

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

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Immigration and Asylum

Holyrood Committees

Equal Opportunities Committee: Migration and Trafficking Inquiry

Evidence from the Lord Advocate

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/equal/or-10/eo10-1702.htm#Col2073>

Public Petitions Committee

Consideration of PE 1288: NHS Translation and Interpretation Services

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Westminster Debates

House of Commons: Anti-Slavery Day

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101014/debtext/101014-0003.htm#1010142900002>

Westminster Hall: Human Trafficking

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101012/halltext/101012h0001.htm#1010124100003>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Debates (continued)

House of Lords: Human Trafficking

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101014-0001.htm#10101424000808>

Westminster Ministerial Statement

Returns to Zimbabwe

The Minister for Immigration (Damian Green): I am announcing today our intention to end the current suspension of enforced returns of failed asylum seekers to Zimbabwe. There are some Zimbabweans who continue to have a well-founded fear of persecution; we continue to grant protection to those people. As with any other nationality, every case is considered on its individual merits and against the background of the latest available country information from a wide range of reliable sources including international organisations, non-governmental organisations and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The courts have found that not all Zimbabweans are in need of international protection and given the improved situation on the ground in Zimbabwe since the formation of the inclusive Government in 2009, the time is now right to bring our policy on returns of failed Zimbabwean asylum seekers into line with that on every other country. This will mean that failed asylum seekers from Zimbabwe will from now on be treated in exactly the same way as failed asylum seekers of all other countries when it comes to enforcing returns.

Those found not to be in need of protection have always been expected to return home. We prefer these individuals to return voluntarily and many hundreds have done so. It is in everyone's interest for people to return to Zimbabwe and use their skills to support themselves and help rebuild the country. The Government support this process and are in active dialogue with Zimbabweans to explore how this process can be further assisted. It remains open to Zimbabweans to return home voluntarily under one of the assisted voluntary return (AVR) programmes which are available for individuals of all nationalities. There are three programmes available under which all returnees receive support in acquiring travel documentation, flight costs to their country of origin and onward domestic transport, airport assistance at departure and arrival airports and, for those eligible, up to £1,500 worth of reintegration assistance per person including a £500 relocation grant on departure for immediate resettlement needs and, once home, a range of reintegration options which are delivered "in kind".

The Immigration and Asylum Chamber of the Unified Tribunal Service (IAC) will be hearing in the near future a further country guidance case on general safety of return to Zimbabwe which we expect to reflect the improvements in Zimbabwe since the previous country guidance case was decided in 2008. Therefore, although there is no reason why Zimbabweans who both we, and the courts, have found not to be in need of protection should not now be removed, we will not enforce the first returns until the IAC has delivered its determination. Those who have no right to remain in the UK, and who chose not to return voluntarily, will then face enforced return, in exactly the same way as failed asylum seekers of all other countries.

This change in asylum policy which I have announced today does not reflect any change in our categorical opposition to human rights abuses in Zimbabwe. We will continue to call, both bilaterally and with our international partners, for an end to all such abuses and the restoration of internationally accepted human rights standards in Zimbabwe.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101014/wmstext/101014m0001.htm#1010143000020>

Immigration and Asylum (continued)

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

British Citizenship

Lord Avebury: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people, broken down by country of birth, were registered as British citizens through applications made under Section 4C of the British Nationality Act 1981 between 1 January 2003 and 30 June 2010. [HL2226]

To read the lengthy tables given by the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones) see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0001.htm#10101326001739>

Nationality

Ian Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applicants for nationality in categories requiring residency in the UK of five years were granted nationality following a period of permanent residency of fewer than five years in the most recent period for which figures are available; for what reasons the residency requirements were waived in such cases; and if she will make a statement. [17017]

Reply from Damian Green: Those avenues to British citizenship requiring five years residence (naturalisation under section 6(1) British Nationality Act (BNA) 1981 and registration under section 4(2) BNA 1981) include it as a mandatory requirement. The applicant must have been resident in the UK five years prior to applying. The answer is therefore, strictly, nil. However, up to 450 days absence from the UK is allowed during the five-year qualifying period and there is discretion available to overlook absences in excess of this level, within reason, in certain circumstances. The number of such cases could be obtained only by the detailed examination of individual case records at disproportionate costs.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101013/text/101013w001.htm#10101332000058>

Immigration Controls

Nicholas Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many organisations have been granted sponsorship status for (a) Tier 2 and (b) Tier 4 schemes since their inception. [14582]

Reply from Damian Green: The Tier 2 sponsor register opened on 28 February 2008. From 28 February 2008 to 8 September 2010, 18,078 Tier 2 licences have been granted. The Tier 4 sponsor register opened on 28 July 2008. Between 28 July 2008 and 8 September 2010, 2,445 licences have been granted. Both figures include organisations whose licences may have been suspended, revoked or withdrawn. A full list of sponsors currently licensed can be found on the website at:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101013/text/101013w001.htm#10101332000055>

Immigration

David Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate she has made of the number of people with pending applications for indefinite leave to remain who have been in the UK for (a) up to five years, (b) between five and 10 years and (c) 15 years or more. [15980]

Reply from Damian Green: This information is not available from the UK Border Agency's Case Information Database (CID) as the information requested is not recorded in a format that can be retrieved by running Management Information (MI) reports.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w008.htm#10101213000092>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Immigration

Andrew Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people had overstayed the time limit of their leave to remain on the latest date for which figures are available. [16059]

Reply from Damian Green: It has not been possible to accurately estimate the number of people who have overstayed their limited leave to remain in the UK since the dismantling of embarkation controls.

The wider immigration programme, contained in "The Coalition: our programme for government" published on 20 May, includes a commitment to support e-Borders and re-introduce entry and exit checks.

I am aware of research by the London School of Economics (LSE) in May 2009 which gave a central estimate for the total irregular migrant population in the UK as at the end of 2007 of 618,000 (1.0% of UK population) within a range of 417,000 to 863,000.

The LSE report is available to view at:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/collections/LSELondon/pdf/irregular%20migrants%20full%20report.pdf>

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101012/text/101012w0002.htm#10101262000009>

Immigration

The Earl of Clancarty: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many creative workers have been awarded certificates of sponsorship under tier 5 of the immigration regulations since it was introduced on 27 November 2008. [HL2431]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many creative organisations applied to become a licensed sponsor for the purposes of tier 5 of the immigration regulations in the past 12 months.[HL2432]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many creative organisations had their applications to become a licensed sponsor for the purposes of tier 5 of the immigration regulations refused in the past 12 months; and what reasons were given for refusal.[HL2433]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): Information relating to creative organisations separately from sporting ones is not collated centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Between 27 November 2008 to 6 October 2010, 43,645 certificates of sponsorship were used by workers under the tier five (creative and sporting) category of the points-based system.

