

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

*MEMO is produced by the **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities** in partnership with the **Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland**. 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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The Scottish Parliament is in recess until 26 October

Immigration and Asylum

Ministerial Statement

Asylum

The Minister for Borders and Immigration (Mr. Phil Woolas): I write today to inform the House of changes we are making to the way in which we register initial asylum applications and further submissions, where someone whose appeal rights have been exhausted asks us to re-examine their claim on the basis of further information or a change in their personal circumstances.

In February 2003 we announced that anyone wishing to make an asylum claim would need to do so in person, and postal applications for asylum would no longer be accepted. We expect individuals to make their claim at a port of entry, where they will be screened and any request for support will be considered. This change was made as part of our reform of the asylum system and has ensured that applications are gripped at the beginning of the system, identity of the applicant is verified and cases are routed quickly to the responsible caseowner to progress the case.

Since then, we have made great progress in processing asylum applications as quickly as possible. We reached our target of concluding 60 per cent. of new asylum cases within six months in December 2008 and we continue to set ourselves challenging targets for the conclusion of cases. We have also been working closely with the UNHCR to improve the quality of our decision making.

Immigration and Asylum Ministerial Statement (continued)

There are, however, parts of the system where information is not gripped as quickly, and it is this we are seeking to address with the changes we will make today. When applicants have exhausted their appeal rights, they often provide further submissions asking us to reconsider their claims. Currently, individuals can still make their further submissions by post.

From 14 October, anyone wishing to make a further submission will need to do so in person by appointment, and we will stop accepting further submissions by post. The following arrangements will be in place:

- those who claimed asylum before 5 March 2007, and whose case is being managed by CRD, will be required to make any further submissions by appointment and in person at Liverpool Further Submissions Unit;
- those who claimed on or after 5 March 2007 will be required to make any further submissions in person at a specified reporting centre in their region.

In the very exceptional case where a person is genuinely unable to attend one of these sites, alternative arrangements will be made to ensure that person can still make further submissions.

It is important that anyone seeking asylum does so at the first opportunity, and we continue to expect individuals to make their asylum claim at the port of entry, on arrival.

From 14 October, it will no longer be possible for initial asylum applications to be made in Liverpool, and anyone wishing to make an initial asylum application in country will be required to do so in person at the Asylum Screening Unit in Croydon.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/wmstext/91013m0002.htm#09101348000013>

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Visas

Lord King of West Bromwich: [HL5550] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to reduce the waiting time for student visa applicants at the visa centre in Jalhandar, Punjab, and at other visa centres subject to queues.

Reply from Lord West of Spithead: All applicants are normally able to lodge their applications at Jalandhar and other visa application centres in India on the same day they attend the visa application centre. The only exception to this was in the last week of September 2009 when very large numbers of students tried to make applications before a change in the maintenance requirements for tier four student visa applications came into effect on 1 October.

The application numbers were far in excess of those we would normally expect to see (in some cases a tenfold increase) and we were therefore unable to accommodate all applicants. The number of applications has declined since and student applications are again not subject to delays at the visa application centres.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200809/ldhansrd/text/91014w0001.htm#09101428000078>

Students: Immigration

Margaret Moran: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many students from colleges not on the Register of Education and Training Providers have applied for permanent residence in the UK in each of the last five years. [292796]

Reply from Phil Woolas: The student category does not lead to settlement and information is not available as to how many migrants who have been granted settlement were previously here as students.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/text/91015w0017.htm#09101544000137>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Entry Clearances: Students

Douglas Carswell [291928]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people who entered the UK on a student visa and remained in the UK after the expiration of the visa in the last 10 years.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Since the phasing out of embarkation controls in 1994 no Government has ever been able to produce an accurate figure for the number of people who have overstayed their visas, including those who entered on a student visa.

However, as part of the Government's 10-point plan for delivery, by 2010 over 95 per cent. of non-EEA foreign nationals will be counted in and out of the country, rising to 100 per cent. by 2014. This is part of a sweeping programme of border protection which also includes the global roll-out of fingerprint visas, watch-list checks for all travellers before they arrive or depart from the UK and ID cards for foreign nationals.

Further to this, Local Immigration Teams (LITs) are being established to serve every community in the UK. Each local team will enforce immigration laws working shoulder-to-shoulder with police, Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, local authorities and other local partners to target immigration crime (including seeking to detect and remove those overstaying on their visa) and address local community concerns on migration. By December 2011 there will be a team serving every community in the country.

Graham Allen [291978]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he plans to take to ensure the effectiveness of the system for granting visas to overseas students wishing to study in the UK; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Phil Woolas: At the end of March this year we implemented Tier 4 of the Points Based System for international students.

We have monitored carefully the implementation of the new system, making various small changes to it in the light of experience. We have now received and processed more student applications than at the equivalent time last year, predominantly within customer service standards. Further IT changes will be introduced between now and February 2010 to further improve processing. We have kept in close touch with stakeholders to understand their needs.

Information on end to end processing times at each overseas post can be found at: <https://ukvisas-stage.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/processingtimes>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0017.htm#0910152000033>

Entry Clearances: Pakistan

Fiona Mactaggart [292367]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the longest period has been between the (a) application for and (b) issue or refusal of a UK visa in Pakistan; and on what date the successful appeal against refusal of that visa was concluded.

