



MEMO is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities \(SCoJeC\)](#) in partnership with [BEMIS – empowering Scotland's ethnic and cultural minority communities](#). It provides an overview of information of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland, including parliamentary activity at Holyrood and Westminster, new publications, consultations, forthcoming conferences, and news reports.

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Note that some weblinks, particularly of newspaper articles, are only valid for a short period of time, usually around a month, and that the Scottish and UK Parliament and Government websites have been redesigned, so that links published in previous issues of MEMO may no longer work. To find archive material on these websites, copy details from MEMO into the relevant search facility.

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The Scottish Parliament will be in recess from 1 to 17 April 2023, and the UK Parliament will be in recess from 30 March to 17 April 2023.

The next issue of MEMO will be published on 24 April 2023.

Immigration and Asylum

UK Parliament Ministerial Statement

Hong Kong Veterans' Settlement Route

The Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick) [HCWS688] I am pleased to announce that, from autumn this year, eligible Hong Kong veterans of His Majesty's Forces and their families will be able to apply for settlement in the UK.

Many Hongkongers served in His Majesty's Forces throughout the 20th century, supporting

the administration of Hong Kong along with important military operations around the globe, including the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi forces in 1991. It is right that we continue to recognise this service and ensure that veterans from Hong Kong are placed on an equal footing with other members of His Majesty's Forces who were also stationed in the territory prior to the handover to China in 1997.

Successful applicants will be granted indefinite leave to enter, allowing them to live and work in the UK without restriction and putting them on a path to full British citizenship.

Further information about this settlement route and how to apply will be published on gov.uk in due course. The Government look forward to welcoming applications from those Hong Kong veterans and their families who wish to make the UK their home.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-29/debates/23032938000012/HongKongVeterans'SettlementRoute>

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

Illegal Migration Update

The Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick): Three months ago, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister set out a comprehensive plan to tackle illegal migration. We said we would act, and we have. We have increased immigration enforcement visits to their highest levels in recent years: since December, more than 3,500 enforcement visits have been carried out and more than 4,000 people with no right to be here have been removed. Anglo-French co-operation is now closer than ever before and will be deepened because of the deal struck by the Prime Minister earlier this month. We have expanded our partnership with Rwanda to include the relocation of all those who pass through safe countries to make illegal and dangerous journeys to the United Kingdom. Our modern slavery reforms, introduced in the Nationality and Borders Act 2022 to prevent those who seek to abuse our generosity from doing so, are bearing fruit. We are tackling the backlog in our asylum system by cutting unnecessary paperwork and simplifying country guidance. As a result, productivity has increased and we are on track to process the backlog of initial asylum decisions by the end of this year.

We must ensure that our laws enable us to deal with the global migration crisis, which is why we have brought forward the Illegal Migration Bill. The Bill goes further than any previous immigration legislation to fix the problem of small boats, while remaining within the boundaries of our treaty obligations. Of course, as we reform the asylum system, we will continue to honour our country-specific and global safe and legal commitments.

But we cannot and will not stop here, because illegal migration continues to impact the British public in their day-to-day lives. The sheer number of small boat arrivals has overwhelmed our asylum system and forced the Government to place asylum seekers in hotels. These hotels take valuable assets away from communities and place pressures on local public services. ...

The enduring solution to stop the boats is to take the actions outlined in our Bill, but in the meantime it is right that we act to correct the injustice of the current situation. ... Today, we are announcing a new funding package, which includes generous additional per-bed payments and continuation of the funding for every new dispersal bed available. We will also pilot an additional incentive payment where properties are made available faster.

However, faced with the scale of the challenge, we must fundamentally alter our posture towards those who enter our country illegally. This Government remain committed to meeting our legal obligations to those who would otherwise be destitute, but we are not prepared to go further. Accommodation for migrants should meet their essential living needs and nothing more, because we cannot risk becoming a magnet for the millions of people who are displaced and seeking better economic prospects. ...

I have said before that we have to suffuse our entire system with deterrence, and this must

include how we house illegal migrants. So today the Government are announcing the first tranche of sites we will set up to provide basic accommodation at scale. The Government will use military sites being disposed of in Essex and Lincolnshire and a separate site in East Sussex. These will be scaled up over the coming months and will collectively provide accommodation to several thousand asylum seekers through repurposed barrack blocks and portakabins. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister is showing leadership on this issue by bringing forward proposals to provide accommodation at the Catterick garrison barracks in his constituency. We also continue to explore the possibility of accommodating migrants in vessels, as they are in Scotland and in the Netherlands.

I want to be clear: these sites on their own will not end the use of hotels overnight. But alongside local dispersal and other forms of accommodation, which we will bring forward in due course, they will relieve pressure on our communities, and manage asylum seekers in a more appropriate and cost-effective way. ... Basic healthcare will be available, around-the-clock security will be provided on site and our providers will work closely with local police and other partners. ...

These sites are undoubtedly in the national interest. We have to deliver them if we are to stop the use of hotels. We have to deliver them to save the British public from spending eye-watering amounts on accommodating illegal migrants. And we have to deliver them to prevent a pull factor for economic migrants on the continent from taking hold. ...

Yvette Cooper (Labour): Today's statement is an admission of failure ... Four years ago, the Cabinet said that they would halve channel crossings; they have gone up twentyfold since then. A year ago, they said they would end hotel use; they have opened more than ever. ...

... we need to end costly and inappropriate hotel use, but these plans do not do that. The Minister has had to admit that, contrary to all the briefing in the papers this morning, they will not end hotel use—instead, these sites are additional. ...

The Bill makes things worse. There are no returns agreements with France or Europe. The Prime Minister has just said that the Home Secretary was wrong: the Rwanda flights will not start this summer. The Government have nowhere to send people to and, instead of speeding up asylum decisions, they are just going to cancel them, which means more people in asylum accommodation and hotels and more flimflam headlines that just do not stack up. ...

Can the Minister tell us: are these sites going to be additional and not instead of hotel use? Will he still be using more hotels, or fewer for asylum seekers in six months' time? On the 45,000 boat arrivals last year, can he confirm that more than 90% of decisions have not been taken because the backlog is still the Government's failure? ...

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... What we have laid out today is three months of intense work, which is seeing the backlog coming down; productivity rising; more sustainable forms of accommodation; a harder approach to make it difficult to live and work in the UK illegally; illegal working raids and visits rising by 50%; and greater control over the channel—all improvements as a result of the 10-point plan that the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary set out. ...

Edward Leigh (Conservative): Although the Minister did not mention RAF Scampton by name, we assume that that is the base in Lincolnshire to which he is referring. I can inform him that the moment that this is confirmed, the local authority of West Lindsey will issue an immediate judicial review and injunction against this thoroughly bad decision, which is based not on good governance, but on the politics of trying to do something. How can he guarantee that we will not lose £300 million-worth of regeneration, already agreed and signed, between West Lindsey and Scampton Holdings? How will he preserve the listed buildings and the heritage centre? How will he preserve the heritage of the Dambusters and of the Red Arrows? How can he guarantee that there is no contamination from the fuel bay of the Red Arrows? How will he protect the safety of 1,000 people living right next door to 1,500 migrants and a primary school? He cannot guarantee anything. ...

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... I can say to him that, while this policy is, without question, in the national interest, we understand the impact and concern that there will be within local communities. ... There will be a significant package of support for his constituents. There will be specific protections for the unique heritage on the site. We do not intend to make any use of the historic buildings. In our temporary use of the site, we intend to ensure that those heritage assets are enhanced and preserved. ...

Alison Thewliss (SNP): Well, Britain has historical form on the use of internment camps and it is despicable that this Government are intent on bringing them back in 2023. The Minister's pathetic attempt to draw comparisons with the use of cruise ships to accommodate Ukrainians is as offensive as it is misleading. ...

Scotland is standing down that emergency humanitarian response. ... Furthermore, the Scottish Government provided wraparound support for those cruise ships, with local government, NHS, schools and community integration. The Minister's plan is a prison ship designed as a deterrent.

Alex Wickham from Bloomberg reports that the Home Office rejected a similar plan last year as it would be even more expensive than the eye-wateringly expensive hotels plan, costing hundreds of thousands of pounds per hour. What has changed since that advice last year? ...

Does he understand that housing unaccompanied minors or traumatised people who have fled a warzone in military-style accommodation, considered unfit for the Ministry of Defence, would be gravely inappropriate, and will he give assurances that such individuals would be exempt from such measures?

The real problem is the backlog—we all know that—and the Home Office's inability to tackle it. The Minister knows that I have constituents waiting six months, 10 months, 14 months, 18 months, 20 months and more for a decision from the Home Office. When will he stop wasting money on headlines and instead tackle the real crisis and fix the backlog?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... As I said in my statement, we do see merits in using vessels. ...

With respect to families, we do not intend to put minors or families on these sites, but they are the right way forward for single adult males. We are making significant progress on the backlog ... our internal figures, unpublished as yet ... show that over 11,000 cases in the backlog have been processed in the last three months as a result of the new processes we have put in place. ...

Alistair Carmichael (Liberal Democrat): I think the House should be more generous to the Minister and acknowledge the true genius of this announcement. Only this Home Office team could think that the answer to the problem of growing numbers of people in small boats was to bring them all together and put them into one big boat. ... But if the Minister is confident in his projections about what is going to happen to the backlog of asylum applications, why is the extra capacity going to be necessary?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... we want to see anyone crossing the channel moved into this rudimentary accommodation immediately. That is why it is critical that we build national capacity so that we can clear the hotels, consign that policy to the history books and put people into larger sites. ...

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

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-29/debates/5C905292-65BA-4B59-9AB9-D41F52605895/IllegalMigrationUpdate>

Afghan Resettlement Update

The Minister for Veterans' Affairs (Johnny Mercer): It has now been over 18 months since the conclusion of Operation Pitting in Afghanistan, the biggest UK military evacuation in more than 70 years. That unprecedented mission enabled around 15,000 people to

leave Afghanistan and reach safety here in the UK. Since then, we have continued to welcome thousands more of those who loyally served alongside the UK armed forces, as well as those who stood up for British values such as democracy, women's rights and freedom of speech and vulnerable groups at risk in the region. To date, nearly 24,500 vulnerable people have been safely relocated to the UK from Afghanistan. ...

We owe a debt of gratitude to those people and in return our offer to them has been generous. We have ensured that all those relocated as a result of Op Pitting have fee-free indefinite leave to remain, giving them certainty about their status, entitlement to benefits and the right to work. Operation Warm Welcome has ensured all those relocated to the UK through safe and legal routes have been able to access the vital health, education and employment support they need to integrate into our society, including English language training for those who need it, the right to work and access to the benefits system.

Given the unprecedented speed and scale of the evacuation, we warmly welcomed our Afghan friends and eligible British nationals into hotel accommodation as a temporary solution until settled accommodation could be found. That ensured that all Afghans have been housed in safe and secure accommodation from the moment they arrived; it gave our Afghan friends peace of mind and allowed us to move quickly during an emergency.

