

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview

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

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

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**The Scottish Parliament is in recess until 19 February 2018.
The UK Parliament is in recess until 20 February 2018.**

Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Justice Committee

Evidence session: Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015
(Support for Victims) Regulations 2018 [Draft]
<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11357>

UK Parliament Debate

Draft Immigration and Nationality (Fees) (Amendment) Order 2018
[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-05/debates/c8db54b0-cb9e-4054-8ac0-98fa073fd3c2/DraftImmigrationAndNationality\(Fees\)\(Amendment\)Order2018](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-05/debates/c8db54b0-cb9e-4054-8ac0-98fa073fd3c2/DraftImmigrationAndNationality(Fees)(Amendment)Order2018)

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Immigration White Paper

Yvette Cooper (Labour): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will make a statement on the publication of the proposed Immigration White Paper.

Mr Speaker: Order. That is very cheeky of the right hon. Lady, who is a very senior denizen of the House. I must ask her to read out the urgent question that was granted. I did not grant an urgent question on what is going on with the immigration White Paper; I believe I am right in saying that her urgent question is, “To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if she will make a statement on the publication of the proposed immigration White Paper.” ...

Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Caroline Nokes): ... It is of course a great pleasure to come to the House today to answer the question from the right hon. Member for Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford (Yvette Cooper) and I commend her for her brevity. In doing so, I point out that Ministers have made great efforts to keep the House informed of the state of play on the UK’s exit from the European Union, bearing in mind that we are in an ongoing negotiation and cannot give a running commentary.

Since June 2016, there have been numerous ministerial statements. This question, however, relates specifically to immigration, so I remind the House of where we have got to. Our first priority in the negotiation is to reach a deal on citizens’ rights, on the position of the 3 million EU citizens currently in the UK and, just as importantly, on the position of the 1 million UK citizens who reside in other EU member states. An agreement was successfully concluded on that last December, meaning that all those people were guaranteed continuing rights to live and work as they do now. Of course, we updated Parliament fully at the time. Our next priority is to agree the arrangements during the implementation period—the period immediately following the UK’s exit next March. Negotiations are shortly to begin with the EU. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister set out the UK’s broad objectives in the speech she gave in Florence last year. We will publish a White Paper in the coming months, when the time is right, and of course we will consider how we can update the House as negotiations progress.

As to the longer term, as the House will know, the Government have commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee to advise on the economic aspects of the UK’s exit. The MAC has been asked to report by September 2018, although it has been invited to consider whether it could also produce interim reports. Let me be clear: given that we expect to have an implementation period of about two years after we leave, there will be plenty of time to take account of the MAC’s recommendations in designing the longer-term immigration system for the UK.

We are clear that the Government will make a success of Brexit. We will end free movement and build an immigration system that works in the national interest. We will, as we have done thus far, ensure that Parliament is kept informed and up to date.

Yvette Cooper: I welcome the Immigration Minister to her new post, but she did not give us any information about immigration or the immigration White Paper. The Home Secretary told the House and the Select Committee in October that there would be an immigration White Paper by the end of last year and a Bill early this year. The then Immigration Minister, the right hon. Member for Great Yarmouth (Brandon Lewis), told the Committee in November that the White Paper would be produced “soon”, but now we have this. What on earth is going on? I have to say to the new Minister that this is a shambles. I understand that the MAC is not reporting until the autumn and that it will want to take advice on the labour market, but Ministers knew that timetable before Christmas, when they answered those questions. They knew that timetable because they set it when they asked for advice from the MAC. I also understand that negotiations are

continuing, but, again, Ministers knew that before Christmas. In addition, this does not get around the obligation on the Home Office to tell the House, the public, EU citizens and employers what its negotiating objectives actually are.

These practical questions need answering very soon, not “in good time” or “when the time is right”. For example, what will the legal status be of the EU nationals who have not registered by the end of the grace period? The Home Secretary told the Committee that that would be in the White Paper. What will the arrangements be for European economic area citizens from Norway or Switzerland? If EU citizens arriving after March next year do not register, will they be able to work? Will employers have to check their registration documents? Will landlords have to make checks before they rent these people a property? What is the position for EU students coming this autumn? What will the arrangements for them be?