Reply from Phil Woolas: The UK Border Agency (UKBA) holds records of visa applications dating back to 1992 but it is not possible to ascertain precisely the processing times for older cases. Therefore, the UKBA has examined applications made in Pakistan since January 2006.

The longest processing time from application to decision was 917 working days in respect of a family reunion application. The application was issued and hence there was no subsequent appeal.

Current processing times are advertised on the Visa Services website at: www.ukvisas.gov.uk

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/text/91015w0015.htm#09101544000124>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Entry Clearances: Appeals

Sarah Teather [291932]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has issued on the time elapsing between an appeal determination being issued by the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal and a visa being issued to the applicant.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Guidance on Appeals (INF 19) is available on the UK Border Agency's Visa Services website: www.ukvisas.gov.uk

This advises appellants that it can take up to six weeks for the visa section to be notified through official channels that an appeal has been allowed, and that the visa section will then contact the appellant. Visa sections are expected to do so within three weeks of receiving the notification. The guidance does not go on to indicate how long it will then take for the visa to be issued as this will depend on how quickly the appellant returns their passport to the visa section and the number of checks that need to be carried out.

Parmjit Dhanda [292046]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when his Department plans to implement the decision of the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal in respect of the appeal OA/46462/2008; what the average period between a tribunal decision in favour of an appellant in an entry clearance case and the granting of entry clearance was in the most recent period for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Although appeal number OA/46462/2008 was allowed on 2 March 2009, notification was not received in the Visa Section in Islamabad until 10 June. A letter was sent to the appellant on 15 June requesting submission of the passport and this was subsequently received on 2 July. Verification checks were then undertaken and the visa was issued on 8 October. The processing was delayed due to a backlog of appeal cases in Islamabad. The UK Border Agency plans to reduce this to near zero levels by mid-November. Turnaround times in allowed appeal cases will then be significantly quicker.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0017.htm#0910152000031>

Work Permits: Bulgaria/Romania

Philip Hollobone [291067]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many UK work permits have been issued to (a) Romanian and (b) Bulgarian nationals since the accession of those countries to the EU.

Reply from Phil Woolas: The number of work permits issued between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2008 to Romanian nationals is 1,690 and to Bulgarian nationals is 3,240.

Figures are rounded to nearest 5.

The figures quoted are not provided under National Statistics protocols and have been derived from local management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change.

The figures equate to the number of individual nationals who were granted a work permit. Not all those who were granted a work permit took up the job and some may have been refused entry clearance or further leave to remain.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0022.htm#0910152000048>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Asylum: Children

Justine Greening [292410]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the (a) aims and (b) eligibility criteria are of the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Grant is; how much funding was (i) distributed to local authorities via the grant and (ii) subsequently spent by local authorities by local authority in each year since the grant began; and what estimate he has made of the amount of such funding to be provided in the next two years.

Reply from Phil Woolas: The aim of the grant is to assist local authorities in meeting the costs of supporting unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) under the provisions of the Children Act 1989. With a few small exceptions all UASC that the local authorities are supporting can be included in a claim for funding under the terms of the grant. The full terms of the grant and eligibility criteria can be found at:

www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/workingwithasylumseekers/localauthoritygrants/

The grant reimburses local authorities for expenditure already incurred (subject to audit). It is not possible to break down expenditure under the grant by year before financial year 2005/06 because of the way in which funding claims from local authorities before that time were finally settled.

The breakdown of total expenditure over the past four years is set out in the table:

	<i>Total expenditure (£ million)</i>
2005-06	144.3
2006-07	139.7
2007-08	132.7
2008-09	138.5

It is anticipated that funding levels for the next two years will be at roughly the same level as at present but this depends on discussions with local authorities and on the numbers of new UASC that arrive in the United Kingdom.

Justine Greening [292411]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what categories of expenditure are covered by the Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children Grant; how many children have received such funding in each local authority in each year since the grant began; and what estimate he has made of such funding in the next two years.

Reply from Phil Woolas: The grant covers the main expenditure local authorities incur in looking after unaccompanied asylum seeking children. This includes the cost of a foster placement, the cost of accommodation provided when fostering is not the placement option, the cost of the social workers who provide the care and general administrative costs.

The numbers of children covered by the expenditure since the financial year 2005-06 is set out in the following table. It is not possible to break down numbers before 2005-06 because of the way in which funding claims from local authorities before that time were finally settled.

It is anticipated that funding levels for the next two years will be at roughly the same level as at present but this depends on discussions with local authorities and on the numbers of new UASC that arrive in the United Kingdom.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

	<i>Supported numbers at end of year</i>
2005-06	5,521
2006-07	4,993
2007-08	4,493
2008-09	4,604

Justine Greening [292412]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what recent assessment he has made of the progress of his departmental goal to transfer a large number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children away from London and the South East as stated in his Department's February 2007 consultation paper, Planning better outcomes and support for unaccompanied asylum seeking children.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Insufficient local authorities outside the South-East have expressed a willingness to accept the transfer of the children to their areas to make this policy goal viable.

