

MEMO



Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

MEMO is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities](#) in partnership with [BEMIS](#).

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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Immigration and Asylum

Holyrood Parliamentary Motions

S3M-1547 Shirley-Anne Somerville: Iranian Asylum Seekers Mehdi Kazemi and Pegah Emambakhsh—That the Parliament condemns the UK Home Office decision to reject asylum applications from Mehdi Kazemi and Pegah Emambakhsh, both Iranian nationals who fear persecution and execution on return to Tehran on the basis of their sexual orientation; notes with deep concern reports that Mehdi Kazemi's former boyfriend was arrested and executed for sodomy and that Ms Embambakhsh's partner was arrested and may face being stoned to death; expresses concern over increasing reports of growing repression in Iran and figures from Iranian human rights campaigners which state that over 4,000 lesbians and gay men have been executed since 1979, and calls on the UK Government to urgently review these cases and the guidance issued to immigration officers and to consider following the example of the Netherlands and Germany by imposing a moratorium on the deportation of gay and lesbian asylum seekers who fear that they will be persecuted in Iran.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-12f.htm>

Immigration and Asylum Holyrood Parliamentary Motions (continued)

Iain Smith (S3M-1571): Roman Catholic Support for Mehdi Kazemi and Pegah Emambakhsh—That the Parliament notes Pope John Paul II's encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, in which his late Holiness made clear that circumstances where the death penalty is acceptable are "very rare, if not practically nonexistent" and Pope Benedict's statement when he was Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith that, in modern society, it is "practically impossible" to find any cases deserving of the death sentence; also notes that Mehdi Kazemi and Pegah Emambakhsh are at risk of being executed for their homosexuality if they are returned to Iran, and calls on the Roman Catholic Church to join the cross-party campaign for the Home Office to reverse its rejection of their asylum applications.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-14f.htm>

Westminster Ministerial Statement

Jacqui Smith (Secretary of State for the Home Department): The Government are committed to the swift establishment of a UK Border Agency (UKBA), which will bring together the work of the Border and Immigration Agency, UK Visas and parts of HM Revenue and Customs at the border. The new agency will work very closely with the police and other law enforcement agencies to improve border controls and security. We will shortly publish our detailed plans for the UKBA's first year of operation, but we are able today to announce key measures to ensure an immediate and seamless operation between the police and the new UKBA.

First, to strengthen effective police coordination at a strategic level I am announcing that chief constable Roger Baker of Essex police will join the UKBA board with immediate effect.

Secondly, to add to the 3,000 police permanently based at our borders 39 new specialists' posts at ports will be funded in 2008-09 to increase special branch coverage where it is most needed.

Thirdly, we will publish in April a new framework for inter-agency co-operation at the border. This can progress more quickly than further structural change either within the police service themselves or between the police and the UK Border Agency.

Fourthly, I can confirm that we will seek a new legislative basis and new powers for the UKBA as part of our immigration bill in the autumn.

Fifthly, the Government will be discussing with police forces and authorities whether change is necessary in the current regime for special funding of special branch posts at ports and airports with a view to implementing a new regime from 2009-10. The Government are also considering how to implement the conclusions of the independent report into airport policing, with the aim of clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the police, airport operators and other agencies to deliver a high level of security at UK airports and we will set out proposals on this later in the year.

Finally, in response to a recommendation in the Cabinet Office report "Security in a Global Hub—Establishing the UK's New Border Arrangements" published last November, the Home Office is working with the Association of Chief Police Officers for England, Wales and Northern Ireland to consider how policing—which is currently delivered by the local force for each port and airports—may best be organised to deliver a fuller level of integration at the border, taking into consideration the drive for greater collaboration which is at the heart of the Government's programme for improving protective services. There are various models.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Ministerial Statement (continued)

The Home Office will also be discussing with the Scottish Devolved Administration and the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland ways of strengthening working relationships between the Scottish police service and the new agency taking into account the devolved nature of policing in Scotland.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080311/wmstext/80311m0002.htm#08031195000015>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Mike Hancock [190052]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will provide funding for (a) legal aid and (b) safe accommodation for women with undecided immigration status who are victims of domestic violence or abuse while their immigration status is being assessed.