We know that the Prime Minister wants people arriving after March 2019 to be treated differently, but we have no idea how. It is just not good enough keeping Parliament in the dark in this way. The Government have said they do not want to be in the single market, but they have not told us what they want instead. They have said that they do not want to be in the customs union, but they have not told us what they want instead. Now they have said that they do not want to have free movement, but, again, they have not told us what they want instead or even what their negotiation objectives are. At best, Ministers are cutting Parliament and the public out of the crucial debate about the future of our country. At worst, they seem to be stuck in negotiations without having agreed, even among themselves, what they want to achieve out of them. May I suggest to the Immigration Minister that she asks the Home Secretary to come to this House to make a full statement, at least on the transition arrangements, because the clock is ticking and when you are running out of time, you cannot keep kicking the can down the road?

Reply from Caroline Nokes: First, I reassure the right hon. Lady that we are not kicking the can down the road. We are making sure we get a system that is right for people. That is why I make no apology for making our priority the 3 million EU citizens living here and the 1 million UK citizens living in EU states. We want to have a system in place for them during the implementation period so that we can register those 3 million people as smoothly and seamlessly as possible. It is imperative that, when we come to the House with a White Paper and an immigration Bill, they are the right pieces of legislation.

Desmond Swayne (Conservative): When are we likely to get immigration down to the tens of thousands?

Reply from Caroline Nokes: My right hon. Friend will know as well as I do that in successive Conservative party manifestos we have made a commitment to making sure that we bring immigration down to sustainable levels.

Diane Abbott (Labour): The immigration White Paper was originally scheduled to be published last summer. Then, Ministers told the Home Affairs Committee that it would be published before Christmas. Does not this constant postponement speak to the chaos and confusion on immigration in the Department as a whole? Does the Minister accept that, as the director general of the Confederation of British Industry said, business will be “hugely frustrated” by yet another postponement? Does she appreciate that firms need time to plan for change?

Does the Minister accept that this uncertainty is particularly upsetting for the 3 million EU citizens who live here? These people are contributing to the health service, social care, universities, financial services and the hospitality industry, among many other sectors. They are many of our constituents, neighbours and work colleagues. It is wrong that they should be treated like this. Furthermore, the longer the uncertainty goes on, the less willing EU citizens will be to come here to take up employment. Does the Minister accept that the consequences for recruitment in the health service in particular are potentially very serious? Does she also accept that European students who come to study in Britain after March 2019 will want reassurance that, if they are doing a three or four-year course, they will be able to stay for more than two years without having to apply again for a

residence permit?

It is all very well for the Minister to say that the White Paper will be published when the time is right. The Opposition argue that the time has been right for some time and that the Government's postponement and delay are inexcusable.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: What is crucial is that, as my predecessor as Immigration Minister did, I continue to consult businesses and universities to make sure that their views are fed into the process. Likewise, the Migration Advisory Committee is consulting businesses because it is so important that their views are fed into the process and that the Government can use the response of economic experts to enable us to determine the best policy going forward.

To continue reading the very long question and answer session see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-05/debates/CF5B6DEF-D13F-4053-8A46-00CBA03E58AE/ImmigrationWhitePaper>

Prosecuting Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery: Global Co-operation

Eddie Hughes (Conservative): What steps the CPS is taking to strengthen global co-operation in prosecuting human trafficking and modern slavery. [903855]

Reply from the Attorney General (Jeremy Wright): Later this month, the Crown Prosecution Service will host an international summit for senior prosecutors from 21 countries around the world. It is an ambitious summit that aims to identify better ways to support victims and witnesses and to establish a strong, active international network to tackle more actively the crime of modern slavery.

Eddie Hughes: Does my right hon. and learned Friend agree that modern slavery and human trafficking are international problems that require the collaboration of the Crown Prosecution Service and similar judicial systems from many countries to address them?

Reply from the Attorney General: I do agree and it is important that we work with partners around the world. The CPS has 30 prosecutors located in other countries and, of course, we agreed last year at the United Nations to double our spend overseas in combating modern slavery.

David Hanson (Labour): Will the Attorney General welcome the work of the UK branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and support the Home Office in dealing with this issue in particular? Will he help to look at identifying the eight or so countries we are dealing with and give support from his office?

Reply from the Attorney General: Yes, I do welcome that work. The right hon. Gentleman is right that there is a huge amount we can do in this institution to back up the fight against modern slavery and, of course, to focus on where the majority of those who are trafficked tend to come from. Of course, as he will recognise, it is not just those eight countries. Those who were identified as victims of modern slavery arriving in this country last year came from some 108 different countries, but he is right that there are particular countries to focus on.