We are therefore developing the other policy goals set out in the consultation paper on the basis that children who are the responsibility of authorities in the South-East will stay in that area for as long as they remain in the United Kingdom.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0017.htm#0910152000026>

Human Trafficking: Females

Chris Huhne [291552]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many shelters for trafficked women his Department plans to build in each of the next five years.

Reply from Claire Ward: The Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking which the Government ratified in December last year commits the UK to provision of sheltered accommodation for all those trafficked women who need it.

The Government have consequently invested £4 million into specialist support services for victims of human trafficking over the next two years.

This includes an investment of £3.7 million into the Poppy project to expand and improve the services that are available to victims that have been trafficked into the sex-industry and domestic servitude. The additional investment will see an expansion of supported accommodation, with refuge places for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude in London, Sheffield and Cardiff. The investment will also fund a new national co-ordinator who will help set best practice standards and work with areas to raise awareness with local agencies and funding commissioners. There will also be an increase in advocacy workers to help provide one-to-one tailored support and the community outreach team will also be extended with two link workers based within the UK Human Trafficking Centre to work in partnership with the police, UK Border Agency and other partners to help with victim identification and onward referral into support.

Additionally, £300,000 is being invested into the UK Human Trafficking Centre to develop flexible support services for victims of labour trafficking.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0017.htm#0910152000034>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Human Trafficking

Anthony Steen [293075]: If she will hold discussions with the Director of Public Prosecutions on policy for the prosecution of human trafficking offences.

Reply from the Solicitor-General: The Attorney-General and I have regular meetings with the DPP, at which we discuss a range of issues. We are due to see him later today. If there were particular concerns about the prosecution of human trafficking offences we would of course raise them with him, within the terms of the protocol between the Attorney-General and prosecuting Departments.

Anthony Steen: Will the Solicitor-General put on the agenda of the meeting with the DPP the question of confiscation orders against human traffickers? The orders rob traffickers of money, but they do nothing to help victims. Compensation orders for victims are allowed under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, but the money that confiscation orders take from traffickers automatically goes to the Treasury unless the DPP asks for compensation orders at the same time. It is a cruel joke that victims should be deprived of money in that way, and it goes totally against the spirit of the European convention on action against human trafficking which was approved by the Government and the House and which is now being brought into operation.

Reply from the Solicitor-General: When I put something on the agenda for a meeting with the DPP I usually have evidence to support it. All I have at the moment is the hon. Gentleman's assertion—

Mr. Steen: That should be good enough!

Reply from the Solicitor-General: Fine; I will take his word for that. However, if there is more evidence, please will he make sure that we have it?

Sir Alan Beith: What thought is the Solicitor-General giving to the fact that it is very difficult to get victims of trafficking to act as credible witnesses? That is because, at the end of a trial, they will have no right to remain or to work outside the sex trade—and, obviously, no right to work in that trade either. Moreover, they will have a well founded fear that, if they are returned to their country of origin, they will suffer attack from the criminal associates of the people whom they may have helped to put behind bars.

Reply from the Solicitor-General: The right hon. Gentleman knows that the situation for such people has improved very strongly, with our ratification and implementation of the convention. Such people have a far longer reflection period than is required by international law. Serious support is given to them—we will be funding the POPPY project, which is the leading agency to look after them, to the tune of about £3.75 million over the next couple of years—and serious consideration is given to whether they should not be given a right to remain. We will do all that we can to ensure that such victims help the authorities and that they are properly supported and restored to a better life afterwards.

Philip Davies: Has any assessment been made of whether the free movement of people across the EU makes it any more difficult to bring forward prosecutions for human trafficking?

Reply from the Solicitor-General: I am afraid that I do not know, but my instincts are that that probably does not make any difference. However, if a piece of work should be done on that, the all-party group on the trafficking of women and children will ensure that it is done.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/debtext/91015-0002.htm#09101538000043>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Human Trafficking

Peter Bone [293078]: What her assessment is of the effectiveness of laws relating to human trafficking for sexual exploitation.

Reply from the Solicitor-General: We keep the effectiveness of the laws on human trafficking for sexual exploitation under review, as our action plan to deal with that topic makes very clear, and if there is a gap, we will tighten the law. As the hon. Gentleman no doubt knows, there are provisions in the Policing and Crime Bill to tackle the demand for exploitative forms of prostitution, including a strict liability offence that criminalises the payment for sexual services to prostitutes who have been subject to force, deception or threats.

Peter Bone: Following the question from My hon. Friend the Member for Totnes (Mr. Steen) about taking money from traffickers and giving it to the victims, is not another problem that the money is very quickly taken out of this country and redistributed to traffickers in the rest of the EU and that we can only confiscate money that remains in this country? Should we consider making this a European issue, so that we can get the money from across the whole of Europe?

Reply from the Solicitor-General: A good deal of work on asset recovery, the proceeds of crime and internationalising the issue is in process. As I told the hon. Member for Totnes (Mr. Steen), if there is any evidence that the Crown Prosecution Service is not applying for compensation to help victims, I would be very pleased to hear it, and if there are any accounts of defects in the process internationally, that will help us in the work that I have already indicated is going on. Therefore, examples would be very welcome.