However, bridging hotels are not, and were never designed to be, a permanent solution. While dedicated teams across central and local government, as well as partners in the voluntary and community sector, have ensured that more than 9,000 Afghans have been supported into settled homes, around 8,000 remain in hotel accommodation. Around half of that cohort are children and around half have been living in a hotel for more than one year.

My colleagues have indicated that that is an unacceptable and unsustainable situation. The Government share that view—I personally share that view—and the situation needs to change. Long-term residency in hotels has prevented some Afghans from properly putting down roots, committing to employment and integrating into communities, which creates uncertainty as they look to rebuild their lives in the United Kingdom long term.

Beyond the human cost, the financial cost to the UK taxpayer of hotel accommodation for the Afghan cohort now stands at £1 million per day. ...

I am today announcing the Government's intention to step up our support, to help resettled and relocated Afghans to access independent, settled accommodation and to end the use of hotel bridging accommodation for that cohort.

We will begin writing to individuals and families accommodated in Afghan bridging hotels at the end of April. They will be provided with at least three months' notice of when their access to bridging accommodation will end. That will crystallise a reasonable timeframe in the minds of our Afghan friends, with significant support from central and local government at every step as required, together with their existing access to welfare and the right to work, to find good, settled places to live in the longer term.

We remain unbowed in our commitment to those who supported us at great personal risk in Afghanistan. The debt we owe them is one borne by our nation as a whole. We also need to support those people we have brought to the UK as genuine refugees fleeing persecution. ...

That is why the Government are taking significant steps to honour and protect that group by providing increased support and funding to facilitate their transition into long-term settled accommodation. Trained staff, including Home Office liaison officers, Department for Work and Pensions work coaches, council staff and charities, will be based in hotels regularly to provide advice to Afghans, including information on how to rent in the private sector, help to find jobs and English language training. In addition, we will publish guidance for families on what support is available and how to access it.

We are announcing £35 million in new funding to enable local authorities to provide increased support for Afghan households to move from hotels into settled accommodation across England. The local authority housing fund will also be expanded by £250 million,

with the majority of the additional funding used to house Afghans currently in bridging accommodation and the rest used to ease existing homelessness pressures. ...

The measures represent a generous offer, and in return we expect families to help themselves. ... Where an offer of accommodation can be made and is turned down, another will now not be forthcoming. At a time when there are many pressures on the taxpayer and the housing market, it is not right that people can choose to stay in hotels when other perfectly suitable accommodation is available. ...

As well as ensuring that Afghans already in the UK can move into long-term accommodation, we will continue to honour the commitments we have made to bring people into the UK into sustainable non-hotel accommodation. ...

Welcoming people who come to the UK through safe and legal routes has always been, and will always be, a vital way in which the UK helps those in need. We are legislating to ensure our commitment to safe and legal routes in the Illegal Migration Bill, but the use of hotels to accommodate families for lengthy periods of time in the UK is not sustainable, or indeed appropriate, for anybody. ...

John Healey (Labour): ... this statement should be ... explaining why, 18 months after Afghan families were airlifted to the UK, 8,000 are still in temporary hotels and the backlog in processing cases has risen to 66,000. It should be ... explaining why it took nine months to open the alternative ACRS scheme and why, by the end of last year, just four people had been brought to safety in the UK since the fall of Kabul. It should be ... explaining why he has not required all council areas to play a part in discharging the national obligation we owe to these Afghans and their families. ...

As the Minister said, this nation promised those who put their lives at risk to serve alongside our armed forces in Afghanistan that we would relocate and settle them, give their families safety, and help them to rebuild their lives. ... Never mind Operation Warm Welcome, and never mind the warm words from the Minister today; he has confirmed that the Government are giving them the cold shoulder. He is serving eviction notices on 8,000 Afghans, half of whom are children, with no guarantee that they will be offered a suitable, settled place to live.

Let us nail a myth at the heart of this statement. The Minister said: "It is not right that people can choose to stay in hotels when other perfectly suitable accommodation is available."

The Government's website confirms that, at the end of last month, the number of Afghan households who had refused accommodation offers was just 258. They want homes, not hotels; they want to rebuild their lives; they want to contribute to this country—their new country—which has offered them refuge. ...

To date, how many ARAP and ACRS applicants have been rehoused in permanent homes? What is the current backlog in processing ARAP and ACRS cases? How many ARAP-eligible applicants remain in Afghanistan? Why, since November, have there been no flights carrying ARAP-eligible Afghans and their families from Pakistan? Have there been any more ARAP data breaches since the one in February 2022? How many hotels are still in use as temporary bridging accommodation for Afghan families? What consultation has there been with local authorities to identify the thousands of permanent homes that are still needed? Will Afghans who are still in hotels be given notice to quit only when a permanent home has been identified for them? How will decisions on eviction deadlines for individual hotels be determined? Who will make those decisions? Will the Minister guarantee today that none of those Afghans will be made homeless as a result of being moved on from the hotels in which they currently live? ...

Reply from Johnny Mercer: ... When it comes to giving Afghans in this country a cold shoulder, I would say that it is a pretty expensive cold shoulder, with the £285 million of new funding announced today. In terms of the number of people who have turned down homes, there is a significant proportion. The right hon. Gentleman mentioned the figure of 258, but it is higher than that now. ...

We reckon that about 4,300 entitled personnel remain in Afghanistan and want to

get over here, and 12,100 have arrived to date on the ARAP scheme. On the ACRS, we have promised 20,000. We have had 7,637 arrive through that scheme. ...

I accept that this is a difficult policy area; I accept that the track record on this policy area has been difficult. ... We are now doing our best to see through our strategic promises to the people of Afghanistan, and we will absolutely do that. We will strain every sinew to get people out of hotels and into the UK community, and unleash the wealth of veteran and voluntary support, which I know wants to welcome those people with open arms and make them feel part of the UK. ...

Alison Thewliss (SNP): ... hotel accommodation is not appropriate, particularly for families ... We know the consequences of people being kept in situations in which they are under severe stress. ... It is not clear whether any specific funding is coming to Scotland as part of this. England is specified, but Scotland is not. What communication has the Minister had with the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities on the issue in Scotland? ...

I was concerned by what the Minister said about offers being turned down and another offer not being forthcoming. Scottish housing legislation refers to a "reasonable" offer of accommodation, and that is important, because the accommodation being offered might not be appropriate for a family. There might be overcrowding; we know that there is a shortage of larger family homes. The accommodation might be far away from schools where children are currently being educated and from the community support that Afghan groups value so much. It might be far away from mosques and from shops that sell halal meat, for example. It should be a reasonable offer, rather than saying, "That's all you're getting" when an offer is rejected ...

Reply from Johnny Mercer: ... On the issue of balance and a fair and reasonable offer, nobody in this Government wants to make any of these individuals homeless. The truth is that we will have to balance very difficult competing priorities when individuals have been in hotels for a long period and may be in school or may have specific health needs, and a suitable offer is made elsewhere in the country but they do not want to leave that location. We will do everything we can to make sure that they can stay where they have local roots and so on, but that has to be balanced off. If there is a choice between them staying in a hotel in that area and going into suitable accommodation, I am afraid the priority will be to get them into suitable accommodation.

I recognise how this is going to be slated and tailored and all of the rest of it, but the truth is that we will do everything we can to take into account all those specific circumstances. The ambition is that nobody is homeless throughout this process, but we are going to implement our commitments to the people of Afghanistan. I do not make any bones about it and say that that is an easy thing to do, but we are going to throw everything we have at it, integrate these people into UK society, turn back on the flights and make sure we see through our duties to the people of Afghanistan. ...

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

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-28/debates/E45C9029-4DF0-4B5A-996D-59DDF0728050/AfghanResettlementUpdate>

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

Afghan Resettlement Update

[The statement made by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs in the House of Commons was read in the House of Lords.](#)

Lord Coaker (Labour): ... Let us start by reminding ourselves that our nation promised those who put their lives at risk to serve alongside our Armed Forces in Afghanistan that

we would relocate their families and give them help, as well as rebuild their lives. Our operations depended on courageous Afghan interpreters and guides, and we made commitments which we have a moral duty to accept and honour. Can the Minister explain why, 18 months after the airlifting of Afghan families to the UK, 8,000 people are still in hotels and thousands await processing in a backlog? ...

Can the Minister tell us why on earth the Ministry of Defence said that applicants to ARAP could come to the UK only if they had Taliban approval? Some 10 days after apologising for that error and committing to changes to its practice, what do we learn? An applicant under the other scheme, the Afghan citizens resettlement scheme, was told to retrieve documents from the Taliban or risk rejection. ...

To clarify figures mentioned in the other place in response to questions, how many Afghans brought over on these schemes have been permanently housed and how many remain in temporary accommodation? Johnny Mercer MP, the Minister in the other place, said that, under the ARAP scheme, 4,300 entitled personnel remain in Afghanistan. What is happening to them? On the ACRS, he said that we have promised 20,000 places and so far only 7,637 have arrived. What is happening to ensure that the Government achieve that figure given by the Minister? ...

If all is well, how on earth is it possible to read in today's paper that, under existing legislation, an Afghan pilot could be sent to Rwanda? Yes, he arrived on a small boat, but this Afghan pilot flew 30 combat missions against the Taliban on our behalf. Is it correct that somebody like that will face deportation? ...

Baroness Smith of Newnham (Liberal Democrat): ... The commitments of His Majesty's Government's under the ARAP and the ACRS are laudable but ... even on their own admission they are failing. ... In his Statement in the other place, Johnny Mercer kept stressing the government mantra about being open to those who come via safe and legal routes. If those people who are left behind in Afghanistan could get here via safe and legal routes, does anybody think they would still be in Afghanistan? ...

It is disappointing that His Majesty's Government seem to feel a need to focus on the people who are already here by saying that if they are in a hotel, they must move out. Of course nobody wants people to be stuck in hotels and it is wholly right that we should want to rehouse those people who are here as refugees, but Johnny Mercer's Statement almost seemed to suggest that people were staying in the Ritz—that somehow they are staying in such wonderful hotel accommodation that they decline suitable offers of accommodation. ...

Reply from the Minister of State, Cabinet Office (Baroness Neville-Rolfe): ... I am talking about measures we are taking to support these Afghan friends who have come via safe and legal routes into settled accommodation that will allow them to put down roots in communities and build the new lives that we want them to build in the UK. Since the start of Operation Pitting, the Government have welcomed over 24,500 vulnerable people to the UK from Afghanistan. Many of them, of course, put their lives at risk because they served alongside our Armed Forces. Due to the scale of the evacuation, while some of our friends were able to enter directly into settled accommodation, we warmly welcomed others into temporary hotels. This ensured that they had safe and secure accommodation when they arrived, but hotels were never designed to be a permanent solution ... Dedicated teams across central and local government have ... ensured that over 9,000 people have been supported into settled homes, and about 8,000 still remain in hotels. That has obviously prevented many of these Afghans properly integrating into communities and has cost £1 million to the taxpayer a day.