In the period 7 October 2009 to 6 October 2010, 825 organisations applied to become a licensed tier five (creative and sporting) sponsor. In the same period 55 organisations had their application to become a licensed tier five (creative and sporting) sponsor refused

It is not possible to provide the reasons for refusal for each application but UK Border Agency reasons for refusal include previous poor compliance with sponsorship or work permit requirements, failure to be in possession of appropriate accreditation and failure to provide information necessary to assess compliance.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101014w0001.htm#10101422000149>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Education: Overseas Students

Lord Naseby: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to enforce the rules that require students coming to the United Kingdom for study to have an intermediate, rather than elementary, level of English.

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): My Lords, in order to enforce the rule that students must have an intermediate level of English when applying to study in the UK, the UK Border Agency will refuse applications in cases where students who are required to have an English language test set by an approved provider cannot present the verifiable evidence of having so achieved that qualification. These rules came into effect on 12 August.

Lord Naseby: My Lords, that is a very encouraging Answer, because I have asked questions in this broad field at least four times, and this is the first time that we have heard a positive Answer about progress, compared with the shambles whereby something like 20 per cent of overseas students are still here five years after graduating. ... Will she ensure that the Foreign Office, the UK Border Agency and the home agencies involved, for once, co-ordinate their activities so that genuine students can come to genuine universities and genuine colleges?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: ... we have put in place a number of measures which indeed include co-ordination between individuals in the UK Border Agency and Foreign Office posts. The system is designed to do two things. One is to monitor the conduct of sponsoring institutions so that they do their duty by ensuring that students who are registered with them actually turn up. The other is to ensure that the students actually come; and if they do not come, they will be penalised. If the institutions fail to ensure that their students turn up and do not correct that, they will have their licences taken away.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: My Lords, does the noble Baroness acknowledge, contrary to the point of view put by the questioner, that in fact the previous Government took action against unscrupulous course providers through the sponsor licensing system? Can she say how many education providers were closed as a result of those actions?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, the previous Government certainly began to put measures in place. This Government have built on those measures, very much strengthened them and are still evaluating whether we have strong enough measures in place. If we want to take further measures, we shall announce them before the end of the year. As to the numbers, 220 institutions have been suspended since the tier-4 system put in place by this Government took effect; 53 of those are permanent suspensions and 78 are still under evaluation. Real measures are being taken-with teeth.

Baroness Sharp of Guildford: My Lords, what is the position of language schools, which are extremely important to some seaside towns?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: Indeed, and no part of the Government's policy is aimed at doing anything other than enabling genuine language schools to offer genuine language teaching to genuine students-one of the points made earlier by my noble friend. The English language qualification for those courses is lower because it is designed to enable people either to do a foundation course or to learn basic English, so different rules apply. On the other hand, we intend those students to actually be in genuine institutions.

To continue reading the lengthy question and answer session see
<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013-0001.htm#10101325000356>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Schools: Exchange Programmes

Baroness Coussins: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether immigration rules currently prevent school pupils from non-EU countries taking part in exchange programmes such as the Rotary Youth Exchange with pupils from maintained secondary schools for a full academic year; and, if so, whether they have plans to change the rules.[HL2130]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The child visitor route within the Immigration Rules allows children from non-EU countries aged up to 17 years old to participate in exchange visits of up to six months in duration to state maintained schools in the UK.

The Government are currently reviewing tier four, the student tier, of the points-based system.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001754>

Visas

Asked by Lord Tanlaw: To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the reasons for the delays in issuing entry visas to bona fide business people visiting the United Kingdom from India and China.[HL2230]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The UK Border Agency aims to process 90 per cent of applications for business visit visas within 15 working days, 98 per cent in six weeks and 100 per cent in 12 weeks. The agency's customer service standards, and a guide to recent processing times at each of the agency's visa application centre overseas, are published on its website at www.ukba.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk/visas.

Business visit visa applications lodged in India are currently being processed well within the published target time. In August 2010 (the last published information), for example, 1,129 business visit visa applications lodged in the New Delhi visa application centre were concluded, of which 72 per cent were decided in two working days and 98 per cent in 15 working days.

The position is similar in China, where in August 2010, 866 business visit visa applications lodged in the Beijing visa application centre were concluded, of which 34 per cent were concluded in two working days and 96 per cent in 15 working days.

Demand for visas in both India and China rises substantially over the summer months, which can lead to longer processing times than at other times of the year, but the UK Border Agency works hard to meet its published customer service standards. In addition, fast track programmes exist in both India and China and continue to operate through the summer, providing a faster turn around time for companies that send significant numbers of staff to visit the UK. ...

Lord Laird: To ask Her Majesty's Government how many visa work permits for medical doctors have been issued in each of the past three years; what is the figure for each of the top 20 countries in that period; and which categories of doctors from non-European Union countries are presently eligible for skilled worker or other visas.[HL2347]

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The total number of work permits issued to non-EEA nationals for employment as a medical practitioner in 2008 was 1,290. The number issued to each of the top 20 nationalities is shown in the first table attached. The total number of certificates of sponsorship assigned to non-EEA nationals for employment as a medical practitioner under tier two of the points-based system in 2009 and 2010 (January-June) was 2,812 and 1,423, respectively. The number assigned to each of the top 20 nationalities is shown in the second table attached.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

While the UK Border Agency can provide data on the number of visas issued to non-EEA nationals (1) for work permit employment; and (2) as skilled workers under tier two of the points-based system, it is unable to breakdown the data by the profession of the visa applicant from central records. This information could be obtained only by checking individual records and therefore at a disproportionate cost.

The categories of medical doctor are published in the codes of practice for sponsors on the UK Border Agency website. They can be viewed at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/employersandsponsors/pointsbasedsystem/sectionqcodeofpractice.pdf>.

Postgraduate doctors may also enter the UK to undertake further study via tier 4 of the points-based system.

To read the lengthy tables see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001758>

Immigration: Detention of Children

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will end child detention in immigration cases.

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): My Lords, I am unable to provide a date for the ending of detention of children for immigration purposes but we remain determined to end this practice as soon as possible. Working with NGOs, we are designing and testing alternative arrangements to protect children's welfare while ensuring the return of families who have no right to be here. We are making significant progress.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: I am grateful to the Minister for that Answer. Will she make available in the Library every week a list of the numbers of detained children, where they are detained and their ages, so that we can end this practice and monitor it if a list is available for us to refer to? Will she accompany three or four of us to Yarl's Wood so that we can see the situation there for ourselves?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, it is perfectly reasonable to make these arrangements. We will certainly be glad to arrange a visit to Yarl's Wood. The number of children in detention is either zero or two. I cannot give an exact figure as it depends on whether the two children in a family who knowingly entered the country illegally yesterday are still in detention; they may have been briefly. However, the numbers are very low.

Lord Soley: Is it not time for both parties in the Government to admit that they made promises to the electorate on this emotive issue which they cannot keep because, if they do, they will end up taking children into care or forcefully separating them from their parents? That admission from the Government is long overdue. We all want to minimise this practice to the absolute smallest limit, but let us be realistic and not make promises which we cannot keep, as the Government have done too often on matters such as this.

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, I do not accept that. We are going to keep this promise. We are trying to go upstream of the previous procedures for requiring families to leave by encouraging voluntary return. We are engaged in that pilot with the help of NGOs. We will, and must, honour an undertaking that we have given.