Christopher Chope: Does the Solicitor-General accept that there is still a significant problem? In fact, human trafficking for sexual exploitation is increasing, and people are fearful that it will increase substantially in advance of the Olympic games. What are the Government going to do to reduce it?

Reply from the Solicitor-General: We are very much apprised of the hazard that an increase in trafficking will be connected with the Olympic games. Indeed, the hon. Gentleman will have seen that there is a similar apprehension about South Africa and the World cup. We have a concerted action plan, we have ratified the convention and we are totally compliant with all our international requirements, so we are engaged on a mission to try to reduce trafficking however and wherever it is found.

Since I answer in relation to the Crown Prosecution Service, I can indicate that the prosecution level has gone up considerably: in 2006-07, 40 people were prosecuted in connection with sexual exploitation; in 2007-08, 87 were prosecuted; and in 2008-09, 114 were prosecuted. Clearly, we are using the courts as a deterrent as well.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/debtext/91015-0002.htm#09101538000045>

Asylum and Immigration Tribunal

Simon Hughes [290262]: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many files were destroyed by the fire at the Asylum and Immigration Tribunal Centre in London on 19 March 2009; how many such files have yet to be reconstructed; how many cases have been delayed as a consequence of that fire; and when he expects those cases to have been determined.

Reply from Bridget Prentice: On 18 March 2009, 127 Asylum and Immigration Tribunal (AIT) files and 22 Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) files were completely destroyed by fire at the AIT's centre, Field House.

All of the SIAC files have been reconstructed. All the 127 AIT files were awaiting

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

decisions from the Court of Appeal. Of these, 12 have been reconstructed and remitted back to the AIT. Administrative staff have requested the necessary papers from the parties in order for these cases to be listed for hearings. A further 26 have been completed because they were withdrawn at the Court of Appeal or Court of Appeal judgments not in favour of the appellant have been delivered. The Court of Appeal has now returned from summer recess and it is expected that the remainder of these will be cleared.

There were also 141 files, at various stages of the AIT reconsideration process, that were damaged by water and smoke and these were sent to a file recovery centre. On return, the files were checked and any papers that were illegible were re-requested from parties. All these cases are now progressing through the appeal system.

A total of 128 AIT cases were adjourned immediately after the fire but hearings resumed a week later at an alternative venue. A total of 93 have already been heard and determined, four have been heard and are awaiting determination, 24 were heard in September and will be determined in October, two will be heard and determined in October and five will be heard and determined in November. These timescales reflect the time needed, in some cases, to reconstruct damaged appeal files. The SI AC cases have not been subject to any delay.

Priority has been given to High Court Review Filter Applications (where a party is dissatisfied with the first appeal decision) with the aim that parties received decisions within 10 days. Here, the impact of the fire was compounded by unexpected increases in workload. All of these cases have now been cleared.

The files destroyed and damaged represent a small number compared with over 1,000 which were salvaged from Field House. A huge contingency operation where administrative staff and members of the judiciary worked closely together ensured that hearings were resumed and the business relocated with a minimum inconvenience and delay to customers.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091013/text/91013w0026.htm>

Immigrants: Young Offender Institutions

Jim Cousins [292952]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young people at each young offender institution who were detained beyond their sentence expiry date as a consequence of unresolved immigration issues there were in (a) 2005, (b) 2006, (c) 2007 and (d) 2008.

Reply from Phil Woolas: Detention beyond sentence for foreign national offenders under the age of 18 is maintained only under my authorisation and in consultation with various sources of expertise, including the Office of the Children's Champion and Children's Services. Detention of child offenders is a last resort and all relevant matters are taken into account when considering their welfare.

Information on the number of foreign nationals held beyond their sentence specifically in each young offender institution can be obtained only by examining each individual record at disproportionate cost.

The Ministry of Justice latest published figures for the foreign national prisoner population as at 30 June 2009 on their website at:

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/populationincustody.htm>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/text/91015w0016.htm#09101544000129>

Immigration and Asylum (continued) Westminster Early Day Motions

Chris Mullin (1982) Detention of Children – That this House notes with concern that around 2,000 children are detained each year in immigration detention centres, some for periods of several months; notes the opinion of Save the Children and the Children's Commissioner that this is unjustified and damaging; notes that families with children are among the least likely to abscond; further notes that some EU and Commonwealth countries have successfully introduced solutions other than secure detention for families who have exhausted their asylum claims; and urgently calls on the Government to end the practice of holding children in immigration detention centres.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=39212&SESSION=899>

Keith Vaz (2058) Calais migrant camp – That this House believes that the existence of the Jungle migrant camp in Calais, France was inhumane; welcomes the action taken by the French authorities to close the camp, but is concerned that this is only a temporary measure; congratulates the British and French governments on their continued cooperation on the issue; notes that this is not solely a British and French problem; and calls for immediate and consistent action from countries across the European Union resulting in the issue being dealt with from the moment of arrival in Europe rather than at the last stage at the furthest edge of the continent.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=39286&SESSION=899>