Reply from Vernon Coaker: Victims of domestic violence with undecided immigration status are eligible to apply for legal aid. All cases are judged on individual circumstances and are measured against the criteria set out in the Legal Services Commission Funding Code.

Victims of domestic violence with undecided immigration status can also access services funded by the Supporting People grant, which provides support to vulnerable people in refuges, hostels and supported accommodation, or in their own home.

In addition, the Home Office announced on 6 March a new scheme where victims of domestic violence who have made successful applications for indefinite leave to remain, may qualify for a contribution towards their housing and living costs.

We recognise the need to find a permanent solution to this issue and are working across Government to achieve this.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080307/text/80307w0002.htm#08030756000049>

Mike Hancock [190051]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance she has provided to (a) local authorities and (b) voluntary agencies on women whose insecure immigration status is being assessed on the no recourse to public funds rule in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004; if she will bring forward proposals to amend the Act to provide funding for such women; and if she will make a statement.

Reply from Vernon Coaker: In February 2006, guidance and a factsheet were issued to all local authority chief executives alerting them to the key issues experienced by these women and setting out how they can be helped through other legislative processes.

We have also commissioned the development of a step-by-step guide for women in black and minority ethnic communities who are victims of domestic violence. It will provide practical advice on how victims, and agencies supporting victims, can protect themselves and their children. This will be published in spring 2008.

Soon we will be announcing a new scheme where victims of domestic violence who have no recourse to public funds may be able to have their housing and living costs met linked to indefinite leave to remain (ILR) criteria. The proposals under the new scheme will strengthen the way in which domestic violence cases are considered enabling those victims who are vulnerable to access further support.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080310/text/80310w0016.htm#08031033000052>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Michael Spicer [192007]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what her most recent estimate is of the number of failed asylum seekers in the United Kingdom.

Reply from Liam Byrne: No Government have ever been able to produce an accurate figure for the number of people who are in the country illegally and this includes failed asylum seekers. By its very nature it is impossible to quantify accurately and that remains the case.

Exit controls were phased out from 1994. As part of the Government's 10-point plan for delivery, by Christmas 2008 the majority of foreign nationals will be counted in and out of the country. This will build on the successes of our early testing of the e-Borders programme (Project Semaphore) which already covers over 30 million passenger movements and has led to 18,000 alerts and more than 1,500 arrests.

This is part of a sweeping programme of border protection which also includes the global roll-out of fingerprint visas, compulsory watch-list checks for all travellers from high-risk countries before they land in Britain and ID cards for foreign nationals.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080310/text/80310w0015.htm#08031033000046>

David Davis [186929]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment she has made of the average cost to the public purse of deporting (a) an illegal immigrant and (b) a foreign prisoner with a recommendation for deportation in the last 12 months;

(2) [186930] how much has been spent on deporting (a) illegal immigrants and (b) foreign prisoners in each of the last five years for which figures are available.

Reply from Liam Byrne: The average cost of the removal of illegal immigrants and foreign prisoners is not disaggregated from the overall costs of the Border and Immigration Agency and therefore not readily available.

In 2007 we removed one person every eight minutes (over 63,000), including a record number of foreign prisoners (over 4,200).

Voluntary returns are always preferable but we will enforce returns where necessary. In doing so, we aim for the lowest available costs. The National Audit Office in 2005-06 estimated the average cost of an enforced removal as £11,000.

The report can be accessed at:

http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/050676.pdf

We are committed to doubling our enforcement activity by 2010. This includes increasing the number of removals.

Latest published statistics on the total spend in the Home Office are set out in the Home Office Report a copy of which has been placed in both Houses. It is also available to view at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ho-annual-report-07?view=Binary>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080311/text/80311w0031.htm#080311138000077>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Lord Roberts of Llandudno asked Her Majesty's Government: Whether they will grant asylum to Mehdi Kazemi, who is threatened with execution should he be deported to Iran.