That is why we put together a new package of measures—it is a step change—to support those who have arrived, either under ARAP or under ACRS, and who remain in hotels. ... they have the right to work, they have entitlement to benefits from day one, and—this is perhaps the most important of all—trained staff will be

based in hotels and will provide support on the ground, including information on how to rent in the private sector and how to find jobs, and help with English language training. ...

To pick up the point about the Afghan pilot, the Prime Minister has promised to review his plight, and on Monday he asked the Home Office to look into the situation. I reiterate that we will honour our commitments to bring people to the UK who are eligible through the ARAP route. Those who are eligible should wait in a safe third country until they are granted leave.

On the point about the Taliban and documentation, this message does not reflect departmental policy. We do not expect Afghans eligible for resettlement under the ACRS to provide every document requested. We ask only that they provide the documentation which they are able to provide.

Finally, where we can make an offer, we will. This is for those who are here in the UK. If the offer is rejected, another will not be forthcoming because we want to move from the bridging position in hotels to getting our Afghan friends into communities and into proper jobs, and their children into permanent education. ...

Baroness McIntosh of Pickering (Conservative): ... Is the accommodation for Afghans going to be extended to other asylum seekers and refugees rather than the use of former military accommodation? ...

Reply from Baroness Neville-Rolfe: ... This is a separate issue. ...

Baroness Berridge (Conservative): The Statement refers to “perfectly suitable accommodation” being available. ... we know there is pressure on housing. Many people who are in work and trying to enter the private rented sector find that prices are enormous, while people who came to this country years ago as refugees and who have been naturalised as British citizens are still in the bidding process with local councils to get out of temporary accommodation and into proper social housing. The Minister has mentioned the private rented sector, but either there is not enough supply or landlords will not rent to people who are dependent on housing benefit, so where is this “perfectly suitable accommodation” going to be found? ...

Reply from Baroness Neville-Rolfe: ... I draw my noble friend’s attention to the UK-wide fund of £35 million that we are providing to local authorities and others to provide casework teams to support this move from hotels into settled accommodation. ... The £250 million housing fund is very flexible so it can be used, for example, if you need to knock two houses together to accommodate a family of 10, because some of the Afghan families who have come over are quite extensive. Secondly, those caseworkers will be sitting in the hotels. As the process starts, individuals will be written to but they will also have caseworkers in the hotels to help them find accommodation. ...

To read this long question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-30/debates/E166C7F1-AF74-41E9-B048-D1800A2F8254/AfghanResettlementUpdate>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Small Boat Crossings

Alexander Stafford (Conservative) [904364] What steps his Department is taking through the criminal justice system to deter small boat crossings of the English channel.

Reply from the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Dominic Raab): Under the Nationalities and Borders Act 2022, 162 people, including 34 small boat pilots, have been convicted, resulting in sentences totalling 108 years—legislation, of course, opposed by the Labour party.

Alexander Stafford: ... is my right hon. Friend aware of the concerns of many of my

constituents that illegal immigrants and their lefty London lawyers are seen to game the court system by relying on its sluggishness so that they can remain here indefinitely? What steps is he taking to boost capacity in the upper and first tier-tribunals ahead of the Illegal Migration Bill coming into force?

Reply from Dominic Raab: ...He is absolutely right. As part of the work I am doing with the Home Secretary, we are increasing the number of judges we are recruiting for the immigration and asylum chamber. That means 72 more judges for the first-tier tribunal and 50 more for the upper tribunal. We want appeals decided swiftly and decisively, so that we can clear the court system and also make sure we remove those who are not entitled to come here.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-28/debates/7A4A4FA1-8998-488C-BCE0-D1260AC0FE93/SmallBoatCrossings>

People Traffickers: Prosecutions

Wendy Chamberlain (Liberal Democrat) [904399] What steps she is taking to increase prosecution rates for (a) small boat gangs and (b) other people traffickers.

Reply from the Attorney General (Victoria Prentis): Last week I met the Minister for Immigration to discuss how we can increase the prosecution rate further for those who engage in this dangerous offending. I am pleased to report that there has been a significant increase in all immigration prosecutions since the end of June last year, with the CPS bringing 260 prosecutions and so far securing 164 convictions.

Wendy Chamberlain: Increasing prosecution rates is an important way of tackling people trafficking, but another is ensuring safe and legal routes for people seeking asylum. The all-party parliamentary group on Afghan women and girls, which I co-chair, has written to the Government looking for support for those very vulnerable groups. Does the Attorney General accept that her assessment for the Government of the Illegal Migration Bill might be better if safe and legal routes were progressed at the same time?

Reply from The Attorney General: ... The Government need to use every tool available to us to stop these dangerous crossings. One of those tools is prosecution, which is going well. Another tool is working closely with the French Government, and it is important to note that the French have prevented 31,000 crossings this year, which is nearly 50% up on this time last year.

Selaine Saxby (Conservative): The Government are working flat out to stop people smugglers from continuing their evil trade and to ensure that they are brought to justice. What assistance is the Crown Prosecution Service providing to investigators on small boat pilots and other people traffickers?

Reply from The Attorney General: The Crown Prosecution Service is working hard on these prosecutions and will not hesitate where people are suspected of immigration offences whenever the legal test is met. It is focusing on the pilots of small boats and also on disrupting the supply chains of people traffickers and organised crime gangs.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-30/debates/8012623E-148D-4AD9-9BD9-B25C0E034C68/PeopleTraffickersProsecutions>

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

Asylum: Rwanda

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [171428] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential implications for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda, and her

designation of Rwanda as a safe country for the purposes of that agreement, of recent reports of threats by the government of Rwanda to remove asylum seekers and refugees from that country to the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Stephen Kinnock (Labour) [171429] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential implications for the Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda, and her designation of Rwanda as a safe country for the purposes of that agreement, of provisions in the extradition treaty recently agreed by the governments of Rwanda and Mozambique in relation to the potential return of asylum seekers and refugees from Mozambique to Rwanda.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Rwanda is a State Party to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the seven core UN Human Rights Conventions and has been recognised globally for its record in welcoming and integrating migrants and refugees. Our own comprehensive assessment as set out in the relevant country policy and information notes (CPINs) Rwanda is a safe and secure country. Our CPINs are kept under constant review and updated periodically on the Gov.uk website. Any decision to relocate a person to Rwanda will be made on a case-by-case basis and take into account their individual circumstances and relevant country information.

Safeguards and assurances were considered throughout the development of the Migration and Economic Development Partnership between the UK and Rwanda, and have been included in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). An independent Monitoring Committee will monitor the entire relocation process and compliance with assurances in the Memorandum of Understanding, including the processing of asylum claims and provision of support in Rwanda.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171428>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171429>

The Memorandum of Understanding referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/memorandum-of-understanding-mou-between-the-uk-and-rwanda/memorandum-of-understanding-between-the-government-of-the-united-kingdom-of-great-britain-and-northern-ireland-and-the-government-of-the-republic-of-rwanda>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer: Channel Migrants

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Charlotte Nichols (Labour) [175701] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants in small boats have been prevented from sailing across the Channel in the last 12 months.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: These crossings are dangerous, illegal and unnecessary, and the UK Government works closely with the French to prevent them from happening wherever possible. In the past 12 months, nearly 33,000 crossing attempts have been prevented as a result of our joint work.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-28/175701>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Afghanistan: Refugees

John Healey (Labour) [169188] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what the total

number of decisions taken on applications through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme was since its establishment on 1 April 2021.

Reply from James Heappey: As of 20 March 2023, decisions have been reached on approximately 21,010 unique applications since the start of the ARAP scheme. Of these unique applications, approximately 3,393 were found eligible and 17,617 were ineligible. All figures provided are from a live database and are subject to change.

Applicants to the ARAP scheme often submit multiple applications, so reaching a decision on one unique application closes other open applications submitted by the same applicant.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169188>

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>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Jessica Morden (Labour) [174250] To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of extending eligibility for the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy to Afghan (a) special forces personnel and (b) fighter pilots trained by UK Armed Forces who face risks of reprisal in Afghanistan.

Reply from James Heappey: There are no plans to widen the ARAP criteria, which is more generous than previous Afghan relocation schemes. Furthermore, the provisions requested by the hon. Member in her question are already catered for by the ARAP scheme under Category 4. This category provides for eligibility to be granted on a case-by-case basis to Afghan nationals who worked in Afghanistan alongside a UK Government Department, or in partnership with or closely supporting and assisting that Department; alongside consideration, amongst other criteria, of the contribution an individual made to UK objectives and the threat they are now under. The full criteria are publicly available at:

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

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174250>

Visas: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [174304] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it is her Department's policy that Afghans eligible for visas under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy scheme must have secured accommodation in the UK secured before leaving Pakistan; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The cost of accommodating those resettling under the ACRS or ARAP, whilst they await permanent accommodation, is estimated at £1 million a day. We don't want to see Afghan families in temporary accommodation for any longer than is necessary – and we have been working as fast as possible to support Afghan families into homes of their own, so that they can settle into their local communities, feel safe and independent and rebuild their lives in the UK.

The Prime Minister's statement on illegal migration on 13 December 2022 set out his ambition to end the use of hotels as temporary accommodation. We continue to work with partners to secure sufficient suitable accommodation for new arrivals.

We will also arrange travel for any beneficiaries under the ACRS or ARAP who can be supported to arrange their own accommodation in the UK ahead of arrival.

The Government is working with c.350 local authorities across the UK, to meet the demand for housing. Over 9,000 people have been supported into settled accommodation (This breaks down as c.8,500 moved into homes with an additional c.500 matched but not yet moved).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174304>

The statement referred to above can be read at

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

Refugees: Afghanistan

Deidre Brock (SNP) [171431] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the response to the Answer of 17 March 2023 to Question 162216 on Refugees: Afghanistan, whether her Department has set a target date for providing people with further information on how they can be reunited with their family members.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government remains committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan. However, the situation is complex and presents significant challenges, including how those who are eligible for resettlement in the UK can leave the country. This includes eligible immediate family members of those being resettled under the ACRS.

For those evacuated from Afghanistan under the ACRS without their immediate family members, further information will be made available in due course about options for reuniting with them. We are unable to provide a target date at this time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171431>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/162216>

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 and Ukraine

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [172412] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, which councils have received new funding to house refugees from (a) Ukraine and (b) Afghanistan; and how many refugees his Department plans to support with this funding.

Reply from Felicity Buchan: We are announcing £35 million of new funding to enable local authorities to provide increased support for Afghan households to move from hotels into settled accommodation.

Further to the announcement made earlier today, the Department for Levelling Up is expanding the Local Authority Housing Fund for England with an additional £250 million, primarily targeted at Afghan arrivals. This is in addition to the £500 million already allocated to support areas with the highest existing housing pressures and those that are facing the most significant housing pressures as a result of the recent Ukrainian arrivals.