Nigel Huddleston (Conservative): How much money have the UK Government committed to tackling human slavery around the world?

Reply from the Attorney General: At the UN General Assembly last year, the UK Government agreed that we would spend £150 million overseas to combat modern slavery. As my hon. Friend will recognise, that is in addition to the substantial sums already committed in our domestic budgets to deal with the problem.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-08/debates/BAEB9953-99A4-44CA-A7EC-E66CA23F2155/ProsecutingHumanTraffickingAndModernSlaveryGlobalCo-Operation>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Immigration

Stephen Gethins (SNP) [125205] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, whether UK Visas and Immigration expedites cases in which an applicant's entry to the UK via air may be restricted due to pregnancy before the case is resolved.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: While UKVI's published timescale for processing standard visa applications is 12 weeks (60 working days) for settlement applications, and three weeks (15 working days) for non-settlement applications the option of applying for a priority visa service is available to applicants should time be a factor in their applications.

Those applications made under the priority service will be placed to the front of the processing queue and expedited. However, it should be noted that timescales for decision are not guaranteed. If there is a problem with an application or it is complex and expected to take longer than the standard processing timescale, UKVI will write to the customer within the standard processing time and explain what will happen next.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-26/125205/>

Visas

Adam Afriyle (Conservative) [125560] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the adequacy of the availability of Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) Visas.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route demonstrates our commitment to continuing to attract top international talent in the digital technology, science and arts sectors. On 11 January we doubled the number of places available to applicants from 1000, to 2000, and are confident that this is sufficient to meet demand at this time. We will continue to monitor take up of the route.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125560/>

Visas

Jess Phillips (Labour) [125632] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many visa applications were rejected because the applicant was late with their tax return in each of the last three years for which data is available.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The specific information that has been requested is not included in statistics published by the Home Office.

Information on the number of applications and decisions (i.e. grants, refusals, withdrawn and lapsed cases) is published quarterly in the Home Office's Immigration Statistics, Visas volume 1, table vi_01_q, latest edition at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125632/>

Visas

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [125811] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will assess the number of financial administrative mistakes with regards to visa application renewals that have been made by her Department in each of the last seven years.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: UK Visas and Immigration continually reviews its operation to improve performance and accountability. Customer feedback, including complaints, are taken into account to ensure we offer value for money; which includes improving the services we offer, the quality of the decisions we make and the provision of an excellent customer service. When we are informed of errors we work promptly to rectify them.

More widely, we have assurance regimes which aim to increase consistent quality and identify good and weak practice within the department. We utilise three

regimes; operational oversight, independent business reviews and third party reviews, in conjunction with the wider Home Office, in order to develop and ensure best practice.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125811/>

Visas

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [126650] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 2 February 2018 to Question 125638, what steps she is taking to reduce the number of visa applications classified as non-straightforward.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: UK Visas and Immigration continually reviews its operation to improve performance and accountability. Customer feedback, including complaints, are taken into account to ensure we offer value for money; which includes improving the services we offer, the quality of the decisions we make and the provision of an excellent customer service.

Visa applications are considered to be non-straightforward (identified as complex) when an Entry Clearance Officer determines that additional information is required in order for a decision to be made and that these enquiries will take longer than the published service standard.

The circumstances that call for this action are varied. For example it may be necessary for the officer to make enquiries of an external organisation or wait for the applicant to clarify details stated on their application or submit additional evidence.

Where an application has been classified as complex and cannot be concluded within published services standards, we will write to the customer to inform them that it will not be decided within the service standard and what will happen next.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-05/126650/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125638/>

Visas: Overseas Students

The following three questions all received the same answer

Robert Neill (Conservative) [125578] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's news story, Twenty three universities join student visa pilot, published on 18 December 2017, what criteria universities were required to fulfil in order to take part in that pilot.

Robert Neill (Conservative) [125579] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many representations the Department has received from universities wanting to take part in the expanded student visa pilot scheme.

Robert Neill (Conservative) [125580] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to further expand the student visa pilot scheme.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Tier 4 visa pilot, helps to streamline the visa process for international students looking to study on a Masters' course, in the UK, of 13 months or less. The pilot also helps to support students who wish to switch into a work route and take up a graduate role, by extending the leave period following the end of their study to up to six months.