Reply from Lord Bassam of Brighton: My Lords, I cannot comment on the details of individual cases. However, I can assure the noble Lord that the United Kingdom Government are committed to providing protection for those individuals found to be genuinely in need, in accordance with our commitments under international law. Asylum applicants have access to the independent appeals process through the courts.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: My Lords, I thank the Minister for his reply, but it is not quite as full as I would expect and hope. He will be aware that, since the ayatollahs came to reign in Iran, humanitarian organisations tell us that 4,000 lesbians and gay men have been executed in that country. What representations have Her Majesty's Government made and what representations do they continue to make about that policy? Secondly, will he assure us on behalf of the Government that no one, gay or otherwise, will be deported to any country where they will be persecuted, tortured or executed?

Reply from Lord Bassam of Brighton: My Lords, I have read with serious concern the human rights figures that the noble Lord refers to. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office regularly raises concerns with Iran in the context of individual cases, most often around methods of punishment used by that regime. Representations are also made through the EU, as this has been found to be the most effective way of making such representations. The Border and Immigration Agency enforces the return of Iranian gay men only when we are satisfied that they are not in need of protection. We do not seek to enforce returns to Iran unless our decision-making processes and the independent courts are satisfied that it is entirely safe to do so.

To continue reading this question and answer session see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80311-0002.htm#080311102000005>

Julian Brazier (190199): To ask the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, what sources of funding are available for the provision of English language and life skills to unaccompanied minors who are seeking asylum (a) up to the age of 16 years and (b) after they are 18 years old; and if he will make a statement.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmordbk1/80310w01.htm>

Press Releases

Lord Goldsmith recommends new emphasis on the common bond of citizenship

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease110308b.htm>

Border policing strengthened

<http://bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/borderpolicingstrengthened>

New publications

Security in a Global Hub: Establishing the UK's new border arrangements

http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/upload/assets/www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/publications/reports/border_review.pdf

Immigration and Asylum New Publications (continued)

Beyond Naturalisation: Citizenship policy in an age of super mobility

<http://www.ippr.org.uk/members/download.asp?f=%2Fecomm%2Ffiles%2Fbeyond%5Fnaturalisation%2Epdf>

News

Citizenship in one day: £350 course cons immigrants

http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/news/display.var.2105601.0.Citizenship_in_one_day_350_course_cons_immigrants.php

Inside the six hour course that promised UK citizenship

http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/education/display.var.2105595.0.Inside_the_six_hour_course_that_promised_UK_citizenship.php

Bogus college courses

http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/editorial/display.var.2105440.0.Bogus_college_courses.php

Where the gulags are full of those who have no voice

http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/featuresopinon/display.var.2105503.0.Where_the_gulags_are_full_of_those_who_have_no_voice.php

Immigrant influx: 'Time Holyrood met some of the bills involved'

<http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/opinion/Immigrant-influx-39Time--Holyrood.3863220.jp>

Aid hope for abused women refugees

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/latest-national-news/Aid-hope-for-abused-women.3872886.jp>

Soaring pay lures Poles back home

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/7282923.stm>

Gay Iranian's deportation delayed

<http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/latest-national-news/Gay-Iranian39s-deportation-delayed.3877584.jp>

Victory for Kazemi as Home Secretary halts deportation to Iran

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/victory-for-kazemi-as-home-secretary-halts-deportation-to-iran-795713.html>

Flexible immigration policy call

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7295602.stm>

'Fix' immigration so foreign workers flock to Scotland, advises race relations chief

<http://news.scotsman.com/scotland/39Fix39-immigration-so--foreign.3878346.jp>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

Give immigrants 'extra points' to live in Scotland, says equality chief

http://www.theherald.co.uk/politics/news/display.var.2119214.0.Give_immigrants_extra_points_to_live_in_Scotland_says_equality_chief.php

