs in (a) asylum and (b) other immigration applications.

Meg Hillier (Labour Co-op) [904174] What recent progress [has the Minister's] Department has made on reducing the backlog of asylum applications.

Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick): The Prime Minister made a commitment on 13 December to clear the legacy backlog of asylum

applications over the course of this year. I am pleased to report that we are on track to deliver that. We have already doubled the number of caseworkers, and we are on course to double the number again. We are streamlining processes to reduce unnecessary paperwork while maintaining robust standards. The productivity of caseworkers has more than doubled since the start of the year. ...

Meg Hillier: The Minister says that the Government are providing a good service, but that is not my experience, either of asylum cases or across the piece. There are so many cases of work visas, visitor visas and so on being delayed for longer than I have seen in the 18 years I have served as an MP, which have included serving in the Minister's role. When will he get a grip? It is all very well saying that he is dealing with asylum, but it is like whack-a-mole: he puts effort into one area, and another area goes badly wrong. When is he going to get a grip?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: I prefer to trade in facts, and the fact is that in every single one of the visa categories the UK visa service is at or exceeding the service standard. It is true that we moved a number of people away from work and visit visa duties to ensure that we met the demands of the Homes for Ukraine scheme last year, but those people are now back on the job and the service is performing well. If the hon. Lady wants to give specific examples, I shall be happy to look into them.

Jerome Mayhew (Conservative): The backlog of asylum seekers is increasing the need for accommodation. ... Can my right hon. Friend update the House on the progress that the Scottish Government are making on housing numbers of asylum seekers similar to the numbers housed in the rest of the United Kingdom?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... There are almost no individuals in initial and contingency accommodation in Scotland; in fact, there are fewer hotels in Scotland than there are in Kensington. However, it is not just members of the SNP who should hang their heads in shame, but Labour in Wales, because in the whole of Wales there are only three hotels. There are more hotels in Earl's Court than there are in Labour Wales.

Damian Collins (Conservative): As my right hon. Friend knows, the sudden influx over, say, a bank holiday weekend of thousands of migrants who have crossed the channel in small boats causes substantial infrastructure problems in Kent. If we are to stop this dangerous trafficking of people across the channel, we must not only crack down on the gangs but demonstrate that it is a futile practice which will not lead to a shortcut into the asylum system in the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: My hon. Friend has cut to the nub of the question. We cannot build ourselves out of this issue by creating more hotels or large sites. The only sustainable answer is to break the people smugglers' model, and that is what the Illegal Migration Bill sets out to do. We on this side of the House are on the side of the British people, while those who vote against the Bill are on the side of the people smugglers. It is only by stopping people crossing the channel, by creating a genuine deterrent—for instance, sending people to a safe third country such as Rwanda—that we will achieve that.

To read this question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/9812022F-EBBB-4151-A653-BEE487DE0372/AsylumAndImmigrationApplicationsBacklog>

The commitment referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-12-13/debates/DB61C374-16B5-411C-9A29-CC3DCA119EB3/IllegalImmigration#contribution-0956F9E3-33B1-435A-B085-6B124DAD75AD>

Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre

Neale Hanvey (Alba) [904167] Whether [the Minister] has had recent discussions with the Scottish Government on the operation of the Dungavel House immigration removal centre.

Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick): There is regular contact between Dungavel House immigration removal centre and relevant local stakeholders, as necessary, on issues relating to the day-to-day running of the centre. Although immigration is not a devolved matter, we will keep the Scottish Government informed should there be any significant changes.

Neale Hanvey: I share my constituents' shock at the distasteful photoshoot of the Home Secretary outside the transportation camp in Rwanda. Will she set out the following in regards to Dungavel? How will this whole process work? How many refugees at Dungavel House are earmarked for transportation to Rwanda? How many are children or pregnant women? If the Home Secretary cannot give us those numbers now, I am happy to receive a letter later.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Well, I share the disappointment at those who peddle misinformation of any kind. However, with respect to Dungavel House, it is an immigration removal centre and it is used routinely to detain, prior to removal, foreign national offenders and those who have entered our country illegally and whom we are seeking to remove. The hon. Gentleman and I may disagree on this issue. We on the Government side of the House want to remove foreign national offenders. We do not want them to remain in the UK. We also do not want to close detention centres. The right hon. and learned Member for Holborn and St Pancras (Keir Starmer) campaigned to be Leader of the Opposition on a pledge to close detention centres, but we want to get dangerous offenders such as murderers and rapists out of this country.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/CAF31EED-C602-4A1D-A6C6-6938C8A475C4/DungavelHouseImmigrationRemovalCentre>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Asylum: Housing

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [170635] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number and proportion of properties at Bwiza Riverside Estate, Kigali that will house (a) Rwandan citizens and (b) asylum seekers transferred from the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government of Rwanda is responsible for procuring accommodation in Rwanda and have the capability to expand and increase capacity as required for relocated individuals.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170635>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer: Channel Migrants

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Jim Shannon (DUP) [155119] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to reduce the number of illegal crossings of the English Channel; and if she will increase the number of patrols in the channel.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The small boat crossings are dangerous, illegal and unnecessary and the Government is committed to working with our European partners to stop them.

On 10 March 2023, the Prime Minister and President Macron announced the biggest package with France yet to tackle small boats. Initiatives include a

significant uplift of the number of personnel deployed to tackle small boats across northern France, as well as a package of new cutting-edge surveillance technologies and equipment, including additional drones, aircraft, and other vehicles and embedded observers to step up our capabilities to detect and respond to small boat crossing attempts.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-28/155119>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-agrees-unprecedented-measures-to-tackle-illegal-migration-alongside-france>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Refugees: Afghanistan

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [165315] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the number of Afghan nationals who (a) meet the eligibility criteria for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, (b) meet the eligibility criteria for the Afghan citizens resettlement schemes and (c) have received an offer of resettlement under one of those schemes who (i) have not arrived in the UK and (ii) are known to have died since August 2021.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), launched on 1 April 2021, we have relocated c.12,100 Afghans, including LE Staff, to the UK under ARAP.

The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) launched on the 6 January 2022 and will see 20,000 people from Afghanistan and the region resettled to the UK over the coming years. Around 6,500 people brought to safety in the UK during and after the evacuation are eligible for the ACRS under Pathway 1.

There is no application process for the ACRS. Prioritisation and referral for resettlement will be under one of the three Pathways.

More information on the ACRS is available via the link below: [Afghan citizens resettlement scheme](#)

We estimate that the number of ARAP-eligible people that remain in Afghanistan is approximately 3,900 people (inclusive of immediate family members) out of a total of around 4,300 ARAP eligible individuals awaiting relocation, some of whom are in third countries undergoing visa checks. These figures are based on HMG records and are subject to change.

Under Pathway 3 of ACRS, the Government is considering eligible at-risk British Council and GardaWorld contractors and Chevening alumni located in Afghanistan and the neighbouring region for resettlement in the UK. The FCDO is in regular contact with Gardaworld and British Council. We are not aware of the death of a contractor, or a Chevening alumnus, since Pathway 3 of the ACRS opened.

We do not have access to records of deaths in Afghanistan and have not made any such assessment.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165315>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Information about Pathways 2 and 3, referred to above, can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3>

Afghanistan: Refugees

Seema Malhotra (Labour (Co-op)) [165302] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, whether he plans to reopen the ex gratia scheme for Afghan nationals.

Reply from James Heapey: There are no plans to reopen the Ex-Gratia Scheme (EGS) which closed on 30 November 2022. EGS was replaced by the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) scheme, which offers a safe and legal route for relocation to the UK for Afghan citizens who worked for or alongside UK forces in support of the UK mission in Afghanistan.

The scope of those eligible under ARAP includes, and is wider than, those who would be eligible for EGS.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/165302>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Afghanistan: Refugees

John Healey (Labour) [162465] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, pursuant to the Answer of 18 January 2023 to Question 122054 on Afghanistan: Refugees, how many applications for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme were (a) received and (b) processed in (i) January 2023 and (ii) February 2023.

Reply from James Heapey: In January 2022, 1,327 applications were received, of which approximately 721 were duplicates, while an approximate 7,503 applications were processed.

In February 2022, 2,106 applications were received, of which approximately 935 were duplicates, while an approximate 8,444 applications were processed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/162465>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/122054>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Afghanistan: Refugees

John Healey (Labour) [166128] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2023 to Question 162117 on Afghanistan: Refugees, how many Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (a) principals and (b) dependents were housed in bridging hotels on 15 March 2023 following their relocation to the UK under that scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: All those resettling under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) or Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP), have recourse to public funds and the right to work and study.

We are working intensively across government, and in partnership with local authorities across the country to both bring down the number of people in bridging hotels and help families move into more sustainable accommodation as quickly as possible so they can put down permanent roots. Local authorities currently receive integration tariff funding of £20,520 per person, over three years, for each Afghan family they resettle and provide full integration support to for this duration.