23 additional institutions were selected to participate based on having the consistently lowest visa refusal rates for their region or country. The evaluation of the pilot is ongoing, with an interim report due to be published in the summer of 2018. The primary focus of the evaluation is to assess the impact of the Tier 4 visa pilot on UK education institutions' competitiveness in terms of attracting international students and the ability of international students to switch into a work

route. Engaging more sponsors to participate in the pilot will provide additional evidence for the evaluation to ensure it more accurately represents the diversity of the sector. Once evaluated, we will consider whether to introduce the offer being tested with the pilot into the Immigration Rules and make it policy.

We regularly engage with the education sector on student migration policy, including the Tier 4 visa pilot. We hold a quarterly Education Sector Forum with key representatives from the sector including the devolved administrations.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125578/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125579/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125580/>

Migrant Workers

Anneliese Dodds (Labour Co-op) [125559] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 January 2018 to Question 124494, what assessment she has made of the effect of removing the named worker system on the effectiveness and efficiency of the immigration application system.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: In most instances, a single caseworker will consider an individual's application and correspond with that applicant as appropriate in order to make a decision. However, on occasion an application may be considered by a different caseworker, for example due to absence. In addition, and to provide excellent customer service, the department has correspondence teams who can respond to case specific enquiries from applicants, and MP account manager teams who can provide a similar service for members. This aids in the effective operation and efficiency of the department.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125559/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124494/>

Immigrants: Employment

Gill Furniss (Labour) [125864] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 January 2018 to Question 124304, on Immigrants: Employment, whether her Department has considered allowing people to use alternative forms of ID to prove their employment status while their immigration documents are processed.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: There are no plans to expand the list of documents an individual can use to demonstrate a right to work. Acceptable right to work documents are set out in legislation. Employers seeking to verify an individual's right to work where there is an outstanding immigration application, administrative review or appeal can use the Home Office's Employer Checking Service. This is designed to ensure that where individuals have a right to work, employment can commence with minimal delay.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-31/125864/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124304/>

General Practitioners: Migrant Workers

Sarah Wollaston (Conservative) [125446] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what estimate he has made of the number of non-EU GP registrars who are currently on GP training schemes in England who will not be eligible for indefinite leave to remain when they finish their three-year training.

Reply from Steve Brine: Currently there are 719 non-European Economic Area national general practitioner trainees working under a Tier 2 visa. On the completion of training, these trainees would be eligible to apply for indefinite leave to remain if they meet the requirements as set out by UK Visas and Immigration. Eligibility is based on individual circumstance and will be decided by UK Visas and Immigration.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125446/>

Overseas Students: Employment

Tulip Siddiq (Labour) [126260] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what restrictions there are on the (a) working hours and (b) type of work permitted for international students with tier 4 visas; and whether her Department plans to implement further such restrictions.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Tier 4 (General) students studying courses at degree level or above at Higher Education Institutions (HEI) are permitted to work for 20 hours per week during term time and full-time during vacations. Tier 4 (General) students studying courses below degree level at HEIs are permitted to work for 10 hours per week during term time and full-time during vacations. In addition, courses of study may include a work placement, provided it is an integral and assessed part of the course.

Students are permitted to undertake a wide range of jobs whilst studying, however Tier 4 (General) students cannot be self-employed or employed as a professional sportsperson, an entertainer, or a doctor in training, except where the student is studying on a recognised foundation programme under Tier 4.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126260/>

Immigration: EU Nationals

Stephen Doughty (Labour Co-op) [126440] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate she has made of the number of (a) dependants, (b) spouses and (c) civil partners of non-UK EU nationals normally resident in the UK who are not in the UK on 31 March 2019 and who would be affected by the Prime Minister's proposed changes to EU citizen's rights in any transition period.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Dependent children and parents, spouses and civil partners of non-UK EU nationals who are normally resident in the UK but who are not present in the UK on 31 March 2019 are covered by the agreement on citizens' rights reached with the EU last year, and documented in the Joint Report published on 8 December 2017. These groups of people are not affected by any negotiations concerning the rights of those arriving during the proposed implementation period.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-02/126440/>

Immigrants: Finance

Tulip Siddiq (Labour) [126315] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many migrants granted leave to remain in the UK have had no recourse to public funds conditions imposed on them because of exceptional circumstances since 2010.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: No Recourse to Public Funds is the default condition for grants of leave to remain in most categories. It is not a condition that

is normally imposed due to exceptional circumstances.