Curry industry 'could die' claim

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/7293539.stm>

Save Our Spices: Curry chefs lobby Holyrood

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/scotland/Save-Our-Spices-Curry-chefs.3878298.jp>

Curry protest over the new laws

http://www.theherald.co.uk/news/other/display.var.2119210.0.Curry_protest_over_the_new_laws.php

Sanctuary for Yakob

<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/leaders/Sanctuary-for-Yakob.3882900.jp>

Britain's refugee shame

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/britains-refugee-shame-796606.html>

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Race Relations

Holyrood Parliamentary Motion

Marlyn Glen (S3M-1559): Young Gypsy/Travellers Raising Awareness in the Scottish Parliament—That the Parliament welcomes young Gypsy/Travellers from across Scotland to the Parliament on 26 March 2008; acknowledges that Gypsy/Travellers remain one of the most isolated and excluded minority ethnic groups in Scotland; commends the young people, supported by Save the Children, for raising awareness of the issues faced by Gypsy/Travellers among their peers, professionals and parliamentarians and for bringing about a better understanding of Gypsy/Traveller culture, changing attitudes and challenging discrimination; considers the importance of this work, and urges the Scottish Executive to support, through providing both community leadership and funding, the young people to continue to promote equality by challenging prejudice and discrimination through sharing their experiences with their peers.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-14f.htm>

New publication

Neighbourhood identity: People, time and place

<http://www.irf.org.uk/bookshop/eBooks/2154-neighbourhood-identity-regeneration.pdf>

Race Relations (continued) **News**

Police seek help from minorities

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/7288223.stm

Police to hold discussion on race

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/7296285.stm

Are Muslim enclaves no-go areas, forcing other people out

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article3537594.ece>

The prejudice that still shames the nation

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/mar/16/race>

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Equality

News

Equality move could hit white men

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2008/mar/16/race.gender>

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Racism and Religious Hatred

Holyrood Parliamentary Motions

Bill Kidd (S3M-1552): Anti-Semitic Blogging in National Newspapers—That the Parliament abhors the publication in both The Scotsman and The Herald newspapers' online blogs of blatantly anti-Semitic rhetoric by individuals who hide their identities behind screen names; believes that any such racist statements have no place in national newspapers, in print or online, and calls on the editors of these two major newspapers to ensure that such foul-mouthed attacks on any section of society are removed from their blogs before publication.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-13f.htm>

Racism and Religious Hatred Holyrood Parliamentary Motions

Sandra White (S3M-1518): Racial Harassment Toolkit—That the Parliament welcomes the launch of Positive Action in Housing's online Racial Harassment toolkit, www.challengeracism.com, aimed at providing a straightforward framework for helping housing providers challenge racism in their communities; believes that this toolkit will complement previous work done on promoting awareness and reporting of such incidents and as such help to further bridge the gap between legislation and guidance, and encourages housing providers and other organisations to make full use of these excellent resources in order to promote a more inclusive society free from racially motivated crime and harassment.
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-10f.htm>

News

'No legal status' for Scotland's gypsies

<http://news.scotsman.com/scotland/39No-legal-status39-for-.3872727.jp>

Fine for racist Iraq war veteran

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/7292265.stmhttp://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/scotland/tayside_and_central/7292265.stm

Hunt for race-hate attacker in city centre

<http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/edinburgh/Hunt-for-racehate-attacker-in.3874123.jp>

Asian youths in 'faith hate' attack on priest

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/faith/article3559768.ece>

Rector beaten up 'over his faith'

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2008/03/16/nrowan316.xml>

Vicar attacked for 'being a Christian' after hate campaign by jobs who claimed his church 'should be a mosque'

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=535131&in_page_id=1770&ct=5

Basil Brush probed by police over 'racist abuse' in gipsy spell sketch

http://www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=535329&in_page_id=1770

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Other Holyrood

Committee

Education, Lifelong Learning and Culture Committee: Panjabi Language Examination

Karen Whitefield (Convener): The second and final item on our agenda is to consider correspondence that was sent to me, as the committee convener, by the Guru Nanak Sikh Temple in Glasgow with regard to the assessment of Panjabi language learning. It is not currently possible for students in Scotland to sit an examination in Panjabi as the funding that has enabled such examinations to take place for the past three years is no longer available.