Lord Avebury: My Lords, bearing in mind that the Royal College of Paediatrics and others have said that significant harm is caused to children detained for immigration control purposes, why has this process not been brought to an end? Will the noble Baroness give a date when the facilities at Yarl's Wood and other places of detention are to be dismantled so that such detentions cannot happen again?

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, I wish I could give a date. We cannot do that because, as things stand, we are taking seriously the whole business of how we bring about a situation whereby it is no longer necessary to detain children. It requires time to get the right procedures in place and, if I may put it this way, it is an earnest of our seriousness that we are going into considerable detail to get the right procedures.

The Earl of Listowel: Will the Minister consider extending from two weeks to three months the window for families to consider voluntary returns? Is she aware that in Sweden in 2008, 82 per cent of families chose to take the voluntary return route?

Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, I am aware that this figure of a fortnight has got around to being perceived as some sort of deadline, whereas a fortnight is the absolute minimum period that the families are given to consider voluntary return. I do not want to set a timetable for the other end. We would obviously like to achieve a high rate of voluntary return which would take place as soon as was possible and at the least cost to the taxpayer.

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath: But, my Lords, the noble Baroness has not answered my noble friend. The coalition agreement states that the Government will end the detention of children for immigration purposes. Her honourable friend Damian Green said on 6 September in the other place that the policy was to minimise the detention of children. Why the change in policy?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, we intend to end the detention of children for immigration purposes.

Baroness Howe of Idlicote: My Lords, if, in fact, children of school age and their families are still being detained together, will the Minister assure the House that education in outside schooling will be provided?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The emphasis of our policy is obviously on keeping families together. I trust that we will not be in a situation in which children are detained for any length of period at all; but certainly if they were, education would be a very important factor.

Lord Dholakia: My Lords, has the Minister taken a view on whether families should be deported to countries such as Somalia, Afghanistan, Sudan and Zimbabwe, and particularly on the impact, which could be considerable on those being deported, of sending families with children back to those countries?

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, if there are security factors in place, those of course introduce elements which are not necessarily present in all other cases.

Lord Rooker: Can the Minister confirm that Yarl's Wood, which was opened on my watch as a Home Office Minister, remains a removal centre and not a detention centre? As she will find out, if people are reluctant to go and they have children, it is not possible to organise removals economically and humanely by knocking on their doors; nor, if one wants to keep the family together, is it possible to do so other than by the family spending a minimum short period in a removal centre. That is not detention in the normal use of the word.

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The noble Lord points to some of the difficulties that arise. In our view, it is certainly not humane to knock on people's doors and require them to go absolutely immediately to a train or plane. Indeed, removal to a centre such as Yarl's Wood, which has facilities, is sometimes the right procedure. The situation varies from case to case but we entirely accept that the procedure to be followed should be humane and in the interests of the family, and the children in particular.

Baroness Williams of Crosby: My Lords, is it possible to persuade the border agency not immediately to deport children, often by breaking into their homes in the early hours

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

of the morning, but perhaps, as was suggested just now, to give the family a little more time to consider its position and return to the country from which it comes so that the children can be brought round to understanding what is going on? There is a great deal of evidence from the Royal College of Psychiatrists and others to show the huge effect on young children of suddenly being forced out of their homes in the middle of the night and compelled to go to a totally strange environment.

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: My Lords, I entirely take that point. The Government are trying to learn these lessons, and we are piloting this scheme precisely by going down the road of giving families more time and more options, particularly for voluntary departure. The scheme is absolutely in the spirit of the point mentioned by the noble Baroness.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101011-0001.htm#1010116000503>

Dentention Centres: Children

William Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she plans to take to end the detention of children of asylum seekers; and if she will make a statement. [15389]

Reply from Damian Green: The Government are committed to ending the detention of children for immigration purposes. I am having ongoing discussions with the UK Border Agency about how this can be achieved in a way which promotes the welfare of children while ensuring the return of families who have no right to be in the UK. Significant progress has been made and we are now piloting new approaches that involve options based on keeping families with children in the community. We are also continuing to work on alternative ways of securing the removal of those families who refuse to comply with our new approach.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0007.htm#10101213000064>

Detention Centres: Parents

William Bain: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she plans to take to ensure that parents in immigration detention are not separated from their children. [15722]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency has a policy of not separating children from both parents, or from one in the case of a single-parent family, for immigration purposes other than in exceptional cases.

For example, there may be circumstances where a prisoner, who is also a parent, is released from prison and a decision is made to maintain their detention under immigration powers in order to effect their deportation. Such assessments are made on a case by case basis taking into account public and child protection concerns.

However, family separations may occur for other reasons, such as for child protection purposes (which would be a matter for local authority children's services) or where the parent has chosen to split the family by deliberately hiding the whereabouts of their children. Where children are missing the UK Border Agency will work with other statutory agencies, such as the police and local authorities, to try to locate the children and reunite them with their parent.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0008.htm#10101213000077>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Asylum

David Evennett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from which countries have claimed asylum in the United Kingdom in the last five years. [15981]

Reply from Damian Green: The accompanying table shows the number of asylum applications received in the United Kingdom by principal applicants, by country of nationality in the last five years. The figures for 2009 are provisional.

Information on asylum is published annually and quarterly. Annual figures on principal asylum applications, by nationality, for the years 2000-09 are available in Table 2a of the supplementary tables that accompany the Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom, 2009 bulletin. Latest quarterly figures on principal applications are also available in Table 2a for Quarter two 2010 that accompany the Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary, April to June 2010.

Both bulletins are available from the Library of the House and from the Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate web site at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html>

To read the lengthy table see

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0007.htm#10101213000052>

Asylum Seekers

The Earl of Sandwich: To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' proposals for a Common European Asylum System.[HL2423]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees has not brought forward any specific proposals to create a Common European Asylum System. However, the Lisbon treaty does call for such a system to be established and the European Commission has proposed a number of measures that move towards creating it.

The Government strongly believe in the importance of practical co-operation on asylum policy within the EU. We do not judge that adopting a common EU asylum policy is right for Britain. We believe there are many issues in this area where all EU member states have much to gain by working together. We will be active in promoting effective co-operation and consider participation in legislative proposals on their merits, in consultation with our European partners and relevant EU institutions.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0001.htm#10101326001738>

Asylum: Children

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which UK Border Agency offices provide child care when asylum seekers are being interviewed; and what plans she has for the future of that provision. [16932]

Reply from Damian Green: We are committed to ensuring that parents who are being interviewed about their reasons for seeking protection are not placed in the position of having to give an account of personal victimisation or humiliation in the presence of their children. In general, applicants are advised in their letter of invitation not to bring their children to the interview but to make alternative arrangements. For some families, child care will be easier to arrange-in London, for example, the majority of asylum applicants are able to reside with family and friends and as a result have a wider support network for child care. We do recognise, however, that this will not be possible for all families.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

At present, the only UK Border Agency building that provides child care facilities when a parent is being interviewed about their asylum claim is in the North West. Additionally, however, in the West Midlands, the UK Border Agency is currently in the final stages of discussions with the Children's Society and hope to be in a position to provide a supervised play facility for the dependents of interviewees by January 2011. If these facilities prove successful and cost effective, we will consider extending this approach to other offices.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101013/text/101013w001.htm#10101332000050>

Asylum: Females

Bridget Phillipson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many female asylum seekers were detained in mixed sex facilities in the latest year for which figures are available. [16931]

Reply from Damian Green: The UK Border Agency has three Immigration Removal Centres and two residential short-term holding facilities where women may be detained.