Press Releases

Points-based system - approved English language tests for Tier 1 and Tier 2

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2009/october/tier-1-2-english-language-tests?area=allNews>

Changes to the asylum process

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2009/october/18-asylum-changes?area=allNews>

New rules forcing asylum seekers to travel 400 miles to lodge their claims a 'huge step back' says Scottish Refugee Council

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/UKBA_Changes_141009

Murphy welcomes progress on Glasgow Asylum Seekers Pilot

<http://www.scotlandoffice.gov.uk/scotlandoffice/12844.html>

UN agency calls for better monitoring to combat human trafficking in Europe

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=32575&Cr=human+trafficking&Cr1=>

News

Outrage over visa "injustice"

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/output/2009/10/14/newsstory13943242t0.asp>

Angus MP's vow on 'unjust' moves to deport

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/output/2009/10/15/newsstory13948990t0.asp>

Deportation threat mum is hopeful

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/output/2009/10/16/newsstory13954657t0.asp>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

Please let me stay

<http://scotlandonsunday.scotsman.com/opinion/Please-let-me-stay.5743372.jp>

Iraq sends back UK asylum flight

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8310572.stm>

Iraq returns deported asylum seekers to Britain

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/home-news/iraq-returns-deported-asylum-seekers-to-britain-1.926626>

Immigration centre's toll on children's mental health

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/immigration-centres-toll-on-childrens-mental-health-1801772.html>

Influx of 1m migrants will cripple public spending, warn MPs

<http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/politics/article6879636.ece>

Destitute asylum seekers top 1,000

<http://news.scotsman.com/latestnews/Destitute-asylum-seekers--.5743378.jp>

Deported Iraqis put straight back on plane to Britain

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/deported-iraqis-put-straight-back-on-plane-to-britain-1804350.html>

We are shockingly complacent about locking up 2,000 children a year

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/libertycentral/2009/oct/18/henry-porter-asylum-seekers-immigration>

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Race Relations

Press Releases

Diwali celebrated at Downing Street

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page21020>

Foreign and Commonwealth Office hosts Eid reception

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=Speech&id=21026698>

PM celebrates contribution of the black community

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page20962>

Row over school closures for Muslim, Hindu and Sikh holidays

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/religion/6358886/Row-over-school-closures-for-Muslim-Hindu-and-Sikh-holidays.html>

New Publications

In Defence of British Muslims: A response to BNP racist propaganda

http://www.quilliamfoundation.org/images/stories/pdfs/in_defence_of_british_muslims_09.pdf

Race Relations

New Publications (continued)

Building Cohesive Communities: What frontline staff and community activists need to know

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/1357439.pdf>

News

Festival of light that's heavy on the calories

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/this-britain/festival-of-light-thats-heavy-on-the-calories-1804877.html>

Diwali: from south India to Sheffield

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2009/oct/17/diwali-india-fireworks-narakasura>

The flourishing of Diwali celebrations shows how multicultural Britain has become

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2009/oct/16/diwali-celebrations-multicultural-britain>

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Racism and Religious Hatred

Westminster Parliamentary Question

Racial Hatred: Football

John Mann [292042]: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many reports of racist abuse relating to football matches police forces in England and Wales received during the 2008-09 football season.

Reply from Alan Campbell: Levels of racist behaviour in connection with football matches in England and Wales is extremely low. During the football season 2008-09, over 36 million spectators attended over 3,100 competitive and friendly matches. In total, local police recorded 64 incidents of "hate crime" inside and outside of football stadia. This categorisation of hate crime includes racist and homophobic chanting or behaviour, incidents involving ethnic minority fans or local residents, the distribution of racist material, and other racist or extreme right wing activity. The incidents recorded usually involved individuals as opposed to groups of fans.

A great deal has been achieved over the past decade in terms of preventing and tackling racism in connection with football. All of the agencies involved in football safety and security, including supporter groups, are committed to working together to combat hate crime, including racism. The law makes clear that the courts should consider imposing a football banning order on any person convicted of racist chanting or other racially aggravated offences committed in connection with football.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091015/text/91015w0017.htm#09101544000134>

Racism and Religious Hatred (continued)

Press Release

Commission forces BNP to change its constitution and membership criteria after legal case victory

<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/media-centre/commission-forces-bnp-to-change-its-constitution-and-membership-criteria-after-legal-case-victory/>

News

Race abuse trial PC denies grudge

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/8304943.stm>

Undercover job hunters reveal huge race bias in Britain's workplaces

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/money/2009/oct/18/racism-discrimination-employment-undercover>

Jane Elliott, the American schoolmarm who would rid us of our racism

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2009/oct/18/racism-psychology-jane-elliott-4>

BNP to consider non-white members

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/8308582.stm

BNP ready to ditch race-bar rule

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/latestnews/BNP-ready--to-ditch.5739440.jp>

BNP to amend its constitution, court told

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/bnp-to-amend-its-constitution-court-told-1803162.html>

BNP may have to admit black and Asian members after court challenge

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/bnp-may-have-to-admit-black-and-asian-members-after-court-challenge-1803635.html>