Members will see from the briefing paper that we are asked to consider whether the committee should write to the SQA to seek its comments on the possible inclusion of Panjabi and other minority ethnic languages in the examination diet. I seek members' views on the matter.

Rob Gibson: I am happy for us to enter into dialogue on the matter because it is clear that many more languages are becoming prevalent. We need to get some sort of benchmark for the examination aspect.

Karen Whitefield In that case, we will write to the SQA. In light of our consideration of foreign languages a few weeks ago, and given the point that the deputy convener has just made about considering all languages, we could consider this issue again when we consider the other petition that was passed to the committee. However, we will write to the SQA about Panjabi language learning because that is what the organisation in question wants us to do.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/ellc/or-08/ed08-0602.htm#Col754>

Parliamentary Question

Bashir Ahmad (S3W-10346): To ask the Scottish Executive how many pupils attend state-funded faith schools.

Reply from Maureen Watt: This information is published annually in Pupils in Scotland, and is available on the government website.

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2008/02/25145216/24>.

In 2007, 119,935 pupils attended state-funded denominational schools in Scotland.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/pqa/wa-08/wa0312.htm>

Parliamentary Motion

Jamie Hepburn (S3M-1544): Citizenship Oaths—That the Parliament notes with concern proposals to introduce citizenship ceremonies involving an oath of allegiance to Britain and the Crown for school leavers in the United Kingdom; believes that such a scheme would be unnecessary and unpopular in Scotland, and further believes that such a scheme could undermine the tradition in Scotland that sovereignty is vested in the people rather than any one individual or institution.

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-12f.htm>

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Other Westminster

Parliamentary Questions

Paul Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government how much her Department plans to spend on (a) the provision of new Gypsy and Traveller sites and (b) the refurbishment of existing Gypsy and Traveller sites in (i) 2007-08, (ii) 2008-09, (iii) 2009-10 and (iv) 2010-11. [190110]

Reply from Iain Wright: The Government makes Gypsy and Traveller Sites Grant available for the provision of new sites and refurbishment of existing sites. In 2007-08, £18.4 million has been approved for new sites or the extension of existing sites, £11.8 million has been approved for the refurbishment of existing sites (which in some cases may bring pitches back into use) and £3.7 million has been approved for schemes which include both refurbishment and extension. £33 million will be available for the grant in 2008-09, and £32 million in both 2009-10 and 2010-11.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080307/text/80307w0012.htm#08030756000170>

Harry Cohen [192523]: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the Answer of 29 February 2008, *Official Report*, column 1985W, on marriage: Islam, how many marriages have taken place in each of the 152 buildings in the last 10 years; how many of those weddings have taken place in the presence of (a) a registrar of the registration district and (b) an authorised person for that building; what criteria he applies in deciding on applications for authorised person status; and how many people have applied for authorised person status and have been refused in that period.

Reply from Angela Eagle: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Karen Dunnell, dated 10 March 2008:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question pursuant to the Answer of 29th^() February 2008, *Official Report*, column 1985W, on marriage: Islam, how many marriages have taken place in each of the 152 buildings in the last 10 years; how many of those weddings have taken place in the presence of (a) a registrar of the registration district and (b) an authorised person for that building; what criteria he applies in deciding on applications for authorised person status; and how many people have applied for authorised person status and have been refused in that period. (192523)

Information on the numbers of marriages in England and Wales is published in the annual reference volume Series FM2 Marriage, Divorce and Adoption Statistics, available from the House of Commons library. However, figures for the number of marriages by building are not readily available.

Authorisation of a person to be present at the solemnisation of marriages in a registered building instead of a registrar are given by the trustees or governing body of the building. They may do so one year or more after the building has been registered by the Registrar General for the solemnisation of marriages. The criteria for authorisation are a matter for the trustees or governing body but the person must fulfil certain statutory obligations and duties in respect of the solemnisation and registration functions. The trustees or governing body certify on a prescribed form the name and address of the authorised person to the Registrar General and to the superintendent registrar of the registration district in which the building is situated.