Yarl's Wood is the main centre for women. Single women are accommodated in one of three units; those who are part of a family group may be held on a separate unit, where they may mix with other families.

Tinsley House and Dungavel House Immigration Removal Centres and the residential holding facilities at Pennine House and Colnbrook, hold both men and women, although the facilities are designed to ensure they sleep separately. Dover Harbour closed in July 2010.

The following table shows the number of female asylum seekers entering detention held solely under Immigration Act powers, by place of initial detention in 2009, Q1 2010 and Q2 2010.

As at 30 June 2010, there were 190 female asylum seekers detained solely under Immigration Act powers.

Information on females detained solely under Immigration Act powers are available in the Control of Immigration: Quarterly Statistical Summary, United Kingdom, April-June 2010 in the Library of the House and the Home Office's Research, Development and Statistics website at:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration-asylum-stats.html>

Female asylum seekers entering detention^(1, 2, 3) held solely under Immigration Act powers, by place of initial detention, (excluding Harwich), 2009-Q2 2010^(4, 5)

<i>Number of persons</i>			
	<i>Females entering detention</i>		
<i>Place of initial detention</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>Q1 2010</i>	<i>Q2 2010</i>
Yarl's Wood	1,505	435	305
Tinsley House	175	25	25
Dungavel	200	45	30
<i>UK Border Agency s hort- term holding facilities</i>			
Colnbrook short-term	65	20	20
Dover Harbour	470	10	15
Pennine House	210	30	35
Total	2,625	570	420

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

(1) Some detainees may be recorded more than once. If, for example, the person has been detained on more than one separate occasion in the time period shown, such as a person who has left detention, but has subsequently been re-detained.

(2) Persons detained under Immigration Act powers who are recorded as having sought asylum at some stage. Figures may under record due to instances of detainees claiming asylum after the data extract date.

(3) Management information.

(4) Figures rounded to the nearest 5 and may not sum to the totals shown because of independent rounding. Figures exclude persons recorded as entering Harwich short-term holding facility, police cells and Prison Service establishments, those recorded as detained under both criminal and immigration powers and their dependants.

(5) Figures include dependants.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101013/text/101013w0001.htm#10101332000051>

Asylum: Deportation

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 35W, on asylum: deportation, how much the UK Border Agency has spent on cancellation fees in respect of (a) scheduled and (b) chartered flights in the last 12 months. [15478]

Reply from Damian Green: The amount spent on cancellation fees for removals using scheduled flights from the United Kingdom (UK) in the last 12 months (commencing from 1 September 2009 until 31 August 2010) is not readily available. Since May our service providers have been contractually obliged to produce management information on cancellation costs. As such we are able to provide costs from May 10 to August 10 (see table). However to calculate the amount spent on cancellation fees for removals from the United Kingdom using scheduled flights prior to May 10 would require detailed analysis of management information captured and this could be done only at disproportionate cost.

<i>Departures in month</i>	<i>Cancellation costs (£)</i>
2010	
May	18,243.10
June	21,980.00
July	40,319.00
August	18,204.00
Total costs	98,746.10

Note: All figures given are internal management information and subject to change. They have not yet been fully accounted or reconciled.

UKBA also spent £291,826.00 on cancellation fees as part of our contractual obligations for cancelled charter flights.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0007.htm#10101213000053>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Deportation: Children

Annette Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 6 September 2010, *Official Report*, column 44W, on deportation: children, which holds and techniques have been used on children by (a) staff in immigration detention centres and (b) UK Border Agency escort providers since January 2009. [15726]

Reply from Damian Green: Further to my answer of 6 September 2010, officers are required to complete a report for any occasion where a detainee is restrained which must be passed to the relevant UK Border Agency contract monitor. The report requires officers to set out the circumstances of the situation and to justify why restraint was necessary. It does not, however, require them to stipulate the exact holds and techniques used and the information sought is therefore not recorded.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0008.htm#10101213000075>

Human Trafficking

Alan Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the evidential basis is for the Government's decision not to opt-in to the provisions of the European Directive on trafficking in human beings. [15693]

Reply from Damian Green: The Government decided not to opt in to the directive at the outset, but to review the position once the directive has been implemented. We still have the option of applying to opt in at a later stage.

In reaching this decision, the Government considered whether the directive would make a practical difference to the way the UK fights trafficking and whether it contained operational co-operation measures from which the UK would benefit.

Alan Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps she plans to take to tackle human trafficking. [16058]

Reply from Damian Green: Combating human trafficking is a key priority for the coalition Government. We are committed to tackling the organised crime groups who profit from this human misery, and to the protection of victims.

In addition to ongoing efforts by law enforcement agencies and NGO partners in combating trafficking, the Government are committed to creating a National Crime Agency, which will help combat organised crime, including trafficking, more effectively. We are also reviewing victim care arrangements, including the National Referral Mechanism which helps identify victims and refer them for support.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/text/101011w0008.htm#10101213000087>

People Trafficking

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will opt in to the European Union Directive intended to co-ordinate European efforts to combat human trafficking for sexual purposes.[HL2143]

The Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The Government decided not to opt in to the directive at the outset, but to review the position once the directive has been agreed. We still have the option of applying to opt in at a later stage.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101012w0001.htm#10101244000085>

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

People Trafficking

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have not opted in to the European Union Directive intended to co-ordinate European efforts to combat human trafficking for sexual purposes.[HL2142]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The Government decided not to opt in to the directive at the outset, but to review the position once the directive has been agreed. We still have the option of applying to opt in at a later stage. In reaching this decision, the Government considered whether the directive would make a practical difference to the way the UK fights trafficking and whether it contained operational co-operation measures from which the UK would benefit. It concluded it would not.

Baroness Thornton: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Neville-Jones on 16 September 2010 (HL2073), why they have not opted in to the draft European Union directive on human trafficking if the United Kingdom already complies with most of the legislation and practice required by the draft directive; and what parts of the draft directive the United Kingdom does not comply with.[HL2178]

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The Government decided not to opt in to the directive at the outset, but to review the position once the directive has been agreed. We still have the option of applying to opt in at a later stage.

In reaching this decision, the Government considered whether the directive would make a practical difference to the way the UK fights trafficking and whether it contained operational co-operation measures from which the UK would benefit.

The UK already does most of what is required by the directive. We are not currently compliant with the provision in Article 9 that requires wide-ranging extra-territorial jurisdiction. A breakdown of the Government's compliance with the directive is provided in the Explanatory Memorandum submitted to Parliament on 25 May 2010 (reference 8157/10 COM (2010) 95).