Statistics on individuals resettled or relocated under the Afghan schemes is available in the [Immigration System Statistics, year ending December 2022](#) release.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/166128>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/162117>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Information about the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [162237] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she will take to enable the parents of children who have come to the UK from Afghanistan under the UNHCR scheme, and are currently fostered by British families, to come to the UK so that they can resume their parenting roles.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The UNHCR refer refugees who have fled Afghanistan under Pathway 2 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), based on assessments of protection needs and vulnerabilities. Those we resettle under Pathway 2 (and the ACRS as whole) may be accompanied by their immediate family members, including spouse or partner and dependent children under 18 years.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/162237>

Information about Pathway 2, referred to above, can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/220613500016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Illegal Migration Bill

Asylum

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [165401] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate of the proportion of people who would not be eligible for asylum under the Illegal Migration Bill who would be eligible to be sent to (a) a third country and (b) their country of origin.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Illegal Migration Bill will change the law so that people who come to the UK illegally can be detained and then swiftly returned to a safe third country or their home country. If they cannot be returned to their home country, then they will be relocated to a third safe country, such as Rwanda, where they will receive support to rebuild their lives. If someone is identified as a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking, we will ensure they are safely returned home or to another safe country, away from those who have trafficked them.

The Secretary of State is not required to make arrangements to remove an unaccompanied child from the UK until they turn 18 years old, but there is a power to do so. As a matter of current policy this power will only be exercised in limited circumstances ahead of them reaching adulthood, such as for the purposes of family reunion or where removal is to a safe country of origin.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165401>

Detainees: Children

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [165400] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether the Illegal Migration Bill would permit the indefinite detention of children.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We do not detain people indefinitely and the powers

in the Bill do not provide for this.

The Bill will create new detention powers which will allow us to detain a person pending a decision as to whether the new duty to remove applies, and thereafter to detain pending their removal. These new powers will not be time limited; however, in line with our other existing immigration detention powers, detention will be limited to a reasonable period of time.

Families will be kept together wherever possible and children will only be detained for as short a period as possible and in age-appropriate accommodation. The Secretary of State is not required to make arrangements to remove an unaccompanied child from the UK until they become adults, but there is a power to do so. As a matter of current policy, this power will only be exercised in very limited circumstances ahead of them reaching adulthood, such as for the purposes of family reunion or where removal is to a safe country of origin.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165400>

Illegal Migration Bill

Rupa Huq (Labour) [161356] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has made an assessment of the potential impact of the Illegal Migration Bill on victims of modern slavery who have been trafficked to the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The UK government remains committed to tackling the heinous crime of modern slavery and supporting victims.

The Illegal Migration Bill will crack down on the opportunities to abuse modern slavery protections, by preventing people who come to the UK through illegal and dangerous journeys from misusing modern slavery safeguards to block their removal.

We are working on developing guidance regarding the operation of these measures, including any potential impacts and how they relate to victims of Modern Slavery, to be introduced when it is appropriate to do so once the Illegal Migration Bill has progressed through Parliament.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/161356>

Refugees: LGBT+ People

Rupa Huq (Labour) [165510] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to include protections within the Illegal Migration Bill for those claiming asylum from a country where they are at risk of persecution on the basis of their sexual orientation.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Illegal Migration Bill provides the Home Secretary with a legal duty to remove people who have entered or arrive in the UK illegally, having travelled via a safe country. In these circumstances, they will be detained and removed back to their home country or a safe third country such as Rwanda. This will send a clear message that people should not make dangerous, unnecessary and illegal small boat crossings to the UK.

Everyone considered for relocation to a safe third country will be screened and have access to legal advice. We would not relocate someone where it would be unsafe to do so.

Our Migration Partnership with Rwanda will provide protection to those who need it and will provide individuals relocated with support to build new lives there. Rwanda is a fundamentally safe and secure country with a track record of supporting asylum seekers, including working with the UN Refugee Agency which said the country has a safe and protective environment for refugees.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165510>

Refugees: LGBT+ People

Cat Smith (Labour) [165253] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that asylum seekers who are removed to (a) Rwanda and (b) other safe third countries under the Illegal Migration Bill will not be subject to discrimination on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Everyone considered for relocation to a safe third country will be considered on a case-by-case basis and have access to legal advice. We would not relocate someone where it would be unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165253>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

Immigration: Scotland

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [904179] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential effect of her immigration policies on the (a) population of and (b) labour market in Scotland.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The UK's immigration system enables individuals to enter UK for work purposes from all parts of the world where they have a suitable job offer and meet our criteria. This is helping fill skills gaps, boosting our economy and through specific visa offers, such as the Health and Care visa, supporting our public services.

There is no compelling argument that Scotland should have a different immigration system to the rest of the UK. Indeed it's economy benefits from the simplicity and clarity of having one single system for our country. Scotland's economically active rate is closely aligned with UK average. Minor variations are accounted for in the Scotland specific Shortage Occupation List.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/904179>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Naturalisation

Patrick Grady (SNP) [169331] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of changing the requirement for naturalisation applicants to have been in the UK for five years before the qualifying period, in the context of people's inability for people to travel during the covid-19 pandemic.

Patrick Grady (SNP) [169332] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of changing the requirement for naturalisation applicants via the spousal route to have been in the UK for three years before the qualifying period, in the context of people's inability to travel during the covid-19 pandemic.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Nationality and Borders Act 2022 introduced the power to allow the Secretary of State to waive the requirement for an applicant to be in the UK at the start of the residential qualifying period for naturalisation. Published guidance sets out when discretion would normally be exercised and covers absence due to the pandemic. Guidance also makes it clear that we would apply the same approach to extended period of absences from the UK due to covid restrictions.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169331>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169332>

Undocumented Migrants: Legal Aid Scheme

Afzal Khan (Labour) [170711] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to help people entering the UK by irregular means access legal (a) advice and (b) aid before they are removed.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: All migrants (with the exception of those who are removed within 7 days of refusal of leave to enter at the border) are given a notice period prior to removal allowing time for access to justice, and those detained pending removal are able to access legal aid surgeries.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170711>

Undocumented Workers: Convictions

Nadia Whittome (Labour) [169433] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been convicted of the offence of illegal working since that offence was introduced under the 2016 Immigration Act.

Reply from Edward Argar: The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number of convictions between 2017 and 2021 in the [Outcomes by Offence data tool: December 2021](#).

Information on the number of people convicted prior to 2017 can be found in the [Principal offence proceedings and outcomes by Home Office offence code data tool](#), however, there are no convictions for illegal working in this period.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169433>

Asylum: Albania

Hilary Benn (Labour) [169209] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of Albanian nationals who have applied for (a) asylum, (b) refugee status and (c) protection under modern slavery legislation have been granted leave to remain in the UK by gender in each of the last five years.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the ['Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release'](#). Data on initial decisions of all asylum applications raised in a period by nationality can be found in table Asy_D04 of the ['asylum and resettlement detailed datasets'](#). A breakdown by gender is not available. People who successfully apply for asylum are granted refugee status or other leave.

Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. the latest available data is for 2021, and data are accurate as of June 2022. Data for 2022 will be published in August 2023. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the ['Research and statistics calendar'](#).

The Home Office does not publish data on referrals to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for potential victims of modern slavery that have been granted leave to remain in the UK.

Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and availability of data.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169209>

Asylum: Housing

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [165397] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that private providers of asylum accommodation meet minimum standards.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Accommodation for supported asylum seekers is arranged by private sector providers through contractual arrangements with the Home Office. We expect high standards from all of our providers, and we have a

robust governance framework in place to manage service delivery of the Asylum Accommodation Support Contracts (AASC). Details of the AASC can be found at: [New asylum accommodation contracts awarded](#).

All asylum seekers have access to a 24/7 AIRE (Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility) service provided for the Home Office by Migrant Help where they can raise any concerns regarding accommodation or support services, and they can get information about how to obtain further support.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165397>

Refugees: Housing

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [162233] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on taking steps to place obligations on local authorities to provide housing for a set number of refugee families.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: As the Prime Minister set out in his statement to Parliament on 13 December 2022, the UK will establish an annual cap on the number of people who come to the UK via safe and legal routes which will depend on a variety of factors, including Local Authorities' capacity to support them.

In introducing this cap, we will consult with Local Authorities first to understand their capacity and ensure that we have the resource to properly support and integrate people into our communities, before Parliament votes and commits to a final number.

The UK's resettlement schemes are only possible thanks to the commitment of over 350 Local Authorities and community sponsors across the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/162233>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2022-12-13/debates/DB61C374-16B5-411C-9A29-CC3DCA119EB3/IllegalImmigration>

Asylum: Hotels

Emma Lewell-Buck (Labour) [904175] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent progress her Department has made on reducing the use of hotels as contingency accommodation for asylum seekers.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: This government does not want to continue the use of hotels for a day longer than necessary. We are as frustrated as the public are at the cost to the taxpayer.

Our strategy is to limit hotels wherever possible by increasing dispersal accommodation agreed with local authorities and by making use of large sites. We are working with the MoD to make use of disused military sites.

Migrants will be housed in decent, but not luxurious accommodation, that does not create a pull factor to the UK.

The Government can't build it's way out of this challenge, nor can the UK taxpayer afford to do so. The only sustainable answer is to deter individuals from making this dangerous, unnecessary and illegal journey, as we will be doing through our Illegal Migration Bill.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/904175>

Asylum

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [162235] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to open up safe routes for people seeking refuge to come to the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The UK has a proud record of providing protection for people fleeing war and persecution. Between 2015 and December 2022, just under

half a million (481,804) people were offered safe and legal routes into the UK. In addition to dedicated resettlement schemes for Syria, Afghanistan, Hong Kong and Ukraine, the UK has welcomed refugees and people in need around the world through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Community Sponsorship, the Mandate Resettlement Scheme, and Family Reunion.