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

This is not an application and there are therefore no refusals. Information prior to 2005 is not readily available but in each of the last three years, the number of authorised persons certified to the Registrar General has been:

2005. 1379, of which 1 was for a building registered for Muslim marriages

2006. 1636, of which 7 were for buildings registered for Muslim marriages

2007. 1057, of which 10 were for buildings registered for Muslim marriages

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080310/text/80310w0027.htm#08031110000041>

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans she has to introduce accredited training in respect of people in the criminal justice system dealing with cases of forced marriage. [188273]

Reply from Tony McNulty: The Initial Police Learning and Development Programme administered by the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) covers the police response to planned forced marriages, within the wider training material on domestic violence and child abuse.

Police officers also receive additional training on domestic violence and the NPIA are, in conjunction with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), currently considering the development of forced marriage and honour-based violence training, although its use by the police service is optional. There are no immediate plans to accredit this learning.

In July 2007, a pilot on forced marriage/so-called honour-based violence commenced in four CPS which will aim to establish information about the prevalence of forced marriage and to inform the development of any national guidance and training for prosecutors to improve these prosecutions and increase support for victims. A final report on the pilot is due in summer 2008.

In relation to the judiciary, a programme of work being planned prior to the implementation of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 will include the development of the necessary court rules and forms, the setting up of the appropriate court processing systems, guidance developed for staff and judicial training undertaken.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmhansrd/cm080311/text/80311w0031.htm#080311138000073>

Lord Lester of Herne Hill asked Her Majesty's Government [HL2305]: Further to the Written Answer by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath on 3 March (WA 154), whether they will initiate discussions about the possible application of the powers conferred by Section 1 of the Divorce (Religious Marriages) Act 2002 to religions other than Judaism.

Reply from Lord Hunt of Kings Heath): I refer the noble Lord to my Answer on 3 March. It is for a religious community itself to decide to make use of the provisions of the Act and then ask the Lord Chancellor to prescribe the religious group for that purpose.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80313w0001.htm#08031371000004>

Brian Jenkins (193633): To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what advice his Department gives to primary care trusts on the treatment of patients of diverse religious beliefs.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmordbk1/80311w01.htm>

Other Westminster Press Release

Forced marriage an evil in our society

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease110308e.htm>

News

UK Budget at a glance

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/7291841.stm

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Other News

Fears over forced marriage levels

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/7288952.stm>

Alert over forced-marriage areas

http://www.eveningtimes.co.uk/news/display.var.2112705.0.alert_over_forcedmarriage_areas.php

Such an alien concept

http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/editorial/display.var.2111708.0.Such_an_alien_concept.php

Oaths and flags can't force anyone to feel British

http://www.theherald.co.uk/features/featuresopinon/display.var.2111773.0.Oaths_and_flags_cant_force_anyone_to_feel_British.php

Commission announces independent inquiry into human rights and British attitudes to them

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/newsandcomment/Pages/humanrightsinqury.aspx>

EHRC Human Rights Inquiry (England and Wales only)

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/changeanddevelopments/humanrightsinqury/Pages/HumanrightsInquiry.aspx>

UK: Christian or secular?

http://www.theosthinktank.co.uk/UK_Christian_or_secular.aspx?ArticleID=1931&PageID=11&RefPageID=5

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Bills in Progress

** New or updated this week

Holyrood

**** Creative Scotland Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/07-CreativeScotland/b7s3-introd.pdf>

Explanatory Notes

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/07-CreativeScotland/b7s3-introd-en.pdf>

Policy Memorandum

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/07-CreativeScotland/b7s3-introd-pm.pdf>

**** Judiciary and Courts Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/06-JudiciaryCourts/b6s3-introd.pdf>

Explanatory Notes

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/06-JudiciaryCourts/b6s3-introd-en.pdf>