Where sponsorships can no longer continue for the financial year 2023/24, all councils will receive help to house Ukrainians through a one-off pot of government funding worth £150 million.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-23/172412>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Dan Jarvis (Labour) [172408] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether it has been the policy of her Department to place people who were relocated to the UK through the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy into hotel bridging accommodation in the period since 23 March 2022.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The use of hotels to accommodate those we are relocating and resettling from Afghanistan under both the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy (ARAP) and the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) is a temporary solution. We do not want to see Afghan families in temporary

accommodation for any longer than is absolutely necessary. We continue to work at pace with over 350 local authorities to find appropriate long-term accommodation for them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-23/172408>

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

Luke Pollard (Labour Co-op) [170730] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 6 March 2023 to Question 152302 on Refugees: Afghanistan, how many Afghan citizens are living in temporary accommodation in the UK; and how many and what proportion of these are children.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: 9,483 people, around half of whom are children, are currently living in hotel or serviced accommodation. This figure changes frequently as new arrivals enter the UK and others move into settled accommodation.

The above is the best available operational data, as of 31st December 2022.

More information on those that we are temporarily accommodating in hotels can be viewed at: [Afghan Resettlement Programme: operational data](#).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170730>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-02-24/152302>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [175603] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department has identified alternative accommodation for Afghan refugees who are due to leave hotel accommodation by the end of the 2023.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government is working with local authorities across the UK to meet the demand for housing. Over 9,000 Afghans under our ACRS and ARAP pathways [please check this] have been supported into settled accommodation.

Hotels are not suitable for long-term accommodation, and we want to support people to rebuild their lives in the UK so that they can enjoy the freedoms of independent living and integrate into society. Supporting them to move into long-term more suitable accommodation is critical in achieving this.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-28/175603>

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>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Ukraine

The following four questions all received the same answer

Visas: Ukraine

Deidre Brock (SNP) [168057] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of automatically extending visas for

people in the UK under the (a) Homes for Ukraine, (b) Ukrainian Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme, if the war in Ukraine continues.

Deidre Brock (SNP) [168058] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending visas under the (a) Homes for Ukraine scheme, (b) Ukrainian Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme beyond the initial three-year period.

Deidre Brock (SNP) [168059] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of extending visas under the (a) Homes for Ukraine scheme, (b) Ukrainian Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme for people who enter (i) further and (ii) higher education.

Deidre Brock (SNP) [168060] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to provide assurance to those people in the UK under the (a) Homes for Ukraine scheme, (b) Ukrainian Family Scheme and (c) Ukraine Extension Scheme on the longer-term status of their visa; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: In response to Putin's barbaric invasion of Ukraine, we launched one of the fastest and biggest visa schemes in UK history, with over 220,000 visas issued under Ukraine Schemes; 67,000 through the Ukraine Family Scheme and 156,000 through the Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme.

We firmly believe that Ukraine will be safe again and we will continue to support the Ukrainian Government for as long as is necessary in their efforts against Putin.

The Government of Ukraine has been clear that it needs citizens to return to Ukraine when it is safe to do so, to help rebuild the country.

Therefore, our approach has been to provide Ukrainians with access to a three-year visa for temporary sanctuary in the UK, providing them with certainty and stability while they are here, to settle into jobs, schooling and accommodation.

Of course, we keep any future need for an extension of leave in the UK under review, in line with developments of the situation in Ukraine.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-17/168057>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-17/168058>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-17/168059>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-17/168060>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme, Homes for Ukraine Scheme, and Ukraine Extension Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members>

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Paula Barker (Labour) [169421] To ask the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, whether his Department has made an estimate of the number of Ukrainian households admitted under the Homes for Ukraine scheme at risk of homelessness in each of the next two years.

Reply from Felicity Buchan: We want to avoid households becoming homeless wherever possible. Local authorities provide a statutory safety net Ukrainian households can access if they need help.

Government is monitoring the number of Ukrainian households seeking homelessness assistance through our management information, which is published monthly on gov.uk [here](#).

To help prevent homelessness, we have announced £150 million for councils across the UK, as well as a £500 million Local Authority Housing Fund in England

to help house Ukrainians. This is on top of the £2 billion in funding Government is spending over three years to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in England.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169421>

Information about the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

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

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

Immigration

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [168039] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it remains her Department's policy to reduce net migration to the tens of thousands.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: As the Prime Minister has said, the Government remains committed to reducing net migration over time, while ensuring we have the skills our economy needs to grow. The Government continues to keep the immigration system under review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-17/168039>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Refugees

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [170721] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how her Department plans to determine the level of the annual cap on the number of refugees who will be allowed to settle in the UK.

Marsha De Cordova (Labour) [170722] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to consult with organisations representing refugees and asylum seekers when determining the level of the annual cap on the number of refugees who will be allowed to settle in the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: As the Home Secretary set out in her 7 March 2023 statement, the Illegal Migration Bill will introduce an annual cap, to be agreed by Parliament, on the number of refugees the UK will resettle via safe and legal routes. This cap will be amendable in response to humanitarian emergencies, and, in setting the cap, we will engage with local authorities to determine their capacity to accommodate and support individuals.

Our intention, as outlined in the Bill, is to engage with relevant organisations as necessary to understand the UK's capacity to accommodate and support those who arrive on safe and legal routes. The annual cap pertains exclusively to safe and legal routes and does not apply to asylum seekers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170721>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170722>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-07/debates/87B621A3-050D-4B27-A655-2EDD4AAE6481/IllegalMigrationBill>

Refugees: English Language

Tobias Ellwood (Conservative) [172357] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she is taking steps with Cabinet colleagues to help refugees learn English.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We know that language skills are crucial to help people integrate into life in England, as well as to break down barriers to work and

career progression.

The Department for Education funds English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) through the Adult Education Budget (AEB). Refugees and those granted humanitarian protection are eligible for full funding for ESOL through the AEB if they are unemployed and looking for work.

The Home Office provides funding to local authorities to support resettlement and integration costs for those who arrive through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme and the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy. In the first year this includes £850 per adult to cover additional English language provision.

We have also invested in a number of ways to improve English language provision for refugees, including providing £1.8mn in 2022/23 to support additional childcare so that refugees resettled to the UK (the UKRS) can access ESOL lessons; and £360,000 to improve regional coordination of ESOL for refugees.

The government is committed to offering an enhanced integration package for refugees arriving through safe and legal routes, to help them integrate and become self-sufficient more quickly. This will be delivered in England through the Refugee Employability Programme (REP), which has three key pillars: tailored employment support, integration support and English language training. More information about the Refugee Employability Programme can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/refugee-employability-programme/refugee-employability-programme-policy-statement>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-23/172357>

Asylum: Employment

Cat Smith (Labour) [170642] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of allowing asylum seekers to work on (a) the economy and (b) the level of job vacancies.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Asylum seekers are allowed to work in the UK if their claim has been outstanding for 12 months or more, through no fault of their own.

Those permitted to work are restricted to jobs on the Shortage Occupation List.

A review of the policy concluded in December 2021 and there will be no changes to the policy at this time.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170642>

Restart Scheme: Refugees

Rachael Maskell (Labour Co-op) [173035] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether refugees can be placed on the Restart scheme.

Reply from Guy Opperman: To be eligible for a referral to the Restart Scheme, claimants must be of working age, have the right to work in the UK and live in England or Wales. Once refugees are granted Refugee Status, they may be able to apply for benefits such as Universal Credit and in turn to access Universal Credit employment programmes including the Restart Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-24/173035>

Undocumented Workers: Convictions

Stephen Farry (Alliance) [169506] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many people have been convicted of the offence of illegal working under Section 34 of the Immigration Act 2016 since the introduction of that offence.

Reply from Edward Argar: The Ministry of Justice publishes information on the number convictions between 2017 and 2021, for the offence of illegal working 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/2023-03-20/169506>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Immigration: Applications

Martyn Day (SNP) [170674] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to accept requests to expedite Further Leave To Remain (Family and Private Life) applications where financial hardship can be evidenced.

Martyn Day (SNP) [170675] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make it her policy to accept requests to expedite Further Leave To Remain (Family and Private Life) applications where disruption to education or training can be evidenced.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Requests can be made to the Home Office to expedite Family and Private Life applications. This does not mean the request will be accepted, only in the most compelling or compassionate circumstances will an application be expedited.

Expedite requests should be accompanied with supporting evidence. Home Office staff will consider any expedite requests on their individual merits.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170674>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170675>

Visas: British National (Overseas)

Gavin Robinson (DUP) [173026] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether people who are granted Leave To Enter under a British National Overseas Visa are entitled to get married in the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Holders of a Hong Kong British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa who are already in the UK can get married in the UK. Information about marriages and immigration status in England and Wales is available here: Marriages and civil partnerships in England and Wales: If you or your partner are from outside the UK or Ireland - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). Marriages in Scotland and Northern Ireland are a matter for the devolved administrations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-24/173026>

Information about the BN(O) visa, referred to above, can be read at

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

Visas: Rohingya

Anum Qaisar (SNP) [169505] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of introducing a visa scheme for Rohingya people to relocate to the UK.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The UK already welcomes refugees and people in need through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Community Sponsorship, the Mandate Resettlement Scheme Under these schemes, refugees are assessed and referred by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) according to their submissions criteria, which are based on at-risk people's needs and vulnerabilities. In addition to this, the Government provides a safe and legal route to bring families together through its refugee family reunion policy. 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. This allows immediate family members as defined in the Immigration Rules of those granted protection in the UK to join them here, if they formed part of the family unit before the sponsor fled their country.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169505>

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [173073] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an estimate of the cost to claimants of applying for compensation under the Windrush compensation scheme; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We have designed the Windrush Compensation Scheme to be as clear and simple as possible; the Home Office does not charge claimants to apply for compensation under the Scheme.

The claim forms and guidance can either be requested as a hard-copy or downloaded for free from GOV.UK: [Windrush Compensation Scheme: claim forms and guidance](#).

Once the claim form has been completed, it can either be posted to the Scheme's freepost address or it can be emailed to the Scheme for free.

Our claimant assistance provider, We Are Digital provides free impartial advice and support with completing a claim form. The Windrush Help Team also assists individuals should they have questions about the claim form or process.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-24/173073>

Asylum

Derek Twigg (Labour) [174222] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers have been placed in each (a) constituency and (b) English local authority area in each month since 1 April 2022.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The latest published Immigration Statistics detail the number of asylum seekers accommodated in each local authority area. These statistics can be found at

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

Data is published on a quarterly basis, with the latest information published 23 February 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174222>

Asylum: Interviews

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [174312] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applications for asylum from people who applied before July 2022 from (a) Afghanistan, (b) Eritrea, (c) Libya, (d) Syria and (e) Yemen her Department plans to consider without a face-to-face interview.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Prime Minister pledged to clear the backlog of the 92,601 initial asylum decisions relating to claims made before 28 June 2022 ("legacy claims") by the end of 2023. From 23 February, legacy claims from nationals of Afghanistan, Eritrea, Libya, Syria and Yemen will normally be considered through the Streamlined Asylum Process.

Questionnaires have been issued to claimants in scope who have not yet been substantively interviewed. Where further information is required after the questionnaire is returned we will conduct an additional interview to obtain the necessary information as is current practice.