They can be colour-blind when it suits them

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/they-can-be-colourblind-when-it-suits-them-1803633.html>

How the BNP's far-right journey ends up on primetime TV

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/oct/18/nick-griffin-question-time-bbc>

Holocaust survivors will confront BNP on Question Time

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/politics/6360260/Holocaust-survivors-will-confront-BNP-on-Question-Time.html>

People should be trusted to see through extremism

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/6358685/People-should-be-trusted-to-see-through-extremism.html>

Ministers to spend £12m fighting white working-class extremism

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/ministers-to-spend-16312m-fighting-white-workingclass-extremism-1802824.html>

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Other Holyrood

Press Release

Water charge exemptions

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/News/Releases/2009/10/16112707>

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Other Westminster

Parliamentary Questions

Shia Courts

Andrew Rosindell [287969]: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice what recent discussions he has had on Shia courts in the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Bridget Prentice: It is assumed the hon. Member is asking about Sharia councils. Sharia councils do not describe themselves as Sharia 'courts' because they do not have powers to enforce their decisions. Sharia councils are not part of the court system in England and Wales. There are a number of Sharia councils in England and Wales that, on a private basis, when the parties consent, apply Sharia principles to reach resolution of personal and contractual disputes. Some councils have several branches in major cities but councils are not unified under one system governing their approach to issues or their administration so their processes and even their interpretation of Sharia principles may differ.

I also refer the hon. Member to an answer given by my noble Friend Lord Bach on 21 May 2009, *Official Report, House of Lords*, column WA362. The Government have also commissioned a small-scale research project to investigate the number and distribution of Sharia councils in England and Wales. There has not been any recent ministerial discussions on Sharia councils.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091012/text/91012w0037.htm#0910139000084>

Forced Marriages Act 2008: Prosecutions

Chris Huhne [291550]: To ask the Secretary of State for Justice how many prosecutions there have been for offences under the Forced Marriage Act 2008 since its introduction.

Reply from Claire Ward: The Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 was implemented in November 2008 providing greater protection for those at risk, preventing forced marriage and enabling courts to make forced marriage protection orders (FMPOs). These are civil provisions. There is not a separate Forced Marriage Act 2008.

I am told that since implementation of the Act on 25 November 2008, up to 31 August 2009, a total of 64 FMPOs have been made.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091012/text/91012w0025.htm#0910139000038>

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Travelling People

Reply from Robert Neill: To ask the Minister for Women and Equality what research the Equality and Human Rights Commission has undertaken into Travellers. [288262]

Reply from Maria Eagle: The Equality and Human Rights Commission has undertaken the following research:

(i) A review of the inequalities experienced by Gypsy and Traveller communities across the Commission's mandate and public services, building on the race focus of Common Ground published in 2006 by the Commission for Racial Equality.

(ii) An assessment of local authorities' progress in meeting the accommodation needs of Gypsy and Traveller communities in England.

Both pieces of research were published in March 2009 alongside the Commission's report, "Gypsies and Travellers: Simple solutions for living together", which highlights and promotes best practice.

Similar research for Scotland will follow in the autumn.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091012/text/91012w0007.htm#09101240000038>

Roma Children

Anthony Steen: What information he holds on the number of Roma children from other EU member states who attend school in Scotland. [292282]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Scotland (Ann McKechin): The UK Government do not hold information on the number of Roma children in Scottish schools. The pupil census in Scotland is a devolved matter for the Scottish Government.

Reply from Anthony Steen: Wilberforce banished slavery 200 years ago. We have new slavery now both in Scotland and in England. We have thousands of eastern European children on the streets involved in criminal activity organised by trafficking gangs. They do not go to school. What are the Secretary of State and his counterparts doing to rid our streets of this Fagin-like situation? It is quite disgraceful and it needs to be dealt with.

Ann McKechin: The hon. Gentleman has a proud track record in campaigning on this serious issue. I welcome his concern today. Many of these matters are devolved to Scotland, but I can confirm that the UK Government and the Scottish Government are working closely together to tackle the problem. That is one reason why we ratified the Council of Europe convention on action against trafficking in human beings last year and why we have set up a national centre for trafficking in Sheffield, with which the Scottish authorities—including the police—are fully co-operating. They are providing us with important intelligence so that we can track these criminal networks across the whole of the UK.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm091014/debtext/91014-0002.htm#09101435000037>

Press Releases

Opening of the Supreme Court

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/Page21003>

Supreme Court opening is major milestone for government's constitutional reform

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/newsrelease161009a.htm>

Opening of the UK Supreme Court

<http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/speech161009a.htm>

Other Westminster Press Releases (continued)

Councillors in travellers' insults row

<http://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/Article.aspx/1444049>

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New Publications

The charity test: ability to pay charity fees

<http://www.oscr.org.uk/DocumentViewer.aspx?id=49141f7e-e7e4-4afc-b987-aa677651b89c>

Assessing the ability to pay for the fees charged by charities Part 2:

Implementation <http://www.oscr.org.uk/DocumentViewer.aspx?id=29e0432a-d835-4e67-8d72-746480e95f53>