Baroness Thornton: To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the implications for the United Kingdom's relationship with other European Union member states of the United Kingdom opting out of the draft European Union directive on human trafficking.[HL2179]

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The UK remains fully engaged in the negotiations with the European Commission and the EU presidency on the text of the directive. The UK continues to play an active role in helping improve wider EU efforts at combating human trafficking and works constructively with its European partners on issues of mutual interest.

Police-led operations against human trafficking are not affected by the directive. Combating human trafficking is part of core police business, and decisions on anti-trafficking operations are a matter for the police.

Lord Hylton: To ask Her Majesty's Government why they have not opted in to the European Union Directive on Human Trafficking; and whether they will continue anti-trafficking operations such as Operation Pentameter.[HL2193]

Reply from Baroness Neville-Jones: The Government decided not to opt in to the directive at the outset, but to review the position once the directive has been agreed. We still have the option of applying to opt in at a later stage.

In reaching this decision, the Government considered whether the directive would make a practical difference to the way the UK fights trafficking and whether it contained operational co-operation measures from which the UK would benefit.

Police-led operations against human trafficking are not affected by the directive. Combating human trafficking is part of core police business, and decisions on anti-trafficking operations are a matter for the police.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001752>

Immigration and Asylum (continued)

Westminster Early Day Motion

Keith Vaz (779) Human Trafficking - That this House notes with concern that the EU Directive on Human Trafficking may not be adopted by the UK Government; further notes that at least 2,600 women have been trafficked into England and Wales according to the Association of Chief Police Officers; calls on the Government to consider human trafficking as an international crime that requires an international response founded on partnership working across the 27 countries in the EU; and urges the Government to consider opting-in to the EU Directive in March in order to protect those who fall victim to human trafficking and to more effectively prosecute those who commit this crime.

<http://edmi.parliament.uk/EDMi/EDMDetails.aspx?EDMID=41745&SESSION=905>

Westminster Petition

Human Trafficking

The Petition of the constituents of Manchester Withington and others, Declares that the petitioners believe that the continuing and increasing incidence of human trafficking into the UK and across the world is a disturbing situation that brings misery to many adults and children across the globe; notes that the petitioners believe human trafficking is a stain on the moral values of the UK; and notes that the petitioners support the "STOP THE TRAFFIK" campaign.

The Petitioners therefore request that the House of Commons urges the Government to take all possible steps to put an end to human trafficking. [P000855]

Observations from the Secretary of State for the Home Department: Human trafficking is a brutal form of organised crime where people are treated as commodities and exploited for criminal gain. Home Office research suggests that in 2009 there were up to 2,600 victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in England and Wales.

The UK takes a comprehensive approach to combating trafficking, combining a robust approach to enforcement and prosecutions with arrangements to identify and support victims of trafficking. This is in line with the UK's international commitments, chiefly under the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (and in particular the Palermo Protocol) and the Council of Europe Convention on Trafficking Against Human Beings.

The UK works to prevent trafficking in many ways. We work to understand the nature and scale of the problem through estimates of trafficking for sexual exploitation and a scoping study on labour trafficking; by reducing demand at home, by raising awareness and reducing demand upstream through international development programmes.

A range of UK enforcement agencies help to combat trafficking. The Serious Organised Crime Agency gathers intelligence and deploys specialist resources, co-ordinates programmes and activities across UK law enforcement agencies, and leads on upstream enforcement activities in key source and transit countries, in conjunction with overseas law enforcement agencies. The UK Border Agency also plays a crucial role in tackling trafficking through gathering intelligence, border protection (at home and overseas) and taking enforcement action against employers who may be using trafficked labour. The UK Human Trafficking Centre (now part of SOCA but retaining its own role and identity) is a central point of co-ordination for intelligence, analysis and operational activities around human trafficking. All 55 Police Forces have a Senior Investigator trained in human trafficking, and all new police officers get training on human trafficking.

Victim care is central to the UK's approach to combating trafficking. The aim is to ensure that all victims receive the right support and protection.

Immigration and Asylum Westminster Petition (continued)

We have established a National Referral Mechanism to improve identification and protection of trafficking victims, which we are currently reviewing to ensure its effectiveness. Identified victims of trafficking are provided with specialist support and accommodation to enable them to recover from their ordeal, including accommodation, advocacy, counselling, legal advice, interpretative services and reintegration assistance if they return home.

We view the trafficking of children as a very serious offence and acknowledge that where children are found to be trafficked, their safety and welfare needs are urgently addressed. All trafficked children are entitled to the same protection as UK nationals and the primary responsibility for safeguarding children falls to local authorities.

The Government are committed to creating a National Crime Agency, which will help combat organised crime, including trafficking, more effectively.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101011/petntext/101011p0001.htm#1010111000033>

Press Release

Enforced returns to Zimbabwe will resume

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/enforced-returns>

New publications

Maintaining Family Unity throughout the Asylum Support System in Policy and Practice

http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0000/0923/Family_Unity_Report131010.pdf

Migration and Immigrants Two Years after the Financial Collapse: Where Do We Stand?

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/MPI-BBCreport-2010.pdf>

Accelerated removals: a study of the human cost of EU deportation policies, 2009-2010

http://www.irr.org.uk/pdf2/ERA_BriefingPaper4.pdf

No Return, No Release, No Reason: Challenging Indefinite Detention

<http://www.lds.org.uk/files/uploads/NoReasonReport0910.pdf>

News

Protest over immigration plan that 'will hurt Scots education'

<http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/education/protest-over-immigration-plan-that-will-hurt-scots-education-1.1060657>

Immigrants 'putting strain on UK school places'

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-11536829>

Child asylum-seekers targeted in Home Office budget cuts

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/child-asylumseekers-targeted-in-home-office-budget-cuts-2103184.html>

Immigration and Asylum

News (continued)

Zimbabweans who fail to gain asylum will be forced to return

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/zimbabweans-who-fail-to-gain-asylum-will-be-forced-to-return-2107132.html>

The anti-trafficking industry is the biggest threat to migrants

<http://blogs.independent.co.uk/2010/10/13/the-anti-trafficking-industry-is-the-biggest-threat-to-migrants/>

We still won't face the consequences of immigration

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/8068354/We-still-wont-face-the-consequences-of-immigration.html>

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Race Relations

News

Why we should phase out state-funded religious schools

<http://blogs.independent.co.uk/2010/10/16/why-we-should-phase-out-state-religious-schools/>

Reach out to those without faith, too

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/oct/15/atheism-religion-interfaith-dialogue>

British tolerance means recognising freedom of religious expression, say Muslim women

<http://www.civitas.org.uk/press/prWomenAndIslamOct10.htm>

Islamic face-veil part of 'British way of life'

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/religion/8067708/Islamic-face-veil-part-of-British-way-of-life.html>

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Equality

Westminster Parliamentary Question

Religious Tolerance

Lord Sheikh: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps will they take to maintain tolerance and respect for all religious beliefs in British society.[HL1851]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Baroness Hanham): Faith communities make a vital contribution to national life: guiding the moral outlook of many, inspiring great numbers of people to public service, providing succour to those in need.