All claimants have a face-to-face interview when they register their asylum claim. At this stage they also provide their biometric information to enable the Home Office to conduct identity and security checks.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174312>

Asylum: Questionnaires

Amy Callaghan (SNP) [169487] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make an assessment of the adequacy of the accessibility of (a) translators, (b)

legal representatives and (c) other support networks for people completing the asylum questionnaire within the 20-day period.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Streamlined Asylum Process is one way in which we will clear the backlog and policy guidance on this was published on 23 February 2023 [Streamlined asylum processing](#).

The asylum claim questionnaires are in English as is generally the case for immigration paperwork across the Department. If necessary, claimants can utilise legal representatives who can complete the questionnaire on their behalf. All asylum seekers are entitled to legal representation to support them, including with translation, through legal aid. Advice on obtaining a legal representative can be found on [Find an immigration adviser: Search for an adviser](#). For those who are unable to return the questionnaire within 20 working days, a reminder will be sent to the claimant allowing a further 10-working days to complete and return it to the Home Office. A further extension can be requested where the timeframe cannot be met, for example because the claimant has serious medical conditions which is impacting their ability to respond to the questionnaire.

The intention of these questionnaires is to enable claimants to provide any further information about their claims after their initial screening interview upon arrival.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-20/169487>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre: Legal Aid Scheme

Kate Osborne (Labour) [171569] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Detained Duty Advice Scheme surgeries took place (a) in total and (b) in person at Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre from (i) 28 December 2021 and 30 June 2022 and (ii) 1 July 2022 to date.

Kate Osborne (Labour) [171570] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many women in Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre have been provided advice via a Detained Duty Advice Scheme surgery between (a) 28 December 2021 and 30 June 2022 and (b) since 1 July 2022; and what proportion of those women have been provided with advice via an in-person surgery.

Kate Osborne (Labour) [171571] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many women in Derwentside Immigration Removal Centre have been signed up via the legal help scheme following a Detained Duty Advice Scheme surgery (a) between 28 December 2021 and 30 June 2022 and (b) since 1 July 2022; and what proportion of those women had further in-person attendances with a firm on the DDAS rota following an advice surgery.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Legal Aid Agency (LAA) operates free legal advice surgeries in immigration removal centres (IRCs) in England under the Detained Duty Advice Scheme (DDAS). Individuals who are detained are entitled to receive up to 30 minutes of advice regardless of financial eligibility or the merits of their case. There is no restriction on the number of surgeries an individual may attend. If an individual who is detained requires substantive advice on a matter which is in scope of legal aid, full legal advice can be provided if the statutory legal aid means and merits criteria are met.

From Monday 3 April 2023 all DDAS appointments will be facilitated in-person.

Individuals detained in IRCs can also access privately commissioned legal advice, including legally aided advice provided through means other than the DDAS.

Data on the number of women who have signed up via the legal help scheme following a DDAS surgery, and the proportion of those women who had further in-person appointments with a firm on the DDAS rota following an advice surgery, is not held centrally and therefore cannot be provided.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171569>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171570>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-22/171571>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Hong Kong Military Veterans: Settlement

Lord Craig of Radley (Crossbench): To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Murray of Blidworth on 22 January (HL4546), when they will decide whether to grant Hong Kong military service veterans entitlement to British citizens passports and right of abode in the United Kingdom.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Sharpe of Epsom): My Lords, I am pleased to confirm that, from this autumn, eligible Hong Kong veterans and family members will be able to apply for settlement. Settlement allows people to live and work in the United Kingdom without restriction. They would then be able to apply to naturalise as British citizens after living in the UK for five years. ...

Lord Craig of Radley: ... Does the Minister recall that this issue was first raised in January 1986, over 37 years ago?

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... Of course, in 1997, 50,000 heads of household and their families were granted British citizenship. ...

Lord Coaker (Labour): ... As we go forward, will the Government ensure that we can have clarity in the statement around terms such as "eligibility" and "families"?

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: ... I guarantee that we will commit to providing the clarity he seeks in due course. ...

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-29/debates/9701452D-1825-497E-8DC9-34FC0138718A/HongKongMilitaryVeteransSettlement>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4546>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer: Afghanistan

Refugees: Afghanistan

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL6518] To ask His Majesty's Government how many of the 22 individuals granted resettlement through the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme Pathway 2 in 2022 are currently residing in the UK.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: We are pleased to have now welcomed the first arrivals to the UK under ACRS Pathway 2, and we will continue to welcome many more people as we receive further UNHCR referrals.

At 23 February 2023, we have brought c.24,500 Afghans to safety in the UK. More information on arrivals can be viewed at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

All the 22 individuals granted resettlement through ACRS2 are residing in the UK – under pathway 2 individuals are granted leave once they arrive in the UK.

Statistics on individuals resettled or relocated under the Afghan schemes is available in the [Immigration System Statistics, year ending December 2022](#) release. (NB. Data correct as of 31st December 2022 and was released 23rd February 2023).

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6518>

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

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

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Ukraine

Refugees: Ukraine

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL6515] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost of providing the same monthly 'thank you' payments to those hosting people who arrived in the UK through the Ukraine Family Scheme as are provided to hosts on the Homes for Ukraine scheme.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Ukrainian nationals coming to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme are given access to work, benefits and public services as laid down in Appendix Ukraine to the Immigration Rules, details of which can be found at:

[Immigration Rules - Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine Scheme - Guidance](#)

Those sponsoring under the Ukraine Family Scheme are not required to provide accommodation.

Therefore, the Government has not extended the £350 per month 'thank you' payment offered to those who are willing to offer a home to refugees arriving in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine and Super Sponsor Schemes to those sponsoring under the Ukraine Family Scheme.

Sponsoring family members able to provide appropriate accommodation can choose to sponsor their family members under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme in order to become eligible for the 'thank you' payment. They must undergo all the relevant local authority checks before their family member arrives in the UK

The conditions attached to both Ukraine Scheme visas are identical in terms of length of permission to stay, entitlements to work and access to public funds. Local authorities also have flexibility as to how they use the £150 million funding for the Homes for Ukraine scheme to support Ukrainians on the Ukraine Family Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6515>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members>

Refugees: Ukraine

Lord Blunkett (Labour) [HL6294] To ask His Majesty's Government what facility they provide for sibling family reunion in the UK for long-term residents of Ukraine who do not have Ukrainian citizenship, and who are therefore not entitled to nomination by the UNHCR under present arrangements for refugees from that country, in circumstances where the individual has fled to a third country.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Non-Ukrainian nationals who were resident in Ukraine prior to the invasion are eligible for the Ukraine Family Scheme or Homes for Ukraine Scheme if they are the immediate family members of Ukrainians who are also benefiting from those schemes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-09/hl6294>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

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

Migrants

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrt) [HL6476] To ask His Majesty's Government how many people came to the UK each year from 2002 to 2022 on migration grounds, excluding those seeking asylum.

Reply from Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority. ...

In your question, you refer to “those seeking asylum”, which we will take as synonymous with ‘asylum seekers’. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produces tables on long-term international migration (LTIM). Table 1.01¹ details the components and adjustments used to produce our LTIM estimates from 1991 to 2019 (inclusive). One of these adjustments is the ‘asylum seeker adjustment’ based on Home Office data on asylum seekers and their dependants and, from January 2013, on enforced removals of migrants who have never claimed asylum. Using the data from table 1.01, we can provide the following estimates of those who immigrated to the UK excluding asylum seekers, for years 2002 to 2019 (inclusive) in Table 1.

From the period June 2020 onwards, we are unable to state the proportion of total inflow that comprises those seeking asylum. This is because while our estimates include those who arrive in the UK and subsequently apply for asylum, we currently are not able to measure these people as a separate component. We are conducting research and updating our methods with an aim to include a component measuring asylum in our May 2023 migration release. Please see our *International migration research, progress update: November 2022 publication*² (section 4: ‘Irregular migration’) to find more information.

As a guide, please see table 2 for our estimates for long-term international immigration to the UK for years ending June 2020 to June 2022 (inclusive). These figures are based on our long-term international migration estimates, year ending June 2022 (provisional)³. These estimates include those who arrive in the UK on a visa and subsequently apply for asylum, but do not include all other asylum seekers.

Table 1: Total estimated inflow, asylum seeker adjustment, and estimated inflow less asylum seekers adjustment for 2002 to 2019 (inclusive)

Year	Values in thousands			
	Total estimated inflow	+/-CI	Asylum Seekers Adjustment, all (see note 8, copied below)	Total estimated inflow excl. asylum seeker adjustment
2002	515.8	32.1	95.9	419.9
2003	511	32.6	53.6	457.4
2004	589	40.2	36.5	552.5
2005	566.7	37.5	26.2	540.5
2006	596	39	23.5	572.5
2007	573.8	39.5	22.8	551
2008	590.2	39.5	26.8	563.4

2009	566.5	30	25.2	541.3
2010	590.9	30.8	19	571.9
2011	566	28	20.4	545.6
2012	498	27.4	22.3	475.7
2013	526	29.2	24.2	501.8
2014	632	36.5	25.8	606.2
2015	631.5	32.6	33.6	597.9
2016	589	34.4	35.3	553.7
2017	644.2	39.8	30.7	613.5
2018	604	41.5	34.5	569.5
2019	680.9	44.6	41.8	639.1

Source: Office for National Statistics

Table 2: Total estimated inflow to the UK for years 2020 to 2022 (inclusive)

Period (year ending)	Total estimated inflow (thousands)
June 2020	711
June 2021	629
June 2022 (provisional)	1,064

Source: Office for National Statistics

When accessing any of our files, you may find it useful to familiarise yourself with the 'notes, terms and conditions' section contained within them for your information.

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/datasets/longterminternationalmigrationcomponentsandadjustmentstable101>

² <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/internationalmigrationresearchprogressupdate/november2022>

³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6476>

Undocumented Migrants: Legal Aid Scheme and Legal Opinion

Alex Cunningham (Labour) [174287] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that people entering the UK by irregular means in the future will be able to access both legal advice and legal aid in a timely manner before they are removed.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: People subject to the duty to remove under the Illegal Migration Bill will have access to means and merits-free legal advice before they are removed from the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174287>

Asylum

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat) [HL6475] To ask His Majesty's Government how many people came to the UK seeking asylum for each year from 2002 to 2022; and of those, how many were granted asylum.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes data on asylum in the '[Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release](#)' on GOV.uk. Data on outcomes of asylum applications raised in specific years can be found in table Asy_D04 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)' on GOV.uk. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks.

The latest data relate to 2021 and are accurate as of June 2022. An update to this table will be published in August 2023, which will include data for 2022. Information

on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)' on GOV.uk.