Policy Memorandum

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/06-JudiciaryCourts/b6s3-introd-pm.pdf>

**** Glasgow Commonwealth Games Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/04-GlasgowCommGames/b4s3-introd.pdf>

proposed amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/businessBulletin/bb-08/bb-03-13g.htm>

Public Health Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/03-PublicHealth/b3s3-introd.pdf>

Bills in Progress

Westminster

Counter-Terrorism Bill

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmbills/063/2008063.pdf>

**** Criminal Justice and Immigration Bill**

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200708/cmbills/015/08015.i-vii.html>

proposed amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldbills/016/amend/ml016-viii.htm>

House of Lords consideration of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldhansrd/text/80312-0002.htm#08031248000005>

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200708/ldbills/006/2008006.pdf>

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Consultations (closing date)

** New or updated this week

Focusing English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) on Community Cohesion (4 April 2008)

<http://www.esolconsultation.org.uk/>

IMPACT Programme: Equality, Diversity and Privacy (4 April 2008)

[http://www.npia.police.uk/en/docs/Equality Diversity and Privacy Consultationv1_0.pdf](http://www.npia.police.uk/en/docs/Equality_Diversity_and_Privacy_Consultationv1_0.pdf)

Meeting the Charity Test (7 April 2007)

<http://www.oscr.org.uk/DocumentViewer.aspx?id=5455d7cc-a60c-456e-9d06-e623144e8359>

Border and Immigration Agency: Code of practice - Keeping children safe from harm (25 April 2008)

http://bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/keepingchildrensafe/uasc_codeofpractice.pdf?view=Binary

The Role of Further Education Providers in Promoting Community Cohesion, Fostering Shared Values and Preventing Violent Extremism (6 May 2008)

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/downloadableDocs/Community%20Cohesion%20PDF.pdf>

Glasgow 2014 - Delivering a lasting legacy for Scotland (9 May 2008)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/212495/0056525.pdf>

The Path to Citizenship: Next Steps in Reforming the Immigration System (14 May 2008)

<http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/pathtocitizenship/pathtocitizenship?view=Binary>

Cohesion Guidance for Funders (26 May 2008)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/681891>

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Job Opportunities

[Click here](#) to find out about job opportunities advertised in MEMO+ Recruitment

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Funding Opportunities

Race, Religion and Refugee Integration Grant Programme

Closing date for applications: 14 April 2008

Scottish Government programme to improve the lives of minority ethnic and faith communities in Scotland, including asylum seekers and refugees, by tackling the inequalities that currently exist, increasing race and faith equality and promoting good relations between different racial groups as well as by reducing the incidence of racism, discrimination, and religious intolerance in all their forms. The application form is available online at <http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/grant-schemes/RRRI>. For information see http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/assets/RRRI_Press_Release.doc or contact Alison Stevenson 01383 620780 / Alison.Stevenson@voluntaryactionfund.org.uk

'Youth in the world'

Closing date for applications: 15 April 2008

European funding to support youth projects to promote the exchange of experience and good practice in the field of youth and non-formal education, contribute to the development of youth policies, youth work and the voluntary sector, as well as to capacity-building and leadership development for youth organisations/structures, and to develop sustainable partnerships and networks between youth organisations. Projects must deal with one of the following themes:

- Strengthening of civil society, citizenship and democracy
- Fight against racism and xenophobia
- Inter-ethnic and inter-religious dialogue
- Post-conflict resolution and reconstruction
- The active role of women in society
- Minority rights

For information see http://www.enar-eu.org/Page_Generale.asp?DocID=16494&langue=EN

**** Volunteering Scotland Grant Scheme**

Closing date for applications: 16 May 2008

Scottish Government programme to improve the lives of individuals and their communities through volunteering. The grant aims to increased volunteers' access to employment, education, training and other volunteering opportunities, improve social and support networks, provide new and improved services to support vulnerable people and communities, and increase participation in community processes such as planning.