Britain has a proud tradition of religious tolerance, within the law. The Government are committed to creating a strong and integrated society in which hatred and

Equality

Westminster Parliamentary Question (continued)

prejudice are not tolerated and in which all people are free to express their identity and live without fear of harassment and crime that targets them because of that identity.

The Government welcomes and supports the growth of dialogue and shared action between different religious groups. We want to help build effective, friendly working relationships between people of different faiths.

Inter Faith Week 2010, from 21 to 27 November, will be an important focus for inter faith activities. Despite tight spending pressures, we are able to make some funds available to support activities during the week.

We have also decided to continue with the Faiths in Action scheme-grants of up to £6,000 to support innovative local inter faith projects, including during Inter Faith Week. This Government have approved 179 projects totalling £995,000. Many of these have an emphasis on people from different backgrounds coming together to address local problems such as improving green spaces, as well as promoting tolerance and respect.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101014w0001.htm#10101422000154>

News

'How Fair is Britain' report shows that for UK, race is still the issue

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2010/oct/11/equality-report-race-britain-launch>

The case for diversity: legal profession's white, male legacy persists

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/law/2010/oct/13/diversity-legal-services-board-research>

Racism isn't a scourge from the past, it is just enacted in different ways

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/oct/13/racism-isnt-a-scourge-from-the-past>

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Racism and Religious Hatred

Westminster Parliamentary Questions

Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006: Convictions

Sammy Wilson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been (a) charged and (b) convicted under the provisions of the Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006. [16847]

Reply from the Solicitor-General: The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006, which came into force on 1 October 2007, inserted into Part III of the Public Order Act 1986 offences relating to stirring up hatred against persons on religious grounds. Prosecutions for this offence require the consent of the Attorney-General.

Since 1 October 2007 only one person has been charged with any offence of stirring up religious hatred, and that person (Anthony Bamber) was acquitted on 21 June 2010.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101014/text/101014w0002.htm#10101423000116>

Racism and Religious Hatred Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Discrimination

Lord Avebury: To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have received the draft report on caste discrimination from the National Institute of Economic and Social Research; whether they will now make an order to make caste a protected characteristic under the Equalities Act 2010; and whether they will hold a meeting with the organisations which were represented at the 4 February meeting with the then Minister. [HL2459]

Reply from Baroness Verma: The Government Equalities Office has seen an interim version of the report and expects to receive the final version by the end of October. We are not yet in a position to determine whether the caste power in the Equality Act 2010 will be exercised.

Once the report, together with the Government's response to it, has been published in due course, we will be happy to consider discussions with organisations interested in the report and its outcome.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001742>

Niqabs

Lord Sheikh: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that women who choose to wear the niqab or burqa in public are not subject to discrimination. [HL1848]

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Baroness Hanham): Women who chose to wear niqab or burqa are protected by the Equality Act 2010, the core provisions of which were commenced on 1 October, by the Government Equalities Office, carries forward previous legal protection from discrimination and harassment because of religion or belief, or lack of belief, in areas including employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services, education and the exercise of public functions.

Lord Sheikh: To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of how often women who wear the niqab or burqa are refused entry to public buildings. [HL1849]

Baroness Hanham: Such data are not recorded centrally by government; therefore no assessment has been made.

Lord Sheikh: To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to engage with religious and community leaders when considering the issue of women wearing the niqab or burqa in the United Kingdom. [HL1850]

Baroness Hanham: Government departments regularly meet representatives of all faith groups to discuss issues that concern them. The Government do not plan to discuss burqa and niqab issues specifically.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101014w0001.htm#10101422000150>

Press Release

Preventing discriminatory ethnic profiling in the EU

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/press-release-ethnic-profiling_EN.pdf

Racism and Religious Hatred (continued)

New publications

Police Stops and Minorities

<http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/EU-MIDIS-police.pdf>

Towards More Effective Policing: Understanding and Preventing Discriminatory Ethnic Profiling: A Guide

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/Guide_ethnic_profiling.pdf

Police stops and minorities: understanding and preventing discriminatory ethnic profiling: infosheet

http://fra.europa.eu/fraWebsite/attachments/FRA-infosheet-Ethnic-profiling_EN.pdf

News

Black people are 26 times more likely than whites to face stop and search

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2010/oct/17/stop-and-search-race-figures>

Racism in online gaming

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2010/oct/13/player-racism-online-gaming>

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Other Holyrood

Committees

Public Petitions Committee

Consideration of PE1333: Gypsy Travellers (Council Tax)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/petitions/or-10/pu10-1402.htm#Col2941>

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Other Westminster

Parliamentary Questions

Gypsies and Travellers

Lord Avebury: To ask Her Majesty's Government when they plan to identify Gypsies and Irish Travellers as a separate ethnic minority group within the P-NOMIS system.[HL2183]

Reply from the Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord McNally): The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) community uses the Census categories as the standards for ethnicity. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is currently preparing for the 2011 Census. The Census will include an additional category for Gypsies and Irish Travellers. The ONS is responsible for allocating ethnicity groups with a code for recording purposes. Once the ONS has allocated Gypsies and Irish Travellers with a code, the MoJ will circulate a change request. This request will ensure that the change is implemented across the justice agencies in an appropriate and timely manner, including within Prison-NOMIS. A timescale for this change has not been agreed yet.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101011w0001.htm#10101110000399>

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Forced Marriage

Lord Lester of Herne Hill: To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Neville-Jones on 27 September 27 (WA 562), whether they will assess the effect of the increase in the marriage visa age to determine whether the change has increased the length of time British citizens are kept overseas against their will following a forced marriage. [HL2442]

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Neville-Jones): The minimum age at which someone can sponsor a spouse to come to the UK or be sponsored as a spouse was raised from 18 to 21 via a change to the Immigration Rules on 27 November 2008. Given the difficulties in obtaining the information because of the nature of forced marriage, we have no plans to assess whether the increase in the marriage visa age has had any impact on the length of time British citizens are kept overseas against their will following a forced marriage.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001746>

Female Genital Mutilation

Valerie Vaz: To ask the Attorney-General if he will undertake an investigation of factors affecting the number of prosecutions for offences related to female genital mutilation; if he will take steps to increase the rate of such prosecutions; and if he will make a statement. [14880]

Reply from the Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) is an active member of the inter-departmental Female Genital Mutilation Steering Group co-ordinated by the Home Office. This group has been working to raise public awareness and ensure that wherever these cases are reported, they are thoroughly investigated. In addition, they aim to ensure that measures are available to support victims and witnesses.

The prosecution of such cases is taken very seriously by the CPS and prosecutors are made fully aware of the issues surrounding this subject.

The CPS also works closely with the police to build strong prosecution cases. All cases sent to the CPS following an investigation are subject to the Full Code Test set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors, which requires that there is sufficient evidence and it is in the public interest for a prosecution to proceed.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101012/text/101012w0002.htm#10101255000016>

Female Genital Mutilation

Caroline Lucas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department with reference to the answer to the hon. Member for Eastleigh of 13 October 2009, *Official Report*, column 1872W, on female genital mutilation: prosecutions, what the nature of the anecdotal evidence was which suggested that the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 was helping to prevent the practice; what progress in tackling this issue has been made since the appointment of the cross-Government co-ordinator; and if she will make a statement. [16677]

Reply from Lynne Featherstone: The 2003 Act is intended to deter the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and we understand that in some cases social services departments have used the existence of the Act to warn parents-before they travelled with their daughters to countries where FGM is practised-that they could be prosecuted on their return if FGM were carried out abroad. Following this, the girls concerned have returned home intact.