It is not right that control of national borders should be suspended to allow people who have already reached safety in countries with fully functioning asylum systems, to travel further to another country as a matter of preference. This undermines the broader immigration system, and encourages people to fund criminal gangs and to risk their lives trying to get to the UK in unseaworthy vessels or packed dangerously into cars and lorries. Moreover, it diverts our finite resources from those who are most in need of assistance.

As outlined by the Prime Minister, as we tackle illegal migration, we will be able to bring forward more safe and legal routes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/162235>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration Removal Centres: LGBT+ People

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [163934] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to collect data on the number of LGBTQI people held in immigration detention.

Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat) [163935] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the implications for her Department's immigration policies of the report entitled LGBTQI+ people's experiences of immigration detention: A pilot study, published in February 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Published Detention Services Orders (DSOs) [2/2016](#) and [11/2012](#) set out how individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transsexual should be safeguarded and treated in detention.

We are unable to publish data on LGBTQI detained individuals. The identification of an LGBTQI individual detained under immigration powers, is entirely at the discretion of the individual. Consequently, even a manual trawl of cases of individuals detained will not necessarily be representative of the true number of LGBTQI individuals detained during any period. The fact that an individual detained under immigration powers within an IRC or prison is transsexual will always be recorded in a manner sensitive to the needs of that individual, not for statistical purposes. As it is rare for the detention of a trans or intersex person to occur, any reporting would risk the identification of individuals.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-13/163934>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-13/163935>

The following four questions both received the same answer

Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centre

Neale Hanvey (Alba) [165452] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many (a) asylum seekers, (b) children and (c) pregnant women were detained at the immigration detention facility at Dungavel in each year since it opened; and for how long each was detained.

Neale Hanvey (Alba) [165454] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the value was of the contracts awarded to GEO Group for the operation of the Dungavel House immigration removal centre in each year of the operation of those contracts.

Neale Hanvey (Alba) [165455] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the value was of the security contract for the operation of Dungavel House

immigration removal centre in each year since 2001.

Neale Hanvey (Alba) [165458] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the annual budget was for maintaining and operating the immigration detention facility at Dungavel in each year since 2001.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Contact takes place between Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre (IRC) and relevant local stakeholders, as necessary, on issues relating to the day to day running of the centre. Although immigration is not a devolved matter, we will keep the Scottish Government informed of any significant changes to the operation of this IRC.

The Annual Budget for Dungavel House IRC forms part of the budget for the wider detention estate and is not disaggregated. Published figures for the average cost of a detention bed per day can be found at the link: Immigration Enforcement data: Q4 2022.

The Home Office publishes statistics on people entering and leaving immigration detention in the 'Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release'. The number of people entering detention each quarter are in table Det_D01 of the 'Detention detailed datasets', where the data can be broken down by age and first place of detention. The number of people leaving detention each quarter are in table Det_D03 of the 'Detention detailed datasets', where the data can be broken down by length of detention.

The Home Office does not publish by place of detention: asylum-related detentions, length of detention of people leaving detention, or a breakdown of pregnant women detained.

However, data on the total number of asylum-related detentions each year is in table Det_01 and data on the total number leaving detention by place of detention is in table Det_04c of the 'Detention summary tables'. The latest data relate to the end of December 2022.

Data on the total number of pregnant women detained in the immigration detention estate each quarter is published in table PWD_01 of the 'Immigration Enforcement data: Q4 2022'. This data is only available from July 2016 and goes up to the end of September 2022. For data prior to 2010, see the archived Detention tables.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165452>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165454>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165455>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/165458>

Immigration Enforcement data: Q4 2022, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1138252/IE_Q4_2022_Published.ods

The Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>

The Detention detailed datasets, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136702/detention-datasets-dec-2022.xlsx

The Detention summary tables, referred to above, can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1136695/detention-summary-dec-2022-tables.ods

The following three questions all received the same answer

Independent Family Returns Panel

Caroline Nokes (Conservative) [169253] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Independent Family Returns Panel will have a role in oversight of the removal of children seeking asylum to Rwanda.

Caroline Nokes (Conservative) [169254] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to abolish the Independent Family Returns Panel.

Caroline Nokes (Conservative) [169255] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential impact of the Illegal Migration Bill on the remit of the Independent Family Returns Panel.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We are not abolishing the Independent Family Returns Panel (IFRP). We are removing the duty to consult them in order to swiftly remove those families who fall for removal under the Illegal Migration Bill. However, we remain in open dialogue with the IFRP about the role they will have in the removal of those families with children who fall within the remit of the Bill. The IFRP will continue to play an important role in the removal of families with children who do not fall within the remit of the Illegal Migration Bill.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169253>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169254>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169255>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Asylum: Rwanda

Lord Sikka (Labour) [HL6274] To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum-seekers have been relocated to Rwanda to date; and what payments they have made to the government of Rwanda to accept asylum-seekers from the UK.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: There have not been any relocation flights operated from the UK to Rwanda to date due to ongoing legal challenges.

The UK has provided Rwanda with an initial investment of £120m as part of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership.

The UK has also made a £20m upfront payment to the Government of Rwanda to support initial set up costs.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6274>

Asylum: Rwanda

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat) [HL6374] To ask His Majesty's Government how many individuals seeking asylum in the UK the government of Rwanda have agreed to receive and process in (1) 2023, (2) 2024, and (3) 2025.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: We have been discussing a range of scenarios with the Government of Rwanda around volumes of relocations. The current planning envisages several thousand people being relocated to Rwanda each year.

It should be noted that the arrangement is uncapped, and Rwanda has plans in place to scale up their ability to support more relocations if needed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/hl6374>

Asylum: Applications

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat) [HL6373] To ask His Majesty's Government whether

they have signed agreements with any countries, other than Rwanda, to remove those seeking asylum in the UK and to process their asylum applications; and if so, what are those countries.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: We are unable to comment on discussions that may be being held with other countries. We are, however, committed to working closely with international partners as we act on fixing our broken asylum system. This ground-breaking Partnership is a model that could be replicated elsewhere, and we are always willing to work with partners around the world to tackle this joint challenge.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/hl6373>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer: Channel Migrants

Human Trafficking

Lord McColl of Dulwich (Conservative) [HL6368] To ask His Majesty's Government how many individuals arrived in the UK across the English channel in small boats and entered the National Referral Mechanism between 2018 and 2022; and what was the breakdown of these individuals by (1) gender, (2) age, (3) nationality, and (4) location of claimed exploitation, where such a claim was made.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes statistics on small boat arrivals to the UK in the '[Irregular Migration to the UK statistics](#)' report on GOV.uk. Data on NRM referrals from small boat arrivals are published in the 'Potential victims of modern slavery' section of the 'Irregular migration to the UK' publication. The latest data relates to the end of December 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)' on GOV.uk

The Home Office does not publish data on NRM referrals from small boat arrivals by gender, age, nationality, or location of claimed exploitation. Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the Code of Practice for Statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, as well as quality and availability of data.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/hl6368>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer: Afghanistan

Refugees: Afghanistan

Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Labour) [HL6150] To ask His Majesty's Government why only 22 Afghans have been resettled under Pathway 2 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme as of December 2022.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will see up to 20,000 people from Afghanistan and the region resettled to the UK over the coming years.

Under the second pathway, which opened in 2022, we have now begun to receive the first referrals from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of vulnerable refugees who have fled Afghanistan for resettlement to the UK. Further detail can be found on the UNHCR website: UNHCR UK Information and Links on Afghanistan Situation - UNHCR United Kingdom

We will continue to receive referrals to the scheme in coming years.

The pace of actual arrivals will depend on a range of factors including the flow of

referrals from UNHCR and the availability of suitable accommodation and support in the UK. As with existing and previous resettlement schemes, we will manage flows based on need and in support of the wellbeing of the people and communities involved.

Those referred will be assessed for resettlement by UNHCR using their established processes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-06/hl6150>

The UNHCR website referred to above can be read at

<https://help.unhcr.org/uk/afghanistan/>

Information about Pathway 2, referred to above, can be read at

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

[13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Illegal Migration Bill

Illegal Migration Bill

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench) [HL6290] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the remarks by Lord Murray of Blidworth on 8 March (HL Deb col 847) concerning the legality of the new Illegal Migration Bill, what plans they have to address the legal complexities of that Bill.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: In preparing the Bill our aim has been to ensure that it is legally robust to achieve the Bill's core purpose as set out in clause 1(1). Namely to prevent and deter unlawful migration, and in particular migration by unsafe and illegal routes, by requiring the removal from the United Kingdom of certain persons who enter or arrive in the UK in breach of immigration control.

The Government continues to examine ways to further strengthen the Bill, including by bringing forward amendments to make substantive provision (in place of clause 49) as to the effect of interim measures indicated by the European Court of Human Rights.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/hl6290>

The remarks referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-08/debates/44FF4E27-404E-454A-A77A-B2E4BC6D6AC9/IllegalMigrationBill>

The clauses of the Bill referred to above can be read at

<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0262/220262.pdf>

Asylum

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL6366] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the compliance of the Illegal Migration Bill with the UN 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Those who come to the UK illegally who cannot be returned home will be relocated to a safe third country such as Rwanda, where they will have the opportunity to claim asylum and rebuild their lives.