Data is not held in the requested format and to establish whether a migrant did not or did not have the no recourse to public funds condition imposed due to exceptional circumstances would require individual examination of records. This would incur disproportionate cost.

Total grants of leave to remain can be found in table ex_01_q in the Home Office's Immigration Statistics July to September release, available for download at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/immigration-statistics-quarterly-release>
with the data tables at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017-data-tables>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-02/126315/>

Refugees

Thangam Debonnaire (Labour) [125448] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will review her Department's policy guidance on safe return reviews for refugees applying for settlement.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: There are no plans to review the safe return review policy. Those who need protection are normally granted 5 years' limited leave after which they are able to apply for permanent settlement. This policy has been in place since 2005 when automatic settlement for refugees was abolished.

All settlement applications are carefully considered on their individual merits and whilst we have always been clear that protection will be granted for as long as it is needed, we will assess whether there have been significant changes in country conditions or personal circumstances, which means that an individual no longer needs our protection.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125448/>

Refugees

The following two questions both received the same answer

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [126096] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 January 2018 to Question 124424, on Refugees, what guidance has been issued to job centre staff on the new scheme.

Paul Blomfield (Labour) [126097] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 29 January 2018 to Question 124424, what the evidential basis was for the conclusion that the new scheme was tested successfully.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The scheme involves contacting the refugees at the point when they are granted their status to see if they wish to apply for benefits and require assistance to do so. If they say they do, an appointment at a local DWP office is arranged for them. The scheme was first put in place in the North East, Yorkshire and Humberside region and extended to other regions of the UK after it was found that it ensured that the persons received a prompt appointment and consideration of their benefits applications could therefore begin.

The scheme is designed to ensure that the refugees receive the first payment of any benefit they are entitled to before their Home Office support ends. Further information about the scheme will be published in due course.

All frontline DWP staff have access to operational instructions that explain the support available to refugees. Staff in the areas where the refugees have been accommodated by the Home Office have received full information to make them aware of the scheme and the need to process the claims quickly.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126096/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126097/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-23/124424/>

Refugees: EU Action

Chris Law (SNP) [125681] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what representations she has made to her counterparts in other EU Member States on developing safe routes for people fleeing war, armed conflict and persecution.

Reply from Alistair Burt: The UK has actively and regularly engaged with the EU in developing Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees, which aim to support well-managed, safe migration and to provide more effective, long-term support to refugees fleeing conflict and violence. We also work closely with other EU Member States to coordinate our support to vulnerable people on the move, including through our contribution to the Emergency EU Trust Fund for Africa and broader support along the key migration routes in Africa. We regularly engage with EU counterparts on resettlement, including through the European Asylum Support Office, and the UN core groups on resettlement, such as the Central Med group and the Syria Core Group, which the UK has chaired since April 2017.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125681/>

Refugees: Kurds

Christine Jardine (Liberal Democrat) [125702] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government is taking to integrate Kurdish refugees into UK society.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Kurdish refugees are able to access the same support to integrate into UK society as all refugees. Refugees are currently given the same access to the labour market and benefits as UK citizens, as well as access to English language training. Refugees are also eligible to receive a dedicated integration loan designed to help refugees integrate into UK society by offering financial support towards housing costs, employment and training.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125702/>

Refugees: Legal Aid Scheme

Layla Moran (Liberal Democrat) [126163] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will reintroduce legal aid for refugee family reunion cases; and if he will make a statement.

Reply from Philip Lee: The Government has announced the start of the review into the legal aid reforms made as a result of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012 (LASPO). The review will include an assessment of the changes to the scope of legal aid for Immigration cases and will report later this year.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126163/>

Refugees: Children

The following two questions both received the same answer

Alex Norris (Labour Co-op) [125383] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to amend current legislation in order to fulfil the remaining unallocated spaces under Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016.