Since the appointment of the cross-Government FGM co-ordinator, a number of initiatives have been implemented to improve the Government response to tackling FGM. These include:

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

Action plan for 2010 developed following consultation with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), statutory agencies and professionals who have expertise in working on FGM. Actions include:

Improving prevention of FGM by helping more people to understand what it is, the damaging consequences of it and where to access to help.

Ensuring statutory agencies and other professionals know how to recognise potential victims of FGM and how to help them.

Publicity campaign (March 2010) including a website: www.fco.gov.uk/fgm poster and leaflet, launched to raise awareness of FGM by helping people to understand the issue and its consequences as well as encouraging professionals and victims to seek support.

FGM Partner Forum to enable stakeholders to provide challenge, ideas, support and guidance on the work and the key issues relating to FGM.

Multi-Agency Practice Guidelines to assist practitioners handling cases of FGM. These guidelines are open for consultation at the website above.

Following consideration of responses, we hope to publish these guidelines in spring 2011.

Jo Swinson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the provisions of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003; and what steps her Department is taking to increase the proportion of people committing offences under that Act who are prosecuted. [16967]

Reply from Lynne Featherstone: There has been no formal assessment of the 2003 Act. Legislation alone cannot eliminate the practice so our resources are also aimed at raising awareness of the law and the health implications with communities and front-line practitioners.

The Act has provided an impetus for outreach work with the practising communities and it has been widely used to raise awareness among the police, judiciary, health professionals, social services departments and the education sector so that female genital mutilation (FGM) is treated with the seriousness that it deserves.

The Government appointed a cross-Government FGM co-ordinator in September 2009 and a number of initiatives have been implemented to improve the Government response to tackling FGM. Most recently, the Home Office, in partnership with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Department of Health and Department for Education, have developed draft multi-agency practice guidelines to assist practitioners handling cases of FGM. These guidelines are open for consultation at: www.fco.gov.uk/fgm

Following consideration of responses, we hope to publish these guidelines in spring 2011.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101013/text/101013w001.htm#10101332000054>

Cultural Festivals

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to encourage the participation of ethnic minorities in major cultural festivals and concerts.[HL2146]

Reply from Lord Shutt of Greetland: One of the priorities of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is the creation of opportunities for all people to experience artistic excellence. The department's Diversity Project Board aims to ensure that there is an inclusive approach to cultural policy-making, while Arts Council England (ACE)-one of the department's directly-funded bodies-encourages the participation of ethnic minorities in major regular cultural festivals

Other Westminster Parliamentary Questions (continued)

through Race Equality audits, Race Equality Action Plan, and audience development initiatives such as Maximise.

ACE regularly funded organisations such as Asian Arts UK, Sampad and the Milap Festival Trust specialise in encouraging diverse artists and attracting diverse audiences. Arts Council England also provides core funding for a range of community-led festivals and carnival work which reaches out to diverse communities, including St Paul's Carnival in Bristol, the Africa Oye Festival in Liverpool, Stockton International Riverside Festival and the range of artists they fund who perform at the Notting Hill carnival.

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013w0002.htm#10101326001740>

Press Releases

New structure charts give insight into organisation of Government

The Government has published new details about civil servants working at the heart of government as part of its ongoing drive to make the Government more accountable.

- Today departments have published for the first time structure charts setting out details of the number and grade of staff working in different teams.
- The structure charts show:
- The names, job title and salary for all senior civil servants at director level and above
- The job title of all senior civil servants at deputy director level, along with the number of staff in their team and the breakdown of their grades.

For links to charts showing the structure of each UK Government Department see

<http://www.number10.gov.uk/news/topstorynews/2010/10/new-structure-charts-give-insight-into-organisation-of-government-55666>

National Lottery to be reformed

http://www.culture.gov.uk/news/news_stories/7490.aspx

Travel advice for Hajj pilgrims

<http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/news/latest-news/?view=News&id=23024746>

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Other News

Amnesty International challenges councils' policies on travellers

<http://www.thecourier.co.uk/News/article/6198/amnesty-international-challenges-councils-policies-on-travellers.html>

Capital's hidden numbers of forced marriage victims

<http://edinburghnews.scotsman.com/news/Capital39s-hidden-numbers-of-forced.6578803.jp>

Rape 'impossible' in marriage, says Muslim cleric

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/rape-impossible-in-marriage-says-muslim-cleric-2106161.html>

Other News (continued)

Female genital mutilation cannot be defended as part of Islam

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/belief/2010/oct/15/female-genital-mutilation-yusuf-al-qaradawi>

Unsung heroes who broke the racial mould more than a century ago

<http://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/real-life/2010/10/16/unsung-heroes-who-broke-the-racial-mould-more-than-a-century-ago-86908-22638368/>

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Bills in Progress ** New or updated this week

Holyrood

Certification of Death Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/58-CertDeath/index.htm>

**** End of Life Assistance Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/38-EndLifeAssist/index.htm>

Stage 1 evidence from Margo MacDonald

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/endLifeAsstBill/or-10/ela10-0902.htm#Col281>

Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/53-forcedMarriage/index.htm>

Local Electoral Administration Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/57-LocalElecAdmin/index.htm>

**** Palliative Care Bill**

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/50-PalliativeCare/index.htm>

Finance Committee: Financial Memorandum

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/finance/or-10/fi10-2102.htm#Col2537>

Public Records Bill

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/bills/56-PublicRecords/index.htm>

Bills in Progress Westminster

Face Coverings (Regulation) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/facecoveringsregulation.html>

**** Fixed Term Parliaments Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/fixedtermparliaments.html>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/327016/0105484.pdf>

Bills in Progress

Westminster (continued)

House of Lords Reform Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/houseoflordsreformhl.html>

Human Trafficking (Border Control) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/humantraffickingbordercontrol.html>

Identity Documents Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/identitydocuments.html>

** Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/parliamentaryvotingsystemandconstituencies.html>

Report: Political and Constitutional Reform Committee

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmselect/cmpolcon/437/437.pdf>

Notice of amendments

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/063/amend/pbc0631210m.281-287.html>

and

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/063/amend/pbc0631310a.369-372.html>

and

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/063/amend/pbc0631410a.373-376.html>

Oral Questions: House of Lords

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201011/ldhansrd/text/101013-0001.htm#10101355000026>

Return of Asylum Seekers (Applications from Certain Countries) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2010-11/returnofasylumseekersapplicationsfromcertaincountries.html>

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Consultations

(closing date)

** new or updated this week

Consultation on the change to policy direction for the Big Lottery Fund

(29 October 2010)