[table Asy_D04](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6475>

Visas

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat) [HL6477] To ask His Majesty's Government how many people entered the UK legally on a visa each year from 2015 to 2022; and of those, how many have remained in the UK illegally by overstaying their visa.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes data on entry clearance visas in the '[Immigration System Statistics quarterly release](#)'. Data on visas granted are published in table Vis_D02 of the '[Entry clearance visa applications and outcomes](#)' detailed datasets. Information on how to use the dataset can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to Q4 (October to December) 2022. Additionally, the Home Office publishes a high-level overview of the data in the '[Entry clearance visas summary tables](#)'. The 'contents' sheet contains an overview of all available data on visas.

Please note that the published Home Office entry clearance visa statistics show the number of visa applications and outcomes, but this may not necessarily equal the total number of individuals arriving in the UK on visas (for example, some visas may be unused, or some individuals may apply for more than one visa in a given period). The Home Office also publishes data on the number of instances of individuals either departing late or having no record of departure against their leave in the published '[Reports on statistics relating to exit checks](#)', with the latest data relating to the year ending March 2020. Please note, the data cannot tell us the number of 'overstayers' as some people may have departed on time but not been picked up in the data (for example those leaving the UK via the Common Travel Area from the UK to Ireland).

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

[table Vis_D02](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6477>

Asylum

Lord Strasburger (Liberal Democrat) [HL6423] To ask His Majesty's Government what are the legal routes to the UK for citizens of Somalia, Syria, Iran, Iraq, Eritrea, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Myanmar or the Democratic Republic of the Congo who are applying for asylum.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The UK does not accept asylum claims from abroad. Whilst we sympathise with people in many difficult situations around the world, we are 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 which is the fastest route to safety, in line with the 1951 UN Convention.

Our resettlement schemes have provided safe and legal routes for tens of thousands of people including global schemes to start new lives in the UK. The UK welcomes people from all over the world through the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), Mandate Resettlement Scheme, Community Sponsorship as well as country specific routes such as Afghan Citizens' Resettlement Scheme as well as Ukraine and BNO schemes. This commitment, alongside a fair and firm asylum system, will ensure we continue to offer safe and legal routes to the UK for those in need of protection.

There are additional global safe and legal routes for people to come to the UK

should they wish to join family members here, work or study. They would need to meet the requirements of the relevant Immigration Rule under which they were applying to qualify for a visa. Details about the criteria and how to apply are available on GOV.UK at: <http://www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa>.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-13/hl6423>

Refugees: Resettlement

The Lord Bishop of Durham [HL6519] To ask His Majesty's Government which countries the 887 refugees who were granted resettlement through the UK Resettlement Scheme in 2022 come from.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes data on resettlement in the 'Immigration System Statistics Quarterly Release' on GOV.uk. Data on refugees resettled under the UK Resettlement Scheme by nationality and host country can be found in table Asy_D02 of the '[asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#)' on GOV.uk. Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbooks. The latest data relate to the year ending December 2022.

The top 5 nationalities resettled under the UK Resettlement Scheme in 2022 were Syria, Sudan, Iraq, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The top 5 host countries where refugees were identified as requiring resettlement by the UNHCR in 2022 were Egypt, Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan, and Iraq.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6519>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Hong Kong

Lord Tyrie (Non-affiliated) [HL6490] To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers from Hong Kong have been waiting for their case to be processed for longer than (1) six months, (2) one year, and (3) 18 months.

Lord Tyrie (Non-affiliated) [HL6493] To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of Hong Kong asylum seekers are in temporary accommodation; and what proportion of those have no access to Wi-Fi.

Asylum: Applications

Lord Tyrie (Non-affiliated) [HL6492] To ask His Majesty's Government how many asylum applications were processed from individuals from (1) Hong Kong, (2) Ukraine, and (3) Afghanistan, in the past 12 months.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: As of 10/03/2023, there are 52 Asylum Seekers in the Asylum Support Scheme with a Hong Kong nationality out of a total 108,700 Asylum Seekers. 22 of these 52 are currently in temporary accommodation.

All service users are entitled to access Wi-Fi wherever it is available with no restrictions placed on them accessing these services by the Home Office.

In 2022, 17 initial decisions were made on applications from Hong Kong nationals, 4 initial decisions were made on applications from Ukrainian nationals and 1,842 initial decisions were made on applications from Afghanistan nationals.

As at 31 Dec 2022, 115 Hong Kong nationals had been awaiting an initial decision for more than 6 months while 11 had been waiting 6 months or less (main applicants only). Please note that any further breakdowns in wait time are not published.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6490>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6493>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-14/hl6492>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Asylum: Children

Lord Touhig (Labour) [HL6549] To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have sought legal advice on the powers of the Home Office to place unaccompanied migrant children in hotels.

Lord Touhig (Labour) [HL6551] To ask His Majesty's Government what criteria they use to decide whether a hotel used to accommodate unaccompanied migrant children is suitable for that use.

Lord Touhig (Labour) [HL6552] To ask His Majesty's Government what system of monitoring they use to ensure that hotels accommodating unaccompanied migrant children meet the standards necessary for that purpose.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Any legal advice received by the Home Office is subject to legal professional privilege and, as such, we do not comment on legal advice that may or may not have been sought or received.

When considering whether to accommodate Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in Home Office operated hotels, advice and guidance was sought from organisations with expertise and experience with young people. These included the Department for Education, the Home Office Safeguarding Advice and Children's Champion and local authorities.

This information was used to develop the processes and procedures to ensure the safety of the young people accommodated in the hotels.

Safeguarding is a key consideration when identifying potential hotels for temporary use. The Home Office undertake hotel specific risk assessments before contracting any site.

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.

We continue to consult multi-agency partners and subject matter experts to ensure our processes and procedures are robust and evolve as new trends or risks emerge.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6549>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6551>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6552>

Human Trafficking

Lord McColl of Dulwich (Conservative) [HL6571] To ask His Majesty's Government how many people entered the National Referral Mechanism in January and February of (1) 2022, and (2) 2023; and of those, how many received reasonable grounds decisions.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes quarterly and annual statistics regarding the (NRM). The 2022 statistics can be found here;

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1139171/modern-slavery-national-referral-mechanism-and-duty-to-notify-statistics-uk-end-of-year-summary-2022.ods

Data for Q1 2023 is due for publication on 04/05/2023. The data shows the number of NRM referrals received each quarter and the number of reasonable grounds decisions made each quarter regardless of when the referral was received.

Further disaggregated data is published via the UK Data Service.

The disaggregated data shows the year and quarter in which an NRM referral was received and the year and quarter in which a reasonable grounds decision was made.

[Data for Q1 2023](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-16/hl6571>

Press Releases

New support for Afghans in UK hotels to find settled housing

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-support-for-afghans-in-uk-hotels-to-find-settled-housing>

Asylum seekers to be accommodated on surplus military sites

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/asylum-seekers-to-be-accommodated-on-surplus-military-sites>

New Publications

Illegal Migration Bill Factsheets

Overarching factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-overarching-factsheet>

Nationality and Borders Act compared to Illegal Migration Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/nationality-and-borders-act-compared-to-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: detention and bail

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-detention-and-bail-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Duty to make arrangements for removal

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-duty-to-make-arrangements-for-removal-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Legal proceedings

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-legal-proceedings-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: children

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-children-factsheet>

Inadmissibility of asylum and human rights claims by nationals of EU member states and other safe countries: Illegal Migration Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/inadmissibility-of-asylum-and-human-rights-claims-by-nationals-of-eu-member-states-and-other-safe-countries-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Re-entry, settlement, and citizenship bans: Illegal Migration Bill

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/re-entry-settlement-and-citizenship-bans-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Modern slavery

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-modern-slavery-factsheet>

Asylum accommodation factsheets

Bexhill asylum accommodation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-factsheets/factsheet-bexhill-asylum-accommodation-accessible>

MoD Wethersfield asylum accommodation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-factsheets/factsheet-mod-wethersfield-asylum-accommodation-accessible>

RAF Scampton asylum accommodation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-accommodation-factsheets/factsheet-raf-scampton-asylum-accommodation-accessible>

Qualitative Evaluation of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) and the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme (VCRS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualitative-evaluation-of-the-vulnerable-persons-resettlement-scheme-vprs-and-the-vulnerable-childrens-resettlement-scheme-vcrs>

Ukraine resettlement accommodation: Scottish Government letter to Scottish Parliament

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/ukraine-resettlement-accommodation-letter-to-scottish-parliament/>

The UK aid budget and support for refugees in the UK in 2022

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9663/CBP-9663.pdf>

UK aid to refugees in the UK

https://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/UK-aid-to-Refugees-in-the-UK_ICAI-review.pdf

Finding housing, making home: Romanian migrants in post-Brexit/post-Covid UK

<https://housingevidence.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Finding-housing-making-home-report.pdf>

Updated: 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>

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>

Updated: Diphtheria: cases among asylum seekers in England, weekly data tables

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/diphtheria-cases-among-asylum-seekers-in-england-2022/diphtheria-cases-among-asylum-seekers-in-england-weekly-data-tables>

News: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Suella Braverman says Rwanda is safe for migrants despite evidence of 2018 killings

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-65153807>

News: Afghanistan

Afghan refugees to be moved out of hotels under new government plans

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65098829>

Afghan refugees frustrated by plan to evict thousands from hotels

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/afghan-refugees-frustrated-tory-plan-eviction-uk-hotels-latest-smzwxzn8n>

Afghan refugees face homelessness under UK plans, say rights groups

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/28/uk-to-evict-thousands-of-afghan-refugees-from-hotels>

Afghan applying to resettle in UK asked to provide Taliban approval

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/30/afghan-applying-uk-told-retrieve-documents-from-taliban>

Afghan war hero: Moment my wife said 'Flee for your life!' and I began dangerous escape to UK

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/afghan-pilot-deportation-rwanda-home-office-b2311266.html>

Afghan asylum seeker who fought with UK won't be deported

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/afghan-asylum-seeker-who-fought-with-uk-wont-be-deported-j3qfztx2r>

News: Ukraine

Eurovision Song Contest 2023 tickets for displaced people from Ukraine

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eurovision-song-contest-2023-tickets-for-displaced-people-from-ukraine>

Love, loss and sanctuary: On board with Scotland's Ukrainian refugees

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23424668.love-loss-sanctuary-board-scotlands-ukrainian-refugees/>

News: Illegal Migration Bill

Migration dilemma leaves Rishi Sunak confronting an expensive mess

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-65115212>

Not detaining child migrants creates pull factor - Sunak

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-65102133>

Rishi Sunak defends plan to detain child migrants under small boats bill

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/rishi-sunak-child-detention-small-boats-b2309652.html>

UK's illegal migration bill will force traffickers underground, says May

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/28/uks-migration-bill-will-force-traffickers-underground-says-may>

'Stop demonising them': the trafficking victims left behind by UK's new illegal migration bill

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/mar/27/trafficking-modern-slavery-victims-the-migration-bill-will-leave-behind>

UK's illegal migration bill will force traffickers underground, says May

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/28/uks-migration-bill-will-force-traffickers-underground-says-may>

Illegal migration bill could topple world refugee system, lawmakers told

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/29/migration-bill-could-topple-world-refugee-system-mps-told>