In December, the High Court ruled that the Government's Migration Partnership with Rwanda is lawful and that it complies with the Refugee Convention.

We are satisfied that the provisions of the Illegal Migration Bill are compatible with the UK's international obligations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/hl6366>

Undocumented Migrants

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL6218] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the introduction of the Illegal Migration Bill, what plans they have (1) to ban migrants who arrive in the UK via irregular transit routes from re-entering the UK in future, and (2) to prevent them from applying for British citizenship for life; and what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of any such plans, given that lifetime bans could be reversed by future governments.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Illegal Migration Bill makes it clear to migrants thinking of coming to the UK illegally – be that by a small boat, in the back of a lorry or other unlawful means - that illegal entry has real, long-term and significant impacts on their future.

Migrants who enter the UK illegally will be banned from returning at a future date and will not be able to obtain settlement or citizenship.

The very limited power to waive the re-entry ban is included for use in specific exceptional circumstances. The overall approach is clear: if someone wants to come to the UK, they must do so lawfully.

The re-entry, settlement and citizenship bans will be rooted in primary legislation as part of the Illegal Migration Bill and will be subject to the usual parliamentary processes

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-07/hl6218>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

Refugees: Resettlement

Lord German (Liberal Democrat) [HL6242] To ask His Majesty's Government how many persons identified by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as needing resettlement in the UK have been so resettled in each of the last 10 years.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Between 2013 and 2022, 30,055 people have been resettled to the UK through UNHCR resettlement routes. The UK ranks 3rd highest of European countries over this period.

Between 2013 and 2022, people were offered safe and legal routes into the UK via the following:

- 153,708 BN(O) Hong Kong Visas
- 233,770 visas granted under Ukraine Visa and Extension Schemes
- 53,230 family reunion visas
- 51,420 resettled or relocated. 30,055 resettled through UNHCR resettlement routes and 21,365 through non-UNHCR routes (i.e. Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme Pathway 1 and Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6242>

Refugees: Resettlement

Lord German (Liberal Democrat) [HL6243] To ask His Majesty's Government what quotas they place on the numbers of persons to be resettled on the recommendation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The UK does not set a quota on the overall number of persons to be resettled on the recommendation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6243>

Refugees: Resettlement

Lord German (Liberal Democrat) [HL6244] To ask His Majesty's Government what

criteria they apply when considering applications for resettlement from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is uniquely placed to help identify and refer the most vulnerable individuals for resettlement in accordance with their standard resettlement submission categories. These are based on people's needs and vulnerabilities

We do not seek to intervene in or influence UNHCR's selection processes.

The seven resettlement submission categories used by UNHCR are set out here:

<https://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf>

[UNHCR Resettlement Handbook](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6244>

Asylum: Personal Records

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL6163] To ask His Majesty's Government what dispensations they provide to asylum seekers arriving in the UK who have lost any identifying documentation en route.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The effect on credibility of the failure or inability to provide evidence, such as documentation, will depend on all the circumstances, including on the nature of the evidence requested and whether it is reasonable to expect the claimant to be able to disclose or obtain it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-06/hl6163>

Asylum

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL6161] To ask His Majesty's Government what percentage of asylum seekers arriving in the UK by unofficial transit routes were eventually successful in their asylum claims in each of the last five years.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes statistics on the asylum outcomes of small boat arrivals in the 'Irregular migration to the UK statistics' report on gov.uk. The latest data is in the 'Irregular migration to the UK, year ending December 2022' release.

The Home Office does not publish breakdowns for the asylum outcomes of people arriving by other irregular routes.

[Irregular Migration to the UK – December 2022](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-06/hl6161>

Asylum: Afghanistan and Syria

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL6198] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have, if any, to arrange preliminary interviews for Afghan and Syrian refugees seeking asylum in Britain in (1) France, and (2) Belgium.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: There is no provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel to the UK to seek asylum or temporary refuge. Whilst the Home Office sympathises with individuals in many difficult situations around the world, it is not bound to consider asylum claims from the very large numbers of people overseas who might like to come here. Those who need international protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach – that is the fastest route to safety.

Our resettlement schemes already provide safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people to start new lives in the UK. The UK welcomes people at risk through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Mandate Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship and the Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-07/hl6198>

Asylum: Children

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat) [HL6372] To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Greater Manchester Police concerning any evidence of instances of unaccompanied children seeking asylum who have gone missing while staying in hotels, and who may have been taken by gangs involved in crime.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: We have no unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) hotels in Greater Manchester. The Home Office can confirm that those responsible for the care of UASC in temporary accommodation have not had discussions with Greater Manchester Police.

The Home Office takes the wellbeing, welfare and security of children and minors in our care extremely seriously. Robust safeguarding procedures are in place to ensure all children and minors are safe and supported as we seek urgent placements with local authorities.

When a young person who has previously gone missing from an emergency interim UASC Hotel is encountered or located, the Police force where the young person is missing from should be notified. If the young person was located by another Police force in a different area then the force dealing with the missing persons case will liaise with them regarding the circumstances of the encounter and how they came to locate the young person. This will assist both forces with identifying whether there are any concerns regarding possible trafficking; exploitation or other potential criminal activities that may require investigation.

The Department for Education's statutory guidance on any children who run away or go missing from home or care home, states that young people who go missing should be offered a Return Home Interview. This can help understand why the young person went missing as well as identify any harm that may have occurred to them as well as possible risks that might need to be addressed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-10/hl6372>

Asylum: Deportation

Lord Blunkett (Labour) [HL6233] To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum-seekers, except for those from Albania, who failed to establish the right to remain in the UK were removed to either (1) their country of origin, or (2) a third safe country, in the year to 31 December 2022.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes data on asylum-related returns in the 'Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release' on gov.uk. Data on asylum-related returns for the top ten nationalities are published in table Ret_05 of the 'Returns summary datasets'. Data on returns by nationality and return destination group are provided in Ret_D01 of the 'Returns detailed datasets', though these are for all returns cases and not just asylum-related.

The latest data relates to September 2022. Data up to December 2022 will be available in the May 2023 release. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook.

[Table Ret_05](#)

[Table Ret_D01](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6233>

UK Parliament Human Rights Committee

Evidence session: Human rights of asylum seekers in the UK

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12839/html/>

Press Release

UK hosts thanked on first anniversary of Homes for Ukraine scheme

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-hosts-thanked-on-first-anniversary-of-homes-for-ukraine-scheme>

New Publications

The Scottish Government's Supersponsor Scheme – one year on

<https://spice-spotlight.scot/2023/03/20/the-scottish-governments-supersponsor-scheme-one-year-on/>

The changing picture of short-term international migration, England and Wales: Census 2021

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/thechangingpictureofshortterminternationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021>

Migration and the labour market, England and Wales: Census 2021

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/releases/migrationandthelabourmarket>

Irregular migration: A timeline of UK-French co-operation

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9681/CBP-9681.pdf>

Delays to processing asylum claims in the UK

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9737/CBP-9737.pdf>

Hostile Accommodation: How the asylum housing system is cruel by design

<https://www.refugee-action.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Hostile-Accommodation-Refugee-Action-report.pdf>

Update: Migrants detected crossing the English Channel in small boats – last 7 days

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats-last-7-days>

Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme in Scotland: statistics - March 2023

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-in-scotland-statistics-march-2023/>

Updated" Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme: Visa data by country, upper and lower tier local authority

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ukraine-sponsorship-scheme-visa-data-by-country-upper-and-lower-tier-local-authority>

Analysis of Ukrainian nationals entering employment in the UK

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1145444/Analysis_of_Ukrainian_nationals_in_employment_in_the_UK.ods

News: Illegal Migration Bill

Suella Braverman slams SNP as small boats bill 'tests' legal limits

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23399596.suella-braverman-slams-snp-small-boats-bill-tests-legal-limits/>

Scottish Human Rights Commission opposes UK Government's Illegal Migration Bill

<https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/news/commission-opposes-uk-governments-illegal-migration-bill/>

Draconian' migration bill could leave tens of thousands destitute or locked up

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/22/draconian-migration-bill-could-leave-tens-of-thousands-destitute-or-locked-up>

Channel crossings scheme costs 'could top £9bn in three years'

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/22/channel-crossings-scheme-costs-could-top-9bn-in-three-years>

Migrant bill could stop injunctions holding up removals

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/tory-amendment-to-migrant-bill-would-block-court-injunctions-9l78d33wf>

News: Rwanda Refugee Policy

European judges 'close to backing down' on blocking Rwanda flights as Braverman hails 'constructive talks'

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rwanda-flights-suella-braverman-deportation-echr-b2304053.html>

Suella Braverman attacks Rwanda deportations 'snobbery' as European judges near climbdown

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/19/suella-braverman-attacks-rwanda-deportations-snobbery-european/>

Rwanda deal 'a blessing' for migrants, says Suella Braverman

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rwanda-deal-a-blessing-for-migrants-says-braverman-9jrsf9tfz>