<http://www.culture.gov.uk/consultations/7313.aspx>

Equality Act 2010: The public sector Equality Duty: Promoting equality through transparency (10 November 2010)

http://www.equalities.gov.uk/pdf/402461_GEO_EqualityAct2010ThePublicSectorEqualityDuty_acc.pdf

** Certification of Death (Scotland) Bill (closes 18 November 2010)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/hs/inquiries/CertificationOfDeathBill/CallForEvidence.htm>

Consultations (continued)

The Forced Marriage (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Bill (25 November 2010)
<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/s3/committees/equal/inquiries/Call.htm>

**** Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisations (SCIO) Draft Regulations Discussion Paper** (26 November 2010)
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/48453/0105742.pdf>

Equality Duty: Detailed Proposals - Consultation on Public Sector Equality Duty Draft Regulations and Order (26 November 2010)
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/324431/0104438.pdf>

Equality and Human Rights Commission: Draft Code of Practice on Further and Higher Education (closes 31 December 2010)
http://live.ehrc.precedenthost.co.uk/cgi-bin/generate.pl?page_id= sx0666i4b&save=screen

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Job Opportunities

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

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Funding Opportunities

People's Postcode Trust

Closing date for applications: 10 November

Grants from £500-£10,000 for small organisations, community groups and charities for projects in any of the following areas to prevent poverty, promote, maintain, improve and advance health, advance citizenship or community development, advance public participation in sport, promote, improve and advance human rights, conflict resolution or reconciliation, or to promote and advance environmental protection or improvement. For details and application form see <http://www.postcodetrust.org.uk/>

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Events/Conferences/Training

**** New or updated this week**

**** this week!**

Black History Month

29 September -31 October 2010

For the programme of events see <http://www.gara.org.uk/attachments/BHM2010web.pdf>

**** this week!**

Scottish Mental Health Arts & Film Festival

1-24 October 2010

<http://www.mhfestival.com/>

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

**** this week!**

The needs and experiences of refugee women

22 October 2010 in Glasgow

Guest speaker: Kirsty Thomson, Solicitor, Women and Children's Department at Legal Services Agency. 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 Jamie Spurway jamie.spurway@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk / 0141 248 9799 or see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=77>

Localism and the Third Sector

25 October 2010 in Edinburgh

SCVO conference on the future for localism with speakers from all the Holyrood parties, Local Government, and leading third sector organisations. For information contact Helen Swatton 0141 225 8019 / helen.swatton@scvo.org.uk or see <http://www.scvo.org.uk/scvo/SCVOEvents/ViewSCVOEvents.aspx?al=t&EID=1276&from=EventHome>

How do services acknowledge LGBT identities in BME communities?

25 October 2010 in Glasgow (9.30-1.30)

EveryoneIn discussion on improving access to services for people from black and minority ethnic (BME) backgrounds who may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. EveryoneIn is a partnership project between BEMIS and the Equality Network. For information contact Sam Rankin sam@equality-network.org / 0774 704 0355.

**** Document 8: International Human Rights Documentary Film Festival**

26-31 October 2010 in Glasgow (launch event 26 October, 7pm)

The Document Festival, which is intended to challenge negative media attitudes, was founded in response to the discrimination faced by asylum seekers and refugees in Glasgow. For information see <http://documentfilmfestival.org/>

Scottish Refugee Council annual conference

29 October 2010 in Glasgow

The conference will focus primarily on the new Coalition Government's stated agenda for asylum seekers and refugees - including: speeding up the asylum process; ending child detention and treatment of LGBT people seeking asylum. For information contact Graeme Corbett events@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Make a Difference Day

30 October 2010

Make a difference to your community by participating in a volunteer activity on CSV "Make a Difference Day". For information see <http://www.csv.org.uk/campaigns/csv-make-difference-day> or contact 0800 284 533/ difference@csv.org.uk

Judge a book by its cover? Not me!

3 November 2010 in Inverness (9.30 – 12.30)

SCVO training course to find out more about the processes of stereotyping, and how misinformed judgements can lead to prejudice and discrimination. For more information contact Jane Baillie jane.baillie@scvo.org.uk / 0131 474 8019.

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

LGBT Asylum Seekers and Refugees

5 November 2010 in Glasgow (9.00 – 2.00)

EveryoneIN training on making services more inclusive for minority ethnic people who may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. For information contact Sam Rankin sam@equality-network.org / 0774 704 0355 or Emma Boyd emma@lgbthealth.org.uk / 0131 652 3281

An introduction to working with asylum seekers and refugees

9 November 2010 in Glasgow

17 December 2010 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course to explore immigration terminology, main refugee nationalities, why people flee and factors affecting migration, the Refugee Convention - its history and interpretation, the UK asylum process and current implementation in Scotland, how to develop culturally sensitive services, and issues facing practitioners and possible solutions; best practice for support and advocacy. For information contact Jamie Spurway jamie.spurway@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk / 0141 248 9799 or see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/553_an_introduction_to_working_with_asylum_seekers_and_refugees

Asylum law, beyond the first tier tribunal

23 November 2010 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council legal seminar for immigration advisers, solicitors and advocates to examine representation of asylum claims to the Upper Tribunal and Court of Session. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / jamie.spurway@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/745_asylum_law_beyond_the_first_tier_tribunal

Working with Interpreters

25 November 2010 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course for those who work with non-English speaking service users, including asylum seekers and refugees, who need a comprehensive understanding of how to work with interpreters. For information see <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/forms/Notes?formID=94> or contact Jamie Spurway jamie.spurway@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk / 0141 248 9799

Scottish Interfaith Week

28 November – 5 December 2010

The theme for Scottish Interfaith Week 2010 is *Faith in Action*. Details of events will be posted at <http://www.scottishinterfaithcouncil.org/22.html> as they become available.

UKBA (formerly NASS) asylum support - the essentials

30 November 2010 in Glasgow

3 February 2010 in Glasgow

Scottish Refugee Council course for people supporting those going through the asylum process. For information contact Jamie Spurway 0141 248 9799 / jamie.spurway@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk or see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/training/325_ukba_formerly_nass_asylum_support_the_essentials

Events/Conferences/Training (continued)

Youth Interfaith Connect Conference

2 December 2010 (10.00 – 3.00)

ACPOS conference for young people to discuss issues such as the impact of faith in Scotland today, the impact of religious and sectarian hate crime on our communities, the role of the media in representing faith communities, religious education in schools, identity faith and belief, and faith and social action. For information contact Fiach OBroin-Molloy 01786 456000 / 07769 920 462 or see <http://www.interfaithconnect.org/> and discussion forum <http://www.interfaithconnect.org/forum/>

Demands, Challenges, Opportunities: the changing third sector-public policy relationship

3 December 2010 in Edinburgh

SCVO Third Sector Research Conference to bring together Scottish Government, local government, third sector and academic researchers, to showcase their work and discuss a range of findings of relevance to public policy in Scotland. For information contact Helen Swatton 0141 225 8019 / helen.swatton@scvo.org or see <http://microsites.scvo.org.uk/scvo/SCVOEvents/ViewSCVOEvents.aspx?al=t&EID=1176&from=EventHome>

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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>

Useful Links (continued)

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/>

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, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <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/>