Europe's human rights watchdog warns UK over illegal migration bill

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/29/europe-human-rights-watchdog-warns-uk-over-migration-bill>

Parliamentarians should uphold the United Kingdom's international obligations when scrutinising the "Illegal Migration Bill"

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/portal/-/parliamentarians-should-uphold-the-united-kingdom-s-international-obligations-when-scrutinising-the-illegal-migration-bill>

News: Other Immigration and Asylum

Child migrants to have MRI scans to make sure they're not adults

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/child-migrants-mri-scans-not-adults-qwstk7b2>

Rishi Sunak set to open 'safe' routes for 20,000 migrants a year

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/26/rishi-sunak-set-open-safe-routes-20000-migrants-year/>

Home Office accused of building delays into plan to speed asylum claims

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/30/home-office-accused-of-building-delays-into-plan-to-speed-asylum-claims>

Government spends a third of aid budget on asylum seekers in UK as hotel costs soar

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-hotels-migrants-aid-spending-b2309613.html>

Home Office overspends on 'poor value' hotels for refugees, says report

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/29/home-office-overspends-poor-value-hotels-refugees-says-report/>

ICAI rapid review finds poor value for money in UK aid to refugees in the UK
<https://icai.independent.gov.uk/icai-rapid-review-finds-poor-value-for-money-in-uk-aid-to-refugees-in-the-uk/>

UK asylum: Ex-military bases to be used in migrant housing plan
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65107827>

Asylum seekers will get the most basic housing possible, says Robert Jenrick
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/29/asylum-seekers-housed-portakabins-maybe-ships-robert-jenrick>

Why is the government trying to house asylum seekers in disused military bases?
<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/politics-explained/uk-immigration-asylum-seekers-house-b2310340.html>

Last-ditch effort to block migrant camps on disused RAF bases
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/28/last-ditch-effort-block-migrant-camps-disused-barracks/>

Home Office clash with SNP MP over refugee ship
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/23421476.home-office-clash-snp-mp-refugee-ship/>

Home Office plans to put migrants on barges and cruise ships
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/small-boats-migrants-cruise-ships-barges-b2309932.html>

Barge will house hundreds of migrants evicted from hotels
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/barge-will-house-hundreds-of-migrants-evicted-from-hotels-qsvgnhxfp>

Our 16 months stuck inside an asylum hotel
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/inside-the-asylum-hotel-16-months-and-no-end-in-sight-92sw66xq7>

Sixty-six children still missing after vanishing from Brighton asylum hotel
<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/mar/29/revealed-66-children-still-missing-from-just-one-uk-local-authority-after-vanishing-from-asylum-hotel>

TOP

Equality

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Pupil Exclusions: Ethnic Groups

Janet Daby (Labour) [170739] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps she is taking to address trends in the level of racial inequalities in school exclusions.

Reply from Nick Gibb: Behaviour in schools is a priority for the Government. Head teachers use suspensions and permanent exclusions when required as part of creating calm, safe and supportive classrooms. Schools should only use permanent exclusion as a last resort. The Department supports teachers in taking proportionate and measured steps to ensure good behaviour in schools.

The updated Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance 2022 sets out that schools, Local Authorities, and local partners should work together to understand what lies behind local exclusion trends. Guidance on updated suspension and permanent exclusion can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion>

This is in line with the commitment the Government made in Inclusive Britain: the Government's response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities (published March 2022). Action 36 committed to 'consult on and publish new and improved guidance on behaviour in schools and on suspensions and permanent exclusions in 2022'.

The Department's 'Understanding your data: a guide for school governors and academy trustees' makes clear governing boards should carefully consider the level and characteristics of pupils who are leaving the school and deploy maximum challenge to the school and academy trust management teams on any permanent exclusions to ensure it is only used as a last resort.

Schools have a clear duty not to discriminate against pupils under the Equality Act 2010. Ofsted's assessment of behaviour in schools includes specific consideration of rates, patterns and reasons for exclusions, as well as any differences between groups of pupils.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-21/170739>

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

Understanding your data, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/understanding-your-data-a-guide-for-school-governors-and-academy-trustees/understanding-your-data-a-guide-for-school-governors-and-academy-trustees>

Education: Travellers

Janet Daby (Labour) [173089] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether she is taking steps to implement the 18+1 ethnicity monitoring system for data collection in education for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Reply from Nick Gibb: The Department follows the Office of National Statistics (ONS) and Government Statistical Service (GSS) harmonised standards for collecting and/or presenting statistics. More details about codes can be found here along with information on how the codes were chosen:

<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/style-guide/ethnic-groups>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-24/173089>

Government Departments: Travellers

Janet Daby (Labour) [174428] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether she is taking steps to implement the 18+1 ethnicity monitoring system for data collection across Government for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities.

Reply from Maria Caulfield: The Cabinet Office's Equality Hub encourages the use of Government Statistical Service harmonised standards for ethnicity data collection across government departments and other public bodies.

The current ethnicity harmonised standard is based on the 2011 Census questions across the UK. The ethnicity questions were adjusted so they could be used in the 2021 censuses for England and Wales, and Northern Ireland; and the 2022 Census for Scotland.

This means that the 2021 and 2022 census questions are, currently, the most up to

date way of collecting data about ethnic groups.

The classification for England and Wales has 19 groups including the categories 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller' and 'Roma'

<https://analysisfunction.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/ethnicity-harmonised-standard>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-27/174428>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Children in Care: Ethnic Groups

Baroness Benjamin (Liberal Democrat) [HL6511] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to collect and publish data and analysis on the ethnicity of looked-after children who go missing, including their recorded risk factors, such as mental health issues, sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation.

Reply from Baroness Barran: The department collects information on children looked after in the annual Children Looked After (SSDA903) data return, including information on missing incidents. The data collected includes the primary need of a child starting to be looked after, which is collected using an established code set, set out in the collection guide. These categories are not intended to be exhaustive, and mental health issues, sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation are not specified categories. The data collection guide is published online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/children-looked-after-return-guide-to-submitting-data>

The department publishes an annual statistical release which contains information on looked after children who have gone missing. This release disaggregates missing incidents by age, duration or placement, but not ethnicity, although this data is collected. The department reviews the content of statistical publications in light of user needs. The published information is available in table G1 of the 'Children looked after in England' statistical release, which can be found at:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/children-looked-after-in-england-including-adoptions>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6511>

Missing Persons: Ethnic Groups

Baroness Benjamin (Liberal Democrat) [HL6512] To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to include in the National Crime Agency's Missing Persons Data Report data on the ethnicity of people who go missing including (1) the recorded risk factors of those people, such as mental health issues, sexual exploitation or criminal exploitation, (2) the length of time missing, and (3) how those people are found or return.

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: This is a matter for the National Crime Agency (NCA), which is operationally independent of Government. The NCA's annual Missing Persons Data Report includes analysis of risk factors, duration of missing incidents and statistics on found and returned persons.

The Home Office has funded the National Policing lead for Missing persons to conduct research to explore disproportionality and discrimination in police missing persons investigations; comparing how risk is categorised in different ethnic groups. The final report will be completed this year. Deputy Chief Constable Hankinson, the National Policing lead for Missing Persons is committed to working with partner agencies to understand issues of disproportionality and addressing any issues of unconscious bias if this is indicated in the research.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-15/hl6512>

The most recent publication of the Missing Persons Data Report, referred to above, can be read at

New Publication

Scotland's second National Human Rights Action Plan

<https://www.snaprights.info/snap-2>

TOP

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Cricket Scotland (Institutional Racism)

Kaukab Stewart (SNP): The First Minister will recall his meeting with me and representatives of sportscotland and Cricket Scotland following the “Changing the Boundaries” report, which found institutional racism within Cricket Scotland. Despite that body having been placed in special measures, the working group has made no meaningful progress to date. In fact, it has met only once in seven months. Well-respected members of Cricket Scotland’s anti-racism and equality, diversion and inclusion advisory board have resigned, and many in the sport have spoken out about their concern that the issue is just not being taken seriously. It is a fast-moving situation, so who knows what will happen next?

I am sure that the First Minister will agree with me that enough is enough and that polished PR from Cricket Scotland just will not cut it—we need action. Will the First Minister commit to calling for an urgent meeting to meet me, the chair of sportscotland and Cricket Scotland to discuss the woeful lack of progress and to find a constructive way forward?

Reply from the First Minister (Humza Yousaf): ... I pay tribute to many of those former and current cricket players who put their heads above the parapet to talk about racism, which is not an easy thing to do—they did that at much personal as well as professional cost. Again, I do not understand why there was chuntering from some members on the Conservative benches in response to what is a very important question indeed.

We are clear that there is no place for racism or discrimination of any kind in sport or indeed in wider society. In my previous role, I had a number of meetings with sportscotland and Cricket Scotland to discuss this very matter. My understanding is that there have been robust discussions between sportscotland and Cricket Scotland in the past week and sportscotland has reiterated that all options are being considered as Cricket Scotland is being held to account. The final decision on whether Cricket Scotland exits special measures will be dependent on all recommendations from the “Changing the Boundaries” report being fully met. We will continue to engage with Cricket Scotland and I will ensure that the appropriate minister meets Kaukab Stewart. I will also make time to meet Kaukab Stewart to discuss the issue further, because it is very close to my heart.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=15235&i=129955#ScotParlOR>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/media/7801/changing-the-boundaries-independent-review-into-racism-in-scottish-cricket-report.pdf>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Black and Minority-ethnic Children: Police Strip-searches

Baroness Benjamin (Liberal Democrat): To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by the Children's Commissioner showing that 2,847 children, disproportionately from black and minority ethnic backgrounds, have been strip searched by the police since 2018. ...

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Sharpe of Epsom): ... The Children's Commissioner's report raises a number of concerns that we take extremely seriously. Strip-search is one of the most intrusive powers available to the police. No one should be subject to the use of any police power based on their race or ethnicity. The IOPC is currently investigating several instances of children being strip-searched and it will review whether existing legislation, guidance and policies remain appropriate. It is right that we await its findings.

Baroness Benjamin: My Lords, it is sickening, shocking and truly disturbing to read the Children's Commissioner's report on the thousands of children who have been strip-searched by the police unsupervised. Most of us thought that being strip-searched was a rare occurrence during the Child Q scandal. This has proven not to be so. Worryingly, those from black and ethnic-minority backgrounds appear to be disproportionately targeted. Childhood lasts a lifetime. The mental trauma, mistrust, abuse and humiliation suffered by these children will stay with them, at a huge cost to society. How are the Government going to address this unacceptable and despicable practice? What recourse and disciplinary action will there be when a safeguarding failure is found to have taken place?

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: My Lords, the noble Baroness is right. Any child subject to strip-search under PACE should be accompanied by an appropriate adult unless there is an urgent risk of serious harm or where the child specifically requests otherwise and the appropriate adult agrees. Such searches must be carried out by an officer of the same sex as the child. The Children Act 2004 encourages agencies to share early concerns about the safety and welfare of children and young persons and to take preventive action. The Act requires local policing bodies and chief officers to co-operate with arrangements to improve the well-being of children in the authorities' area. It is too early for me to comment on what sort of disciplinary processes and so on might be implemented in cases where there are failures of these things. As I said, we are awaiting the report from the IOPC and will make the appropriate response in due course.