Rwanda can't be dream and deterrent all at once

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/rwanda-cant-be-dream-and-deterrent-all-at-once-8vqsgjqvf>

US calls conditions in Rwanda's detention centres harsh to life-threatening

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/mar/21/us-describes-conditions-in-rwandas-detention-centres-as-harsh-to-life-threatening>

News: Ukraine

Last 50 Ukrainians to leave Glasgow cruise ship

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65064246>

Kyiv ambassador urges more Britons to host refugees on Homes for Ukraine scheme anniversary

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/homes-ukraine-refugees-host-anniversary-b2307668.html>

News: Other Immigration and Asylum

Home Office delays Windrush grants amid row over social media posts

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/21/home-office-delays-windrush-grants-amid-row-over-social-media-posts>

MoD apologises after Afghans told to seek Taliban approval for UK asylum

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/world-news/2023/03/19/mod-apologises-afghans-told-seek-taliban-approval-uk-asylum/>

Our small boats problem is people smuggling, not human trafficking — and we must deal with it

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/our-small-boats-problem-is-people-smuggling-not-human-trafficking-and-we-must-deal-with-it-l5wbn885j>

Sunak used incorrect asylum backlog figures, statistics watchdog says

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/25/sunak-used-incorrect-asylum-backlog-figures-statistics-watchdog-says>

UK government 'planning' to house asylum seekers on military bases

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23411949.uk-government-planning-house-asylum-seekers-military-bases/>

Historic Dambusters building could be listed to thwart migrant camp plans

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/03/25/dambusters-officers-mess-could-listed-thwart-plans-migrant-camp/>

Plans to house migrants on ferries to be announced

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-65074419>

Asylum seekers in UK face being moved to army bases or disused ferries

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/25/asylum-seekers-uk-face-being-moved-to-army-bases-disused-ferries-reports>

Tory MPs launch bid to stop migrants being housed in hotels

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/23/tory-mps-launch-bid-stop-migrants-housed-hotels/>

Private firms profiting from asylum hotels

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64991234>

Undeported illegal migrants 'to cost UK £9bn over three years'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrants-denied-uk-asylum-cost-three-years-2023-bg5j8tftpz>

Priti Patel 'threatened to sue Suella Braverman' over asylum overcrowding claims

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/priti-patel-sue-suella-braverman-asylum-b2303833.html>

Scotland's Bishops call for reform of the asylum process

<https://scmo.org/news-releases/perma/1679318520/article/scotlands-bishops-call-for-reform-of-the-asylum-pr.html>

UK asylum seekers who complain about conditions ‘threatened with Rwanda’
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/23/uk-asylum-seekers-who-complain-about-conditions-threatened-with-rwanda>

TOP

Community Relations

New Publication

Faith and belief engagement strategy

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2023/03/faith-belief-engagement-strategy/documents/faith-belief-engagement-strategy/faith-belief-engagement-strategy/govscot%3Adocument/faith-belief-engagement-strategy.pdf>

News

Major faiths gather for interfaith seder hosted by Board of Deputies President

<https://bod.org.uk/bod-news/major-faiths-gather-for-interfaith-seder-hosted-by-board-of-deputies-president/>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Blood: Ethnic Groups

Navendu Mishra (Labour) [170758] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to encourage people from ethnic minority backgrounds to donate blood.

Reply from Neil O’Brien: The Department works with NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) as it continues its work towards recruiting and retaining more blood donors from ethnic minority backgrounds. Diversifying the donor base is a key priority for NHSBT, to address health disparities and ensure patients from all backgrounds can receive the best matched blood.

Work to increase the supply of Ro Kell negative blood type includes increased investment into targeted marketing and engagement. NHSBT launched its “Not Family but Blood” campaign in October 2022, aimed at recruiting more black heritage blood donors.

In addition, the Community Grants Programme funds community and faith/belief organisations to drive awareness, understanding and behaviour change around donation. In the Programme’s latest round, £440,000, including £40,000 from Anthony Nolan, was invested to support 39 organisations to raise awareness of organ, blood, and stem cell donation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170758>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Equality: Ethnic Groups

Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-affiliated) [HL6544] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0 A Snapshot View of Racial Disparity in the City of York, published on 28 February; and what steps they are taking to address reports of inequalities experienced by ethnic minority communities.

Reply from Baroness Scott of Bybrook: The Inclusive Equal Rights report provides some interesting insights into racial disparities in York, although this is just a snapshot, as the report acknowledges, and does not analyse the causes of these disparities.

The government is taking steps to address negative ethnic disparities through the ground-breaking Inclusive Britain action plan. Published in March 2022 in response to the report by the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, Inclusive Britain sets out 74 actions designed to tackle disparities, promote unity and build a fairer Britain for all.

The Minister for Women and Equalities has committed to reporting back to Parliament on progress with the action plan after 12 months, and will do so shortly.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6544>

The Inclusive Equal Rights UK 3.0 report referred to above can be read at

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/6295d4970d74ec4490212384/t/63fb927fbd0e61176cf8caa2/1677431424604/30070+IER+Racial+Disparity+Brochure+WEB+%28Pages%29+%281%29.pdf>

Inclusive Britain, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-action-plan-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities/inclusive-britain-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>

The Commission on Race and Ethnic disparities 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

New Publication

Scottish Government Equality evidence strategy 2023 to 2025

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-equality-evidence-strategy-2023-2025/>

News

Conference highlights racial disparity in UK maternal healthcare

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/mar/20/conference-highlights-racial-disparity-in-uk-maternal-healthcare>

68% of Muslims in England and Wales live in areas with high unemployment

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/24/two-thirds-muslims-england-wales-areas-high-unemployment>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Anti-Racist Employment Strategy

Miles Briggs (Conservative) [S6W-15818] To ask the Scottish Government what initiatives it has for private sector employers to implement its anti-racist employment strategy.

Reply from Richard Lochhead: On 9 December 2022 the Scottish Government jointly published our Anti-Racist Employment Strategy and refreshed Fair Work Action Plan. The Anti-Racist Employment Strategy offers clear and practical guidance for employers from all sectors to improve the recruitment and representation of racialised minority staff and build fair, diverse and inclusive workplaces. The Strategy was developed in collaboration with stakeholders from a wide-range of backgrounds. This included representatives of the private sector. The Strategy is underpinned by a series of actions working in continued partnership with these stakeholders to address issues affecting racialised minorities.

The Fair Work Action Plan explains how the Scottish Government will work collaboratively to support private and public sector employers to utilise the resources and support available to embed Fair Work in their organisations and build capability among employers, employability providers and partners. By the end of 2023 we will have worked with partners to further join up provision of advice and support for employers in all sectors by establishing a central Fair Work resource. We will also develop a communications strategy to highlight and promote to all employers the benefits of Fair Work and diverse workplaces including recruiting, employing and supporting workers from racialised minorities. By the end of 2023 we will have also further updated the Fair Work First criteria that must be taken into consideration by employers seeking public sector support to better reflect priority action required to address labour market inequalities faced by people from racialised minorities and other groups to help ensure more people can enter, remain and progress in work.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-15818>

The Strategy referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-anti-racist-employment-strategy/>

The Action Plan referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-action-plan-becoming-leading-fair-work-nation-2025/>

Scottish Parliament Motion

Foyso Choudhury (Labour) [S6M-08303] **Congratulations to Community Policy Forum on its Islamophobia, Education, and the Future Parliamentary Event** – That the Parliament congratulates the Community Policy Forum on a successful event, Islamophobia, Education, and the Future, which took place in the Scottish Parliament on 17 January 2023; understands that Muslim teachers, students and their families face a plethora of challenges relating to Islamophobia and other structural inequalities within education; believes that this includes identity-based bullying, the misrepresentation of Islam/Muslims in classrooms and national curricula, and insufficient access to faith-based and culturally competent support services; understands that such challenges can impact the long-term development of Muslim students; recognises what it sees as the importance of developing policies directed at fostering healthy school

environments that enable all students to participate in school life on an equal footing; notes what it considers the importance of working with community stakeholders to facilitate such policies, including increasing diversity at all levels of teaching, and enhancing positive relationships and engagement opportunities between schools and parents, and recognises what it sees as the importance in providing greater representation and emphasis in the National Curriculum of Excellence upon shared histories and the contributions of minority communities to Scotland and the UK.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/votes-and-motions/S6M-08303>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Ministerial Statement and Q&A

Metropolitan Police: Casey Review

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman): ... The Metropolitan Police Service plays a big role in our country: tackling crime throughout the capital and keeping 9 million Londoners safe; preventing terrorism nationally; and managing significant threats to our capital and country. I back the police. I trust them to put their safety before ours, to step into danger to protect the most vulnerable, and to support all of us at our most fearful, painful and tragic moments. Many of us can never imagine the challenges that regular police officers face every day. ...

But there have been growing concerns around the performance of the Metropolitan police and its ability to command the confidence and trust of Londoners. That follows a series of abhorrent cases of officers who betrayed the public's trust and hideously abused their powers. ...

Baroness Casey's report finds: deep-seated cultural issues in the force; persistent poor planning and short-termism; a failure of local accountability; insularity and defensiveness; and a lack of focus on core areas of policing, including public protection. She also highlights the recent decline in trust and confidence in the Met among London's diverse communities.