For information see <http://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/grant-schemes/vsgs>

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Events/Conferences/Training

** New or updated this week

*** this week!*

Embedding Equalities within your organisation

17 March 2008 in Inverness (9.30 – 4.30)

20 March 2008 in Edinburgh (9.30 – 4.30)

28 March 2008 in Glasgow (9.30 – 4.30)

SCVO training for organisations who are looking to broaden their understanding of equalities issues and to those who are looking to incorporate equalities in to their everyday functions, including the design of services. For information contact Cathie Rowall 0141 225 8003 / cathie.rowell@scvo.org.uk

**** Refugee Information Sessions**

25 March 2008 in Glasgow (12.00 – 4.00)

2 April 2008 in Glasgow (12.00 – 4.00)

Positive Action in Housing New Migrants Action Project information sessions for refugees recently granted leave to remain, particularly those granted status via the case resolution (legacy) programme. The sessions will focus on employment rights and options, further education, training and volunteering opportunities. For information contact Seonad Forbes 0141 353 2220 / seonad@paih.org or see http://www.paih.org/quickmail-latest_files/refugeeinfo.pdf

BEMIS / Community Health Exchange (CHEX)

Begins April 2008 in Glasgow (half day/week for 6 months)

Recent developments in health and social inclusion policy within Scotland have resulted in an increase in programmes/initiatives that target health inequalities and community involvement in health (e.g. community health projects and healthy living centres). Health Issues in the Community, a national training resource, is ideally suited to help equip local people who find access to mainstream educational difficult, for the real challenges that they face in developing community responses to health issues and becoming more active citizens. Accredited by the University of Edinburgh. For information contact Adnan Miyasar 0141 548 8047 / adnan.miyasar@bemis.org.uk

European Anti-Discrimination & Diversity Training

8-9 April 2008 in Glasgow

Two-day Runnymede Trust seminar, in association with the STUC, on the role of Non-Governmental Organisations and trade unions in the UK in combating discrimination on the grounds of racial and ethnic origin, age, disability, religions or belief and sexual orientation. For information see <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/news/10/30.html> or contact Sarah Isal 020 7377 9222 / sarah@runnymedetrust.org

The impact of immigration and asylum on children and young people living with HIV

13 May 2008 in Glasgow

Children in Scotland seminar to explore issues surrounding working with children and families who have unsure immigration status and are living with HIV. For information contact Megan Rodgers 0131 222 2426 / training@childreninScotland.org.uk

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

An Introduction to Working with Asylum Seekers & Refugees

22 May 2008 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course is for people working with asylum seekers and refugees who need a comprehensive understanding of the core issues affecting those seeking sanctuary in Scotland; particularly relevant to people working in social work, housing, welfare, education, employment, health, community development or the justice system. For information contact the Scottish Refugee Council 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=67>

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Useful Links

Scottish Parliament <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/home.htm>

Scottish Government <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Home>

Westminster Parliament <http://www.parliament.uk/>

Directgov (links to UK Government Departments)

http://www.direct.gov.uk/DI1/Directories/AToZOfCentralGovernment/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10013528&chk=8b2gQw

European Parliament <http://www.europarl.eu.int/parliament/public.do?language=en>

One Scotland Many Cultures <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/Pages/default.aspx>

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

SCVO <http://www.scvo.org.uk/scvo/Home/Home.aspx>

Volunteer Development Scotland www.vds.org.uk

Social Economy Scotland <http://www.socialeconomyscotland.info/content/index.asp>

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR) <http://www.oscr.org.uk/Index.stm>

Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS) <http://www.crbs.org.uk/>

Disclosure Scotland <http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/>

Useful Links (continued)

BBC News24 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/default.stm>

BBC Parliament online

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/bbc_parliament/default.stm

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The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** 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. <http://www.scojec.org/>



BEMIS is the umbrella body for ethnic minority organisations in Scotland. It aims to strengthen the capacity of the ethnic minority voluntary sector; raise the profile and coordinate the voice of this sector; and take a lead on policy issues to ensure that issues of concern are raised with government and other relevant bodies.

<http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>