Baroness Chakrabarti (Labour): My Lords, it seems that every week there are more devastating revelations for trust in policing in our country ...

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: My Lords, as I have said from this Dispatch Box before, stop and search makes a serious difference to crime prevention. In 2021-22, stop and search removed around 14,900 weapons and firearms from our streets and resulted in almost 67,000 arrests. The noble Baroness made good points about trust in the police, and the Home Secretary has been clear that policing needs to address all of the causes of poor, and in some cases toxic, cultures. ...

Baroness Berridge (Conservative): My Lords, could my noble friend the Minister clarify the role of the IOPC here? Is it reviewing just individual cases—so there will be a number of reports—or is this a systemic review of the use of this practice? Only if we look at the system can we know whether there is potentially racial bias within it.

Reply from Lord Sharpe of Epsom: My noble friend is right. At the start of the process, 14 referrals involving strip-searches were received by the IOPC from the Metropolitan Police Service. On 1 August 2022, it confirmed that it is investigating five of these cases. It decided that six of them were suitable for local investigation

by the force, and the remaining three are still being assessed to determine whether further action may be required by the IOPC. However, the IOPC has been asked to take a more general look at the framework. We expect its findings soon, and for it to opine a little more widely. ...

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

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-03-27/debates/3D6299F6-7182-4930-BEE9-81BEEE99409C/BlackAndMinority-EthnicChildrenPoliceStrip-Searches>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://assets.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wpuploads/2023/03/cc-strip-search-of-children-in-england-and-wales.pdf>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Kim Johnson (Labour) [1037] Show Racism the Red Card – That this House congratulates Show Racism the Red Card for engaging one million people through their anti-racist educational programmes; notes the contribution of footballers and other sportsmen and women in promoting equality and inclusion among adults and children in schools, workplaces and at sporting clubs; believes that Show Racism the Red Card has played an important role in increasing understanding of racism, and providing practical examples of how to combat this; and wishes Show Racism the Red Card every success in continuing to teach young people, especially, the skills to recognise and challenge racism and to have the confidence to become an ally.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60765>

Press Release

Teenager sentenced for posting racist material online

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/teenager-sentenced-posting-racist-material-online>

New Publications

Structural racism in UK newsrooms

https://ethicaljournalismnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/EJN_Structural-Racism_Report_Final_March_2023.pdf

Values and culture in fire and rescue services

<https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmicfrs/publication-html/values-and-culture-in-fire-and-rescue-services/>

News

Baroness Casey urges Met Police chief to accept problems are institutional

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65110300>

One of the biggest safeguarding risks to Black children is the Metropolitan police

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/mar/28/metropolitan-police-safeguarding-risk-black-children-schools-strip-search-child-g>

Fire services: Shocking bullying and abuse widespread, report says

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65128073>

Racism is 'commonplace' in UK journalism with more senior Black staff needed across industry, report warns

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/black-journalists-racist-report-rowntree-b2308806.html>

Almost half of young Muslims have faced Islamophobia, polling suggests

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/muslims-islamophobia-scotland-scottish-national-party-humza-yousaf-b2309969.html>

Religion is 'blind spot' for discrimination at work, peer claims

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2023/04/01/religion-blind-spot-discrimination-lord-alton/>

'Bomb-maker' boasted of kitchen explosion in videos, court told

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bomb-maker-boasted-of-kitchen-explosion-in-videos-court-told-xz3wg37ll>

Two teenagers arrested over Birmingham mosque attack

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/mar/31/two-teenagers-arrested-birmingham-mosque-attack>

Birmingham mosque fire victim in unimaginable pain - family

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-birmingham-65088634>

Cricket Scotland chairman quits after row over tackling racism

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65136207>

Resignations at Cricket Scotland anti-racism group

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65085394>

Michael Vaughan cleared 'on balance of probabilities' of using racist language towards Azeem Rafiq

<https://www.bbc.com/sport/cricket/65135694>

Michael Obafemi: Man sentenced for sending racist tweet

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-65136836>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Press Releases

First Minister tenders resignation to the King

<https://www.gov.scot/news/first-minister-tenders-resignation-to-the-king/>

First Minister nominated

<https://www.gov.scot/news/first-minister-nominated/>

New Cabinet unveiled

<https://www.gov.scot/news/new-cabinet-unveiled/>

Full ministerial team confirmed

<https://www.gov.scot/news/full-ministerial-team-confirmed/>

Scottish Parliament launches digital education session for schools

<https://www.parliament.scot/about/news/news-listing/scottish-parliament-launches-digital-education-session-for-schools>

COVID-19 spring booster programme underway

<https://www.gov.scot/news/covid-19-spring-booster-programme-underway/>

New Publication

The new Scottish Government

<https://spice-spotlight.scot/2023/03/30/the-new-scottish-government/>

News

Nicola Sturgeon formally resigns as first minister

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-65093281>

Humza Yousaf confirmed as Scotland's new first minister

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-65098609>

Who is Humza Yousaf, the new SNP leader?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-64874821>

Humza Yousaf: Can new SNP leader represent South Asian Scots?

<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-65110350>

Shona Robison to be Scottish deputy first minister

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-65104651>

Humza Yousaf leads Ramadan prayers on first night at Bute House

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/29/scotlands-first-minister-leads-ramadan-prayers-first-night-bute/>

TOP

Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Schools: Bible and Koran

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL6265] To ask His Majesty's Government whether (1) the National Curriculum, and (2) other guidance provided to schools, requires that copies of the Koran and the Bible should receive equal respect; and if not, what plans they have to ensure that they are treated equally.

Reply from Baroness Barran: Every school should actively promote mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. Amongst other criteria, Ofsted will inspect pupils' knowledge of, and respect for, different people's faiths, feelings, and values.

All schools must offer a broad and balanced curriculum, which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils.

In response to recent incidents, the government has been repeatedly clear that there is no blasphemy law in the United Kingdom. The department has no plans to give specific guidance on the respect that should be shown to specific religious texts. However, the Home Office is drafting guidance on blasphemy incidents, which the department will support with as needed.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-08/hl6265>

Female Genital Mutilation: Prosecutions

The Lord Bishop of St Albans [HL6584] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Sharpe of Epsom on 14 March (HL6096), what assessment they have made of why there have only been two prosecutions for female genital mutilation out of the 229 offences recorded.

Reply from Lord Stewart of Dirleton: The Government is committed to tackling female genital mutilation (FGM) and all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The familial and hidden nature of FGM presents challenges in bringing a prosecution. Victims are mostly of a young age and vulnerable, and they often do not want to report offences that could lead to them giving evidence against family members. Some identified FGM victims have had the procedure before coming to the UK to live; in these circumstances there may not be jurisdiction to prosecute where the offence had no connection to the UK. Securing prosecutions is important, but it is also essential to protect women and girls at risk and to prevent FGM happening in the first place. FGM Protection Orders, mandatory reporting by front-line staff and an offence of failing to protect a girl from FGM are being used to safeguard those who may be at risk. The Government is funding a feasibility study to explore whether a more rigorous estimation of the prevalence of FGM and forced marriage in England and Wales can be made, to allow a deeper understanding of these crimes

The CPS is working closely with stakeholders, including FGM support organisations, to develop a new VAWG Strategy to bring more offenders to justice and to improve victims' experience of the criminal justice system. It will be published in Summer 2023.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-16/hl6584>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-03-02/hl6096>

Press Release

Portraits of His Majesty The King for UK public authorities

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/portraits-of-his-majesty-the-king-for-uk-public-authorities>

New Publication

Devolution in Scotland: "The settled will"?

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8441/CBP-8441.pdf>

News

Ministers urged to be more aggressive in tackling issues within religious groups

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/mar/29/ministers-urged-to-be-more-aggressive-in-tackling-issues-within-religious-groups>

TOP

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 economy avoided recession and grew at end of last year, new figures show

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/pound-uk-economy-recession-gdp-b2311504.html>

Minimum wage increase for 1.7m workers – but rises ‘wiped out’ by inflation

<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/business/living-wage-national-minimum-inflation-cost-of-living-b2311228.html>

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Other New Publication

Identifying Long Covid Using Electronic Health Records

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/usher/eave-ii/connected-projects/long-covid/project-outputs/identifying-long-covid-electronic-health-records>

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Other News

How British Asians came to be political powerhouses

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/03/29/success-british-asians-humza-yousaf-rishi-sunak-sadiq-khan/>

Gen Z Muslims in the UK — the figures

<https://hyphenonline.com/2023/03/29/gen-z-muslims-uk-hyphen-poll-data/>

One in 50 people in Scotland had long Covid - landmark study

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-65056619>

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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>

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>

Committee Stage, House of Commons

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-27/debates/5D4369C7-D5F5-42D5-B8DF-462BC5DDA601/IllegalMigrationBill>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-03-28/debates/6F481923-B613-4807-BD4B-B1ED72AC3A75/IllegalMigrationBill>

Evidence sessions, Joint Committee on Human Rights

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12974/html/>

and

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/12975/html/>

Notice of amendments

https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0284/amend/illegal_migration_rep_rm_0331.pdf

Illegal Migration Bill: overarching factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-overarching-factsheet>

Nationality and Borders Act compared to Illegal Migration Bill: factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/nationality-and-borders-act-compared-to-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: detention and bail factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-detention-and-bail-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Duty to make arrangements for removal factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-duty-to-make-arrangements-for-removal-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Legal proceedings factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-legal-proceedings-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: children factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-children-factsheet>

Inadmissibility of asylum and human rights claims by nationals of EU member states and other safe countries: Illegal Migration Bill factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/inadmissibility-of-asylum-and-human-rights-claims-by-nationals-of-eu-member-states-and-other-safe-countries-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Re-entry, settlement, and citizenship bans: Illegal Migration Bill factsheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/re-entry-settlement-and-citizenship-bans-illegal-migration-bill-factsheet>

Illegal Migration Bill: Modern slavery

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/illegal-migration-bill-factsheets/illegal-migration-bill-modern-slavery-factsheet>

Immigration and Nationality Fees (Exemption for NHS Clinical Staff)

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

** Online Safety Bill

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

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/49991/documents/3259>

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!*

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/>

** **Review of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997** (closing date 18 June 2023)

<https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/consultations/consultation-review-race-relations-ni-order-1997>

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!**

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/>

**** first round closes this week!**

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

Marketing communications opportunity opens again

Closing date for applications: 28 April 2023

GCVS and the University of Glasgow scheme offering three voluntary sector organisations an opportunity to receive support with their marketing communications. From September to December, 3rd and 4th year Marketing Communications students will create and develop an integrated marketing communications plan based on the needs of the organisations. For information see

<https://www.gcv.s.org.uk/blog/glauni-marcomms-2023/>

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

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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