The report underlines the fact that the Met faces a long road to recovery. Improvements must be made as swiftly as possible, but some of the huge challenges for the organisation may take years to fully address. ... Every officer in the force needs to be part of making those changes happen. ...

It is vital that the law-abiding public do not face a threat from the police themselves. Those who are not fit to wear the uniform must be prevented from doing so. ...

I would like to turn to two particularly concerning aspects of Baroness Casey's report. First, it addresses questions of racism, misogyny and homophobia within the Metropolitan police. Baroness Casey has identified evidence of discriminatory behaviour among officers. ... Discrimination must be tackled in all its forms, and I welcome Sir Mark's commitment to do so. I will be holding the Metropolitan police and the Mayor of London to account by measuring their progress. ...

Secondly, officers working in the parliamentary and diplomatic protection command perform a vital function in protecting our embassies and keeping us, as Members of Parliament, safe on the parliamentary estate. Baroness Casey's report is scathing in its analysis of the command's culture. The whole House will be acutely aware of two recent cases of officers working in that command committing the most abhorrent crimes. ...

We all depend on the police, who overwhelmingly do a very difficult job bravely and well. It is vital that all officers maintain the very highest standards that the public expect of them. ...

Yvette Cooper (Labour): ... The report published today by Louise Casey, commissioned by the Mayor of London, into standards and culture in the Metropolitan police service is thorough, forensic and truly damning. It finds that consent is broken, management of the force has failed and frontline policing — especially neighbourhood policing — has been

deprioritised and degraded ... It finds that the Met is failing women and children, and that predatory and unacceptable behaviour has been allowed to flourish. It finds institutional racism, misogyny and homophobia.

Baroness Casey pays tribute to the work that police officers do and the bravery that they show every day, as we all should, because across the country we depend on the work that police officers do to keep us all safe ... But that is what makes it all the more important that the highest standards are maintained and the confidence of those the police serve is sustained, otherwise communities and the vital work that police officers do are let down. ... The failure to root out officers who have been involved in domestic abuse or sexual assault also applies in other forces. The failure to tackle culture has gone wrong in other forces too ... It is a disgrace that there are still not mandatory requirements on vetting and training, underpinned by law, and that misconduct systems are still too weak. ...

The findings on institutional misogyny, racism and homophobia are based on evidence and clear criteria that Baroness Casey has set out for measuring change with recommendations. ... The British policing model is precious. The Peel principles, which started in London—policing by consent—said “that the police are the public and that the public are the police”.

They are our guardians, not our guards, but that precious policing model is in peril. ...

Peter Bottomley (Conservative): ... I will give as an example the high-profile case of the Sikh police officer Gurpal Viridi, who 25 years ago was in effect accused of doing something he had not done. We had the Muir report at the end of 2001, which showed what the police ought to do to do things right. We had the report by Sir William Morris, as he then was, in 2004. Before that we had had the Stephen Lawrence inquiry by Sir William Macpherson ... What they recommended has not happened.

Now we have the Casey report. I say to the commissioner of the Met police, to the Mayor and to my right hon. and learned Friend the Home Secretary: have a review into what happened in the Gurpal Viridi case, including his prosecution eight years ago for a non-offence, where the only evidence exonerated him. Until that is done, people will not have confidence in people putting things right. It may be one case, and many other examples will be given in the next few minutes, but Sergeant Gurpal Viridi has been the victim of more injustice from the police, over decades, than I have ever seen in my life. ...

Diana Johnson (Labour): The findings of institutional racism in the Met made 24 years ago, the findings of institutional corruption in the case of Daniel Morgan more recently, the homophobia in the botched Stephen Port investigation, the misogyny, homophobia and racism in the Charing Cross inquiry, the criminal misconduct of police officers in the murders of Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman, the strip-searching of Child Q, the numerous Independent Office for Police Conduct investigations and damning HMICFRS reports, the abduction, rape and murder by a serving police officer and the case of the serial sex offender David Carrick were all not enough to provoke real change, so can the Home Secretary say what is now different about this report? Is she confident that the Met can change?

Reply from Suella Braverman: It is clear just from the examples to which the right hon. Lady refers and from this report that all the behaviour, including instances of racism, homophobia and misogyny, is completely unacceptable and that standards must improve. Sir Mark has been clear that he is not shying away from the enormity of the challenge. He has a plan in place to ensure that standards are increased, that more rigour is instilled in the Met and that there is a better and more robust response when standards fall short. ...

Andy Slaughter (Labour): Like many London MPs, I deal with constituency cases—from modern slavery to stalking—in which ethnicity, gender or sexuality is a factor, but the victims complain that those factors are not taken seriously by police investigators. What can I tell them that the Home Secretary will do, following this damning report, to give them dignity, respect and, above all, justice?

Reply from Suella Braverman: Discriminatory attitudes and homophobic, racist or misogynistic behaviour have no place in policing. All the case studies and references in the report make for shocking reading. The ability of the police to fulfil their duties is essential, but what we have seen is a real impediment preventing chief constables from dismissing and getting rid of officers who are not fit to wear the badge, for a host of reasons. ... if necessary I will change the law to empower chief constables to better control the quality of the officers in their ranks. ...

Marsha De Cordova (Labour): Nearly 25 years after the Macpherson report, it is damning that the Casey review has found that the Met remains institutionally racist, and is now misogynistic and homophobic as well. Its actions can seriously undermine policing by consent, and without wholesale reform it will be impossible to rebuild trust and confidence in our communities ...

Reply from Suella Braverman: We are already working with the College of Policing to ensure that there is a statutory code setting out the standards for vetting and recruitment. However, as Baroness Casey makes clear, it is vital that the law-abiding public never face a threat from the police themselves. Those who are not fit to wear the badge should be rooted out, but they should never enter the force in the first place. ...

To read this statement and very long question and answer session in full see
<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-21/debates/ACFF2865-C6A3-4089-8F5F-B101861F47A1/MetropolitanPoliceCaseyReview>

The Casey Review, discussed above, can be read at
<https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/met/about-us/baroness-casey-review/update-march-2023/baroness-casey-review-march-2023.pdf>

Information about the Gurpal Viridi case, referred to above, can be read at
<http://policeauthority.org/metropolitan/scrutinies/gviridi/index.html#h1000>

The Muir report, referred to above, can be read at
<http://www.policeauthority.org/Metropolitan/downloads/scrutinies/virdi/virdi-report-01a.pdf>

The Morris report, referred to above, can be read at
<http://www.policeauthority.org/Metropolitan/downloads/scrutinies/morris/morris-report.pdf>

The Macpherson report, referred to above, can be read at
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf

Information about the David Morgan case, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.met.police.uk/notices/met/daniel-morgan-independent-panel-report/>

Information about the Stephen Port investigation, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/investigations/stephen-port-murders-metropolitan-police-service>

The report of the Charing Cross Inquiry, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.policeconduct.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Operation%20Hotton%20Learning%20Report%20-%20January%202022.pdf>

Information relating to the murders of Bibaa Henry and Nicole Smallman, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-59474472>

Information about the Child Q case, referred to above, can be read at
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-61796798>

A police statement relating to the David Carrick case, referred to above, can be read at
<https://news.met.police.uk/news/statement-ahead-of-david-carrick-sentencing-hearing-461431>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Ministerial Statement and Q&A

Baroness Casey Review

[The Home Secretary's statement to the House of Commons](#) was read in the House of Lords.

Lord Coaker (Labour): ... there can be no hiding place from this damning report into the culture and behaviour of the Metropolitan Police ... It is so depressing to learn that the Metropolitan Police has not done the institutional work to root out racism, sexism and homophobia. The individual case studies in the reports, and the reports given in evidence, show appalling and shocking behaviour going unchallenged. How will all of this change? Why will it change now, following this report, given that so many other reports highlighted these failings in the past?

Even recently, when change was promised and cultural change was made a priority for the police, what does the Casey report say? As an awful example, it says that, following the abduction, rape and murder of Sarah Everard by a serving police officer, there was a "plane falling out of the sky" moment when we should have witnessed real change and reform. Instead, the police failed to understand the gravity and impact of the crimes of a serving police officer, saying that the force preferred to pretend that its own perpetrators were just "bad apples". The report asks what it will take for the police to wake up and change, so I ask the Minister the same question.

What will the Government themselves do to ensure that the cultural change needed is driven forward? Of course, others have a responsibility, but the Minister has to accept that the Government of our country have a responsibility as well. ...

How will racism be rooted out? Why is nothing being done about the fact that, if you are a black officer, you are 81% more likely to be in the misconduct system than white colleagues? ... What do the Government say to the criticisms made by the noble Baroness, Lady Casey, when she points out the eyewatering use of force against the black community? ...

Lord German (Liberal Democrat): ... For decades, there has been racism, sexism, misogyny and homophobia in the Metropolitan Police, and, throughout that time, police leaders have wilfully denied it or have been so embedded in the culture that they do not recognise it. Those who stood up to be counted and reported misconduct were labelled troublemakers, ostracised by colleagues and targeted for misconduct investigations themselves. Some of those who were violent and racist were reinstated, even when they had been found guilty and dismissed. ...

... we must recognise that not every black, female, Sikh, Muslim or gay officer has had these experiences. But that does not detract from the fact that there is a corrupting and unhealthy culture that allows unacceptable behaviour to flourish and grinds down those who stand up for what is right.