Asylum: Children

Alex Norris (Labour Co-op) [125384] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department will commit to maintaining in law, the right of children fleeing conflict to seek sanctuary in the UK if they have family members currently living in our country, after the UK leaves the EU.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The UK is fully committed to transferring the specified number of 480 unaccompanied children under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 as soon as possible. Whilst the Government is clear that we will not be amending the current legislation, after extensive discussion with France, Greece and Italy, we have updated the eligibility date on an exceptional basis to ensure we can transfer the circa. 260 remaining unaccompanied children and meet our obligation under section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016. We are working closely with Member States and with relevant partners such as the UNHCR, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and NGOs to ensure the safe transfer of children referred by each Member State to the UK. Over 220 children are already here and transfers are ongoing.

Our Family Reunion policy allow children to join their refugee parents, and there are also specific provisions that allow extended family members lawfully resident in the UK to sponsor unaccompanied children where there are serious and compelling circumstances. This policy is reflected in domestic legislation and will be unaffected by our exit from the EU. We have reunited over 24,000 partners and children with their families under our family reunion policy in the last five years.

Until we leave the EU, the UK remains bound by EU asylum legislation, where we have opted in, including the Dublin Regulation. The Dublin III Regulation is the mechanism to determine the Member State responsible for the consideration of an asylum claim. We are considering the options to ensure effective cooperation on the country responsible for processing asylum claims when we leave the EU. This will be a key consideration as part of the process of establishing a new relationship with our European partners.

The Home Office publishes data on asylum applications and their outcomes from unaccompanied asylum seeking children who enter the UK. The data are published in volume 3 of the asylum tables in the quarterly Immigration Statistics release. The latest release includes data up to September 2017, is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017-data-tables>.

In addition, the Home Office published a one-off data publication on the number of children transferred from France as part of the UK's comprehensive support for the Calais camp clearance in autumn 2016. The data is published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transfers-of-children-to-the-uk-from-the-calais-operation-november-2017>

The Home Office only returns an unaccompanied child with no lawful basis to remain in the UK if it is satisfied that safe and adequate reception arrangements are in place in the country to which they are to be removed.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125383/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125384/>

Asylum

The following three questions all received the same answer

Peter Kyle (Labour) [126132] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department has taken to ensure the (a) adequacy and (b) consistency of

guidance provided in non-straightforward asylum cases.

Peter Kyle (Labour) [126133] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to paragraph 6.3 of The Home Office response to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's report: An Inspection of the Home Office's Asylum Intake & Casework April – August 2017, whether her department has identified new customer service standards for non-straightforward asylum cases; and if she will make a statement.

Peter Kyle (Labour) [126134] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has on meeting the target to clear 10,000 asylum decision cases by March 2018.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The decision to designate a case as 'non straight forward' must be discussed and agreed by an officer at least the grade of a Senior Executive Officer to ensure it is applied appropriately. In addition the guidance on these cases has recently been reviewed and redistributed across asylum teams to ensure it is applied consistently and that it does not discriminate against any individual groups.

Asylum Intake and Casework Senior Management have been in consultation with staff and partners on the new service standards and it is intended that these will be introduced later this year

Information regarding Asylum data is published as part of the Government's Transparency agenda the latest release of which can be found at can be found at tab as 01q <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-july-to-september-2017/list-of-tables#asylum>. This shows that in from April to September there were 9,883 asylum decisions made.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126132/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126133/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126134/>

Asylum: Finance

Afzal Khan (Labour) [126582] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's report, Asylum Migration and Integration Fund, List of Actions allocated funding, published in July 2017, which actions will receive funding in 2018.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The report referenced was a snapshot of funding as of July 2017. Some of the actions listed will continue to be funded in 2018, and dates for the actions are shown in the report.

At present it is not possible to state precisely what actions will be funded in 2018, as this is dependent partly on business needs of the Home Office, however it is expected that more funding will be allocated to refugee integration activities during the year.

A full list of possible actions to be funded was established in the UK AMIF National Programme, agreed with the EU in March 2015, and published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/asylum-migration-and-integration-fund-programme>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-05/126582/>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662953/amif_project_list_july_2017.pdf

Asylum: Housing

Thangam Debbonaire (Labour) [125480] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the the procurement documents for the new Asylum Accommodation and Support Services contracts.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: All Home Office contracts are tendered in compliance with the EU Procurement Directives, which ensure that there is a transparent and equitable procurement process

The Asylum Accommodation and Support Services Contracts details and procurement timescales are available at:

<http://ted.europa.eu/udl?uri=TED:NOTICE:461664-2017:TEXT:EN:HTML>

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-30/125480/>

Immigrants: Detainees

Ruth George (Labour) [125228] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many immigration detainees who are (a) illegal immigrants and (b) asylum seekers from outside the EU were returned from the UK to an EU country in 2016 and 2017.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The information requested is not readily available and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost by examining case files. Individuals may be both illegal immigrants and asylum seekers, and may be detained at different stages prior to being returned so their entire case history would need to be examined.