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Other News

Rethinking Thought for the Day

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/6360110/Rethinking-Thought-for-the-Day.html>

A dispensation to cause pain

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2009/oct/15/animal-slaughter-religion-research>

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Bills in Progress ** New or updated this week

Holyrood

** Arbitration Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/19-Arbitration/index.htm>

Stage 2 consideration of amendments

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/eet/or-09/ee09-2602.htm#Col2501>

Criminal Justice and Licensing Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/24-CrimJustLc/index.htm>

Public Services Reform Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/26-PubSerRef/index.htm>

Bills in Progress (continued)

Westminster

Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/borderscitizenshipandimmigration.html>

Crown Employment (Nationality) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/crownemploymentnationality.html>

**** Equality Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2008-09/equality.html>

amendment paper

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200809/cmbills/131/amend/pbc1311310a.1295.html>

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Consultations

(closing date)

** new or updated this week

Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland survey about the experiences of BME older people (online survey, no closing date given)

<http://tcp3.com/bmesurvey>

Scottish Refugee Council Strategic Plan (online survey, no closing date given)

https://eazymultimedia.net/EazySurvey/Questionnaire/EazyQuestionnaire3_home.aspx?proj=5EE31727-0F6C-4EDD-9E7E-E7A75DDCFF9A

Earning the right to stay: A new points test for citizenship (26 October)

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/221878/earning-the-right-to-stay/earning-the-right-to-stay/earned-citizenship-consultation?view=Binary>

Review of the Twice Yearly Count of Gypsies/Travellers (30 October 2009)

http://www.craigforth.co.uk/TYC_Scotstat/

Charging for immigration and visa applications (1 December 2009)

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/221878/charging09/>

Integrated Reporting (Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, 29 December 2009)

<http://www.oscr.org.uk/DocumentViewer.aspx?id=ae8a56f1-3abd-4d53-b0c1-0ee5708f4c39>

A Road Less Travelled - A Draft Gypsy Traveller Strategy (Welsh Assembly Government, 5 January 2010)

<http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/housingcommunity/gypsytravellers/?lang=en>

Consultation on Public Sector Equality Duty Specific Duties (15 January 2010)

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/286361/0087195.pdf>

UK Border Agency Equality Scheme (15 January 2010)

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/Stakeholder-questionnaire.pdf>

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Job Opportunities

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

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Events/Conferences/Training

** New or updated this week

**** this week!**

FARE Action Week against Racism and Discrimination in European Football

15-27 October 2009

For the 10th successive season the Football Against Racism in Europe (FARE) network is coordinating action in and around football stadiums across Europe, and large sections of the European football family in 40 countries will stand united against racism and discrimination. For information see

<http://www.farenet.org/default.asp?intPageID=7&intArticleID=1970>

**** this week!**

Islam and Violence Against Women

19 October in Edinburgh (10.00 – 4.00)

Amina seminar to outline where Islam as a faith stands on the issue of violence against women and highlight some of the misconceptions surrounding issues including domestic abuse, rape, forced marriage, FGM and honour killing. For information contact Tabassum Sarfraz 0141 585 8026 / info@mwrc.org.uk

**** this week!**

Are you looking for new Board members?

21 October 2009 in Edinburgh.

22 October 2009 in Glasgow

26 October 2009 in Dundee

28 October 2009 in Aberdeen

29 October 2009 in Inverness

The SCVO Business on Board programme is a free brokerage service that can put organisations in touch with experienced business people interested in joining their Board. For more information contact Shamin Akhtar businessonboard@scvo.org.uk / 0131 474 6154

**** this week!**

Article 8 case law and practice

22 October 2009 in Glasgow (2.00 – 5.15)

ILPA Seminar to update practitioners' working knowledge on Article 8 since the four landmark cases from the House of Lords now over 12 months ago, and offer practical advice on the approach in individual appeals. For information see

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/noticeboard/IPLA_Seminar_Sep

**** this week!**

Asylum in Scotland: The Year Ahead

23 October 2009 in Glasgow (9.00 – 4.40)

Scottish Refugee Council conference to consider developments in the asylum and immigration system and the implications of the General Election. For information see

<http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/Conference09> or contact Graeme Corbett graeme.corbett@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk / 0141 223 7930

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Scottish Third Sector Research Conference

26 October 2009 in Edinburgh (9.45 – 5.00)

Conference organised by SCVO in conjunction with the Centre for Public Services Research, Edinburgh University Business School to connect researchers, policy-makers and practitioners to ensure Scotland's Voluntary Sector has the latest knowledge and research at its fingertips. For information contact Ian Lees ian.lees@scvo.org.uk

To find out how to submit a paper for the conference see

<http://www.scvo.org.uk/scvo/Information/ViewInformation.aspx?al=t&page=&all=&from=DSR&Info=1946&TCID=30&PageName=Impact>

Religion in Scottish Schools

28 October 2009 in Glasgow (1.00 – 4.00)

Govan Law Centre seminar to outline the law relating to religion in Scottish schools, discuss how laws banning discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief affect schools in Scotland, and debate the issue of denominational education and faith schools. For information contact see http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/09x_govan_law_centre.pdf

Equalities: from vertical to horizontal

29 October 2009 in Glasgow (9.45 – 3.30)

Voluntary Action Fund workshop for organisations striving to work across equality strands. For information contact Rhona Morris rhona.morris@voluntaryactionfund.org.uk / 01383 620780.

Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator consultation on Integrated Reporting

3 November 2009 in Aberdeen (1.30)

5 November 2009 in Inverness (1.30)

17 November 2009 in Glasgow (6.00pm)

18 November 2009 in Glasgow (9.30 and 1.30)

24 November 2009 in Edinburgh (6.00pm)

25 November 2009 in Edinburgh (9.30 and 1.30)

1 December 2009 in Dumfries (1.30)

OSCR is looking for comments on our consultation 'Integrated Reporting - The future of reporting and the register' which aims to streamline reporting procedures and to enhance the information about charities made available to the public. For information see <http://www.oscr.org.uk/Events.aspx>

Judge a Book by its Cover? Not me!

4 November 2009 in Inverness (10.00 – 12.00)

11 March 2010 in Edinburgh (10.00 – 12.00)

SCVO seminar to discover more about the process of stereotyping, and how misinformed judgements may lead to prejudice and discrimination. For information contact Jane Baillie jane.baillie@scvo.org.uk / 0131 474 8019

Religious and Moral Education and Multi-Culturalism: Scotland in the Wider European Context

5 November 2009 in Edinburgh (10.00 – 5.00)

Edinburgh University conference to discuss the experiences of majority and minority groups in relation to Religious and Moral Education in Scottish schools, and how Scotland compares with other European countries in its approach to the teaching of Religious and Moral Education. For information contact Helen Christie helen.christie@ed.ac.uk / 0131 651 6459 or see

http://www.scojec.org/memo/files/09xi_remc.doc

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

An Introduction to the Needs and Experiences of Refugee Women

12 November 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course for people working with asylum seekers and refugees who need a comprehensive understanding of the core issues affecting women seeking sanctuary in Scotland. For information contact 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Participation and Influence with New Communities

18 November 2009 in Glasgow

Voluntary Action Fund workshop for organisations working with refugees, asylum seekers and/or migrant communities, and those who have an interest in community participation and partnerships. The workshop will explore what we know of the barriers to involvement in community planning and civic participation by people in Scotland's new communities. For information contact Rhona Morris 01383 620780 / rhona.morris@voluntaryactionfund.org.uk

The Next 20 Years: The Challenge for Social Welfare, Debt, Housing and Asylum Law

18 November 2009 in Glasgow (11.30 – 5.30)

Legal Services Agency conference including presentations on mental health, landlord and tenant, mortgage arrears, asylum and trafficking, debt, health and safety at work, poverty, climate change, human rights and management issues. For information see <http://www.lsa.org.uk/thenext20yearsthechallenge.aspx>

Young Scot: Sounds Right!

26 November 2009 in Edinburgh (7.00pm – 10.00)

For 11 to 17 year olds coming as part of a recognised group

Young Scot: Sounds Right is designed to champion key articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the right to get, and to share, information and the right to relax, play and join in a wide range of activities. For information see <http://www.youngscotsoundsright.org/> or contact Graeme Park graemep@youngscot.org / 0131 313 2488 Ext – 2223.

Scottish Charity Accounts and Reporting to OSCR

30 November 2009 in Edinburgh (9.30 – 4.30)

SCVO seminar to look at what OSCR expects from charities in terms of compliance. For information contact Jane Baillie 0131 474 8019 / jane.baillie@scvo.org.uk

Introduction to Working with Asylum Seekers & Refugees

8 December 2009 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course to identify the issues and concerns participants have in relation to working with asylum seekers and refugees, provide information on legal, political, economic and historical factors in relation to people seeking asylum, share ideas for developing good practice, and to identify strategies and resources for work with refugees. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / train@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=73>

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Introduction to Professional Practice in Race Equality

Course starting 3 February 2010 in Paisley (Wed evenings 6.15 – 9.00pm)

Course jointly organised by the University of the West of Scotland, and West of Scotland Race Equality Council to develop a critical understanding of the concepts 'race', racism and ethnicity, develop a working knowledge of the content and impact of the 1976 Race Relations Act and Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000, identify key elements of best practice towards race equality in employment and service delivery, and analyse and evaluate current progress and challenges in managing change towards race equality in his/her own workplace. For information see

<http://www.wsrec.co.uk/newsite/images/PaisleyUni/new%20ippire%20leaflet%20print%202009-10.pdf> or contact Duncan Sim duncan.sim@uws.ac.uk, or WSREC 0141 337 6626

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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/>

Scottish Refugee Council www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Scottish Inter Faith Council <http://www.scottishinterfaithcouncil.org/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>
Scotland Helpline 0845 604 5510

Scottish Human Rights Commission <http://scottishhumanrights.com/>

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 (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 Charity SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>



BEMIS is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting the development of the Ethnic Minority Third Sector and communities. **BEMIS** aims: To empower and build the capacity of minority formal and informal community organisations; As a strategic partner with Government, to be proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland; and To help develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>



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.scotlandagainstracism.com/>