Things have changed over the decades. For example, overt racism has been replaced by closed WhatsApp groups, to which only a few trusted colleagues are allowed access. ...

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... It is paramount that public trust in the Met is restored. The Home Secretary is committed to ensuring that the commissioner and the Mayor of London will be held to account to deliver a wholesale change in the force's culture. ...

However ... we should not overlook the many officers working in the Met who carry out their duties with the utmost professionalism ...

On the subject of institutional racism, sexism and homophobia, it is obviously clear from the report that recent cases, including instances of all those things, in parts of the Metropolitan Police are completely unacceptable. It has been made very clear that standards have to improve in this area as a matter of considerable urgency. The Met has to rebuild trust, improve standards and keep all Londoners safe from

harm, regardless of their background. ...

I accept that there has been a failure of leadership in the police, of course, but I have faith in Sir Mark ... The police have a lot of work to do to restore trust, and I hope that has been made clear. ...

Baroness Chakrabarti (Labour): My Lords, does the Minister agree that in the spirit of bipartisanship, on such a dark day for the capital and the country, nobody should double down against the central finding of institutional prejudice? This does not mean that everybody is prejudiced; it just means that there are systemic problems that need to be addressed if we are to tackle these deep-seated problems in the institution. ...

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... As regards the institutional racism and so on, like Sir Mark Rowley I probably would not use that description because it can be misused and risks making it harder for officers to win the trust of communities, but I of course acknowledge the noble Baroness's point. ...

Lord Blunkett (Labour): ... Those who have taken responsibility in this area—and, of course, I have—will be aware of the real difficulty of holding the police force to account. Yes, there may have been a dysfunctional relationship ... But what the noble Baroness was pointing out was the real difficulty that any mayor has—and this applies to the Home Secretary as well—in a situation where the force is so defensive. This is illustrated in the report time and again: the force is so defensive that any criticism at all is taken personally, and people go on the defensive to the point where you cannot have a sensible or rational conversation.

... it is time to stop the police hiding behind operational responsibility and to understand that somewhere and somehow they have to be held to account. At this moment in time, we are doing so, but on the back of years of failure. If we are to avoid that in future, we will have to have transparency and honesty in a way that we have not had.

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... I actually agree with everything that he has just said. The fact is that the report also identified an “evasive” culture and a culture that is overly defensive when it comes to perfectly justified criticism. I have confidence that Sir Mark will change that culture and do so very quickly—but, of course, he needs to be held accountable for doing that. ...

Baroness Berridge (Conservative): My Lords, it is 30 years ago next month that Stephen Lawrence was killed. So there have not been “growing concerns” among young black people in London; they have been telling us for years that things have not changed and we—meaning all of us—did not listen. ...

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... It is clear that the Met must have the confidence of all communities, including black and ethnic groups. ...

To read this statement and very long question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-21/debates/04B6A140-579E-4AE8-AF3A-F19C958017D9/BaronessCaseyReview>

The Casey Review, discussed above, can be read at

<https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/met/about-us/baroness-casey-review/update-march-2023/baroness-casey-review-march-2023.pdf>

Information about the Sarah Everard murder, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-58747614>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

Missing Persons: Racial Discrimination

Tanmanjeet Singh Dhesi (Labour) [170695] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has taken recent steps to tackle potential racial bias in missing person investigations.

Reply from Chris Philp: People that go missing include some of the most vulnerable in our society. The Government is determined that missing people and their families receive the best possible protection and support from statutory agencies, including law enforcement, Government, and the voluntary sector. The Government acknowledges that the most recent data published by the National Crime Agency, covering the period 2020-21, indicated that Black people are disproportionately affected by missing incidents:

<http://missingpersons.police.uk/en-gb/resources/downloads/missing-persons-statistical-bulletins>

This aligns with the findings from The Ethnicity of Missing People report, which also indicates the over-representation of Black children in care in missing reports.

To improve the police response to missing people from all backgrounds and address racial and ethnic disparities, the National Police Chief's Council (NPCC) works with police forces across England and Wales, the charity Missing People and the NCA Missing Persons Unit to consider these issues and what action is needed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170695>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.missingpeople.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Missing_Ethnicity-report.pdf

Press Releases

Casey Report: must be catalyst for police reform

<https://www.met.police.uk/notices/met/casey-report/>

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: statement by the High Commissioner

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/03/international-day-elimination-racial-discrimination-statement-high>

Petra Bayr: there's still a long way to go in the fight against racism

<https://pace.coe.int/en/news/9021/petra-bayr-there-s-still-a-long-way-to-go-in-the-fight-against-racism>

New Publications

Scottish Government Hate crime strategy

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/hate-crime-strategy-scotland/>

Final Report: Baroness Casey Review – An independent review into the standards of behaviour and internal culture of the Metropolitan Police Service

<https://www.met.police.uk/SysSiteAssets/media/downloads/met/about-us/baroness-casey-review/update-march-2023/baroness-casey-review-march-2023.pdf>

News

Met Police: Women and children failed by 'boys' club', review finds

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65015479>

Met Police report: Rape cases ruined, Sikh officer's beard cut... five findings from Casey review

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-65019879>

Metropolitan Police is 'institutionally racist, sexist and homophobic' and may have more officers like Couzens and Carrick, review finds

<https://news.sky.com/story/metropolitan-police-is-institutionally-racist-sexist-and-homophobic-and-may-have-more-officers-like-couzens-and-carrick-review-finds-12838717>

Met 'rotten' 30 years after Stephen Lawrence murder

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65025563>

Suella Braverman backs Met Police chief as she rejects 'institutional racism' label

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/suella-braverman-met-police-institutional-racism-b2305115.html>

Bacon placed in Muslim police officer's boots as racist behaviour 'dismissed' by Met

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/03/21/casey-review-bacon-placed-muslim-police-officers-boots/>

'I'm scared of the police': Met report unearths misogyny, homophobia and racism

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/21/im-scared-of-the-police-met-report-unearths-misogyny-homophobia-and-racism>

Police Scotland 'not in same area' to Met over misconduct handling

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/police-scotland-not-in-same-area-to-met-over-misconduct-handling-4074134>

Danish far-right leader banned from UK over threat to burn Quran in Wakefield

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leeds-65020528>

Patriotic Alternative: The town fighting the far-right with Welsh cakes

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65057093>

Counter terror police help investigation as man set alight near Birmingham mosque

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-65030005>

Mosque fire suspect arrested over second attack

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-65045660>

Suspect questioned after man set alight near Birmingham mosque

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-65036283>

Police arrest man after worshipper set alight on way home from Birmingham mosque

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/21/man-suffers-burns-after-jacket-set-alight-outside-birmingham-mosque>

'Hitler supporter' podcasts stirred race hate, court told

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/hitler-supporter-podcasts-stirred-race-hate-court-told-3zmr3ztd9>

We must enshrine the UN day to combat Islamophobia in law

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/asif-aziz-we-must-enshrine-the-un-day-to-combat-islamophobia-in-law-3b6g9k36h>

It's not just hair, it's a statement of identity

<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2023/03/its-not-just-hair-its-statement-identity>

Cricket Scotland criticised over 'progress' claims

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65032137>

Scottish cricket still stumped by racism trauma, says Amer Anwar

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/cricket-scotland-still-unfit-for-purpose-6drzzk8l9>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Press Releases

First Minister's Ramadan Message

<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFM/status/1638481001495101441>

Scottish Government Graduate Recruitment 2023

Applications open 3rd April 2023

https://www.scojec.org/memo/files/23iv_sq.pdf

Individual Graduate Perspectives (videos)

<https://vimeo.com/787560295>

and

<https://vimeo.com/787558217>

and

<https://vimeo.com/788610294>

New Publication

Timings for selection and appointment of a new First Minister

<https://spice-spotlight.scot/2023/03/23/explainer-timings-for-selection-and-appointment-of-a-new-first-minister/>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers Schools: Koran

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL6264] To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they will take to protect pupils who drop or deface a copy of the Koran, and the families of those pupils.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The safety of children is the utmost priority for the department, and it is never acceptable to threaten or intimidate pupils and their families under any circumstances. Schools and colleges have a critical role to play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Keeping Children Safe in Education is statutory safeguarding guidance which all schools and colleges must

consider, to ensure the safety of children at school. A vital part of schools meeting their duties includes creating a safe, calm, and supportive environment for all pupils. Head teachers play an important role in preventing bullying, harassment and discrimination in their schools, and they should ensure that they consider the needs of all pupils and staff when developing the school's approach to its behaviour policy, which all schools are required to have in place.

In response to recent incidents, the government has been repeatedly clear that there is no blasphemy law in Great Britain. There is a range of existing guidance to help schools make decisions on how to meet the needs of their pupils, and to manage and resolve concerns and complaints. The department trusts school leaders to work with pupils, parents, and where necessary the local community and the police to manage the responses to these incidents locally.