Information on returns and on detention is published as part of Home Office's quarterly Immigration Statistics at

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

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-29/125228/>

Asylum: Detainees

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [126214] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum seekers who have claimed to be a victim of torture have been detained at immigration centres.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: Specific information on the number of those who have claimed to be a victim of torture who have been detained at immigration centres is not currently published.

However, all officials making decisions on asylum claims receive a dedicated five-week foundation training programme which incorporates all relevant aspects of international and domestic law. Within this programme there are specific sections on torture and medical reports, and how they should be considered and analysed in asylum claims. Medical reports will be considered together with other written and oral evidence in determining an asylum claim to ensure alleged victims of torture have their claims assessed fairly and sensitively.

The Adults at Risk policy came into effect on 12 September 2016 and governs the detention suitability considerations of all cases where vulnerability in immigration detention may arise. The policy can be viewed in full in the following link;

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/.../adults-at-risk-policy-guidance_v2_0.pdf

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126214/>

Asylum: Detainees

The following two questions both received the same answer

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [126215] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to review its policy on detention for asylum seekers who

have made an application on the grounds they were victims of torture.

Torture

Sammy Wilson (DUP) [126217] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she plans to revise the definition of torture used in the Home Office's at risk policy in light of that definition being ruled unlawful by the High Court.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Government is considering how it can address the Court's findings in relation to the statutory guidance covering the adults at risk in immigration detention policy. This includes consideration of the definition of torture that should apply in the policy. The policy already covers asylum seekers who claim to have been the victim of torture and will continue to do so.

The Court did not find that the definition of torture currently in use in the policy was unlawful. It did, however, find that the definition used between September 2016 and December 2016 had been unlawful.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126215/>

and

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-01/126217/>

Deportation: Vietnam

Vernon Coker (Labour) [125944] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information her Department holds on the number of Vietnamese children who were (a) arrested in and (b) deported from the UK between 2012-17.

Reply from Caroline Nokes: The Home Office does not return unaccompanied children with no lawful basis to remain in the UK, unless we can confirm there are safe and adequate reception arrangements in the country to which they will be returned.

The Home Office publishes statistics on Vietnam returns (both enforced and voluntary). Those statistics can be accessed here-

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662535/returns5-jul-sep-2017-tables.ods

Tables rt_05 and rt_05q show returns to destination country.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-01-31/125944/>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Immigration White Paper

Baroness Vere of Norbiton repeated the answer about the Immigration White Paper that had been given in the House of Commons, and that is included in the "House of Commons Oral Answers" section above.

Lord Kennedy of Southwark (Conservative): My Lords, I thank the Minister for repeating the Answer to the Question given in the other place by the Immigration Minister. Her problem is the Government's lack of any credibility on this. We have Boris Johnson and Michael Gove charging round seeking to undermine the Prime Minister, and they were recently joined by Jacob Rees-Mogg. The Government's action, particularly on immigration, is making us an international laughing stock. Will the Minister explain to the House why publication has again been postponed? Is there anything in the department, even in draft, or are there just sheets of blank white paper sitting in the Home Office? What assurance can she give the House that we will not be sitting here again in a few months' time with another postponement? The Minister was not specific on when she will come back to us. We would like to know that we will not be here again in a few months with another postponement.

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: ... On the timing, it is clear that we are

considering a range of options for the future immigration system. This is incredibly important. We will set out initial plans in the coming months. We have to make sure that all decisions we make for the future immigration system are based on evidence and engagement. I encourage all noble Lords and those they talk to to consult the Government about what they would like a future system to look like. We are already in consultation with a wide range of representatives from business, universities and various countries and when we are satisfied that we have the evidence and have completed the consultation, we will make our decision.