However, we recognise that where these issues arise, they are often sensitive and complex, involving a range of local partners such as the police and local authorities. The Home Office is drafting guidance around blasphemy incidents, which the department will support with as needed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6264>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101454/Keeping_children_safe_in_education_2022.pdf

Schools: Koran

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL6267] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the spokesperson for the Department for Education on 2 March in respect of the suspension of four school children at Kettlethorpe High School for dropping a copy of the Koran that "the school followed standard disciplinary procedures in response to this incident" and that the Department "backs headteachers to take the appropriate action", what are the standard disciplinary procedures for such an incident; whether they consider the suspension of the children in this case to be an "appropriate action"; and if not, what plans they have to withdraw that statement.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The government's priority remains the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The department trusts head teachers to work with pupils, parents and, where necessary, the local community and the police to manage the responses to these incidents locally.

All schools are required by law to have a behaviour policy which outlines effective strategies that will encourage good behaviour and the sanctions that will be imposed for misbehaviour. The department trusts head teachers to develop behaviour policies which reflect their school's individual contexts and needs. The department also supports head teachers in using suspension as a sanction when warranted as part of creating calm, safe and supportive environments where both pupils and staff can work in safety and are respected.

All decisions to suspend a pupil must be lawful, proportionate, and reasonable. Within these requirements, schools need to be able to set and enforce behaviour policies that reflect their ethos and the specific challenges they face. Decisions also need to be based on the particular facts of a case. For this reason, the statutory Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance does not prescribe the behaviours that should or should not lead to a suspension.

If parents feel that disciplinary action is unreasonable, they have the right to make representations to the school's governing board.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6267>

The statement referred to above is not currently available online, but a report of the statement can be read at

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/1741316/Quran-damaged-boys-suspended-school-Wakefield-department-for-education>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1101498/Suspension_and_Permanent_Exclusion_from_maintained_schools_academies_and_pupil_referral_units_in_England_including_pupil_movement.pdf

Batley Grammar School: Harassment

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL6266] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 27 July 2021 (HL1972), whether the Batley Grammar School teacher and his family are still receiving police protection following him showing a picture of the Prophet Mohammed to a class of school children; if so, how much longer they expect to need to provide that protection; how many arrests have been made in connection with the threats received by that individual and his family; and what were the consequences of those arrests.

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government remains steadfast in our commitment to tackling those who spread views that promote violence and hatred against individuals and communities in our society and must always stand up to those who seek to undermine our fundamental values.

The Home Office does not hold information on police protection, or number of arrests made by West Yorkshire Police in relation to this case. This is a matter for West Yorkshire Police, which is operationally independent of Government.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6266>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-07-13/hl1972>

Press Releases

Prime Minister's Ramadan Message

<https://twitter.com/10DowningStreet/status/1638606809291259907>

Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office Ramadan Message

<https://twitter.com/tariqahmadbt/status/1638923037243260930>

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Cost of Living

Scottish Government Website

Help during the cost of living crisis

Most households are concerned about the cost of living, with worries about issues such as rent and mortgages, food and utility bills, energy costs, and debt.

In response, the Scottish Government has launched a new website that provides information to help people access support with

- Energy and Bills
- Benefits and Income
- Children and Families
- Debt and Money

- Health and Wellbeing

Your local council might be able to help if you need urgent help with money, food or fuel – contact the council for information.

<https://costofliving.campaign.gov.scot/>

News

UK is poorer as a country, says Michael Gove

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-your-money-65079792>

Number of people in poverty in UK back to pre-pandemic levels

<https://www.independent.co.uk/money/number-of-people-in-poverty-in-uk-back-to-prepandemic-levels-b2306575.html>

UK economy: When are you going to feel better off?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-65075966>

UK households ‘spent 12% more on essentials in February than year earlier’

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2023/mar/24/uk-households-spent-more-on-essentials-in-february-than-year-earlier>

Food banks supported 800,000 UK children in 2021-22, data shows

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/mar/23/uk-households-universal-credit-food-banks-covid>

Glasgow council poised to write off school meal debt

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-65064602>

Stalling wage growth since 2008 costs £11,000 a year, says think tank

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-64970708>

Veg shortages drive surprise jump in UK inflation

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-65026231>

UK interest rates: Another rise expected as prices soar

<https://www.bbc.com/news/business-57764601>

The ordinary Scots challenging poverty to shape policy

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65021897>

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Other New Publications

Big Help Out Toolkit

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/BHO-Toolkit-Final.pdf>

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Other News

Revitalising Trusts project tracks down millions for public benefit

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/news/revitalising-trusts-project-tracks-down-millions-for-public-benefit/>

Ramadan begins in UK as Muslims welcome holy month

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ramadan-fasting-muslims-iftar-time-b2305184.html>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

**** Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

Stage 1 evidence session, Social Justice and Social Security Committee

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/official-report/search-what-was-said-in-parliament/SJSS-16-03-2023?meeting=15211&iob=129731>

Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

UK Parliament

Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3257>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3263>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) (No.2) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3304>

Bill of Rights Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Housing Standards (Refugees and Asylum Seekers) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3264>

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3248>

Human Trafficking (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3249>

Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3282>

**** Illegal Migration Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3429>

Notice of amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0262/amend/illegal_migration_cwh_day_0327.pdf

Evidence session, Joint Committee on Human Rights

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12899/html/>

**** Immigration and Nationality Fees (Exemption for NHS Clinical Staff)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3436>

First Reading, House of Commons

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/C016D4F4-C6F4-442B-A441-C6EB81A04313/ImmigrationAndNationalityFees\(ExemptionForNHSClinicalStaff\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-20/debates/C016D4F4-C6F4-442B-A441-C6EB81A04313/ImmigrationAndNationalityFees(ExemptionForNHSClinicalStaff))

**** Online Safety Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/49991/documents/3203>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3164>

Scotland (Self-Determination) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3413>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

How the current refugee and asylum system affects refugees' integration into wider UK society (31 March 2023)

<https://refugeeintegrationuk.com/call-for-evidence/>

Illegal Migration Bill (closing date 6 April 2023)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/call-for-evidence/3085/>

Adult Disability Payment: Review of the mobility component (closing date 25 April 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/social-security/adult-disability-payment-review/>

Reforming the criminal law to address misogyny (closing date: 2 June 2023)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/reforming-criminal-law-address-misogyny-scottish-government-consultation/>

ITV/Tell MAMA survey on mosque safety in the UK (closing date not stated)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/V7V5B6L>

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Job Opportunities

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

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Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund 2023 – 2026

Application deadline 31 March 2023

Scottish Government funding to support projects and organisations to facilitate progress towards the priorities of [A Connected Scotland](#) (2018) strategy, and contribute to the recovery and reduction in societal harm associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, and mitigate the impact of the ongoing cost of living crisis. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3b8j98xa>

Ethnic Minority Development Fund

Application deadline 3 April 2023

National Lottery/CEMVO funding of between £500 and £20,000 for projects that bring ethnic minority people together and build strong relationships across communities, help more ethnic minority people to be the best they can be, or improve places and spaces that matter to ethnic minority communities. For information and to apply see <https://cemvoscotland.org.uk/emdf/>

People's Postcode Trust

*There will be three opportunities to apply for funding in 2023 but **each will only be open for 24 hours**. Applications can be submitted from:*

10am on 3 April 2023

10am on 3 July 2023

10 am on 2 October 2023

*Application forms will go live at the above dates and times and must be **started and submitted** within the submission window. In the meantime, a copy of the application questions can be downloaded in order to help you prepare your submission.*

National Lottery funding of between £500 and £25,000 for projects on a wide range of themes including supporting marginalised groups and tackling inequality. Funding priorities include communities experiencing racial inequity, people with disabilities, and the LGBT+ Community. For information and to apply see

<https://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/apply-for-a-grant/>

and

https://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/media/2724/3_ppt_fundingguide_2023.pdf

Cost-of-Living Support Scotland

Application deadline not stated

National Lottery funding from £10,001 to £75,000 for projects to help support individuals,

families and communities currently experiencing hardship as a result of the cost-of-living increases. The programme aims to fund activity that reduces the impact of, or prevents financial insecurity so that people have more resilience and are more able to identify ways to deal with the impact of increased cost of living in their lives, are able to shape activity in their community to address the increased cost-of-living, and have more access to support and services that will help them to deal with the increased cost of living. For information and to apply see

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/cost-of-living-support-fund>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

Safeguarding: managing risk and maintaining confidence

28 March 2023 (Online, 1.00–2.00)

SCVO webinar to help you understand how to ensure there are measures in place to protect beneficiaries, and others who come into contact with your organisation, from harm. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/5yhka9a3>

**** this week!**

Missing Migrant Children – lessons from the Kindertransport

29 March 2023 (online, 6.30)

Between November 1938 and September 1939, the UK's Kindertransport Scheme helped 10,000 Jewish children travel to Britain and escape the Holocaust. A voluntary scheme led by organisations including the Central British Fund for German Jewry (now known as World Jewish Relief) welcomed fleeing children and oversaw their welfare. If, during a world war, using paper records, one small charity could keep track of thousands of child refugees – why has the Home Office, with the available digital resources of today, lost contact with 200 vulnerable children seeking asylum? For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3d8bhb22>

The Big Help Out

8 May 2023 (UK-wide)

The Big Help Out will be a national day of volunteering on the Bank Holiday Monday of the King's Coronation weekend. For information see <https://thebighelpout.org.uk/> or contact margaret.starkie@volunteerscotland.org.uk

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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>

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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SCoJeC
Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



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



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



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

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