Lord Paddick (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, presumably the Minister will have seen the political coverage over the weekend about the damage caused by the uncertainty over Brexit, not least to the National Health Service, which EU nationals are leaving because of the uncertainty. From a situation where they felt they had some certainty, we now learn that there is no certainty during or after the implementation period. The Minister talks about there being plenty of time, but the longer the delay, the more people will leave. What further damage does the Minister believe this delay and the publication of this White Paper will cause to an already understaffed and underresourced National Health Service?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I thank the noble Lord for his observations, but I do not feel he is quite correct. Let us be clear: we have already reached a very important milestone. We have reached an agreement—a citizens' rights deal—with the EU. That covers EU citizens who already live in the UK, so if you are a nurse from the EU living in the UK, you are covered. You need to register with the Home Office. You will then be able to obtain settled status and can remain in the United Kingdom and have the same rights as you would have had prior to our leaving the EU. What will happen during the post-exit implementation period is subject to negotiation, and it would be foolish for us to reveal exactly what we want because the quickest way not to get what you want is to reveal it.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (Crossbench): Would the Minister notice, or agree, that the timing for the White Paper that she has given is about as vague as anything I have heard, and I have heard plenty of vague promises from government about the timing of White Papers? Can she say that the White Paper—when it comes, if it comes, whenever it comes—will cover the aberrant practice of treating international students as economic migrants and will finally address that issue in terms that stop that practice?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I think I can assure the noble Lord that it will come, so "if" is not required in his question. I think I have been very clear that it will be with us in the coming months as the situation progresses. The noble Lord raises including students in the net migration figure, and I am well aware that it is an issue about which he feels very strongly, but we are no different from Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the US in including international students in our net migration calculations. I am afraid I cannot make any promises to him about what will be in the White Paper.

Baroness Redfern (Conservative): I thank the Minister for repeating the Answer to the Urgent Question. Will there be a regional dimension to our future immigration policy?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I thank my noble friend for her question. We have to take into account the labour requirements in regions and in different sectors of our economy. This is why we have commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee to advise on the economic and social impact of the UK's exit from the EU and on how the UK's immigration system should be aligned with the Government's modern industrial strategy, which was published recently. The Migration Advisory Committee will report in September 2018, so there is sufficient time to do the work that needs to be done. We are considering a range of options for a future immigration system, and I am sure we are not ruling anything out at this stage.

Lord Liddle (Labour): Will the Minister please be a little more open with the House about the Government's objectives for their immigration policy in the transition period, or the implementation period, as the Government call it? Is the objective to reduce numbers coming to this country or is it not? The Minister talked about policy being evidence-based. Is it not absolutely clear that at the moment, as the NHS scours the rest of the EU for doctors and nurses to keep our health service going, any restrictions on free movement in that implementation and transition period would have a devastating effect? The Government should make clear that they will not impose conditions on their rights of residence in the United Kingdom.

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The noble Lord will know, as I am sure many noble Lords know, that immigration numbers have already started to fall. It is our ambition to achieve a sustainable level of immigration after we exit the European Union and after the post-exit implementation period has completed. The noble Lord asked what our objectives are for the post-exit implementation period. It is instructive to look forward to the period beyond implementation because that is the period for which we have to establish a stable and robust immigration system that works for every region and every sector of our economy. So in terms of where we are now and where we will be in, say, 2021, the objective for the implementation period and the immigration system for that period is a smooth transition. It is to ensure that there is no cliff edge and that we are able to have the people and skills we need in our country.

Lord Hylton (Crossbench): My Lords, it has been well known for a long time that there have been acute shortages of high-skilled and low-skilled workers. The Answer makes no reference to them. What are the Government thinking and what will they do?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: My Lords, we are well aware that there are shortages in certain areas and there may be overstaffing in other areas. As for what the Government are doing, they are listening. The most important thing that we can do at the moment is to listen to businesses, to universities and to our colleagues across the European Union. The Government have a number of user groups, which have been set up with representatives from all sorts of different organisations. The most important thing we can do is listen, and if we feel that there will be shortages in certain areas—whether regions or sectors—that is what our future immigration policy must address.

Baroness Neville-Rolfe (Conservative): I believe the Government have made a mistake in recent years in understating the scale of immigration and forecast immigration in their planning for health, housing, schools and infrastructure. What annual estimates of immigration are the Government making for next three to five years—ranges if need be—beyond the implementation period, and how are they planning for the consequences for public services and infrastructure? Will this feature in the White Paper?

Reply from Baroness Vere of Norbiton: I thank my noble friend for her question. I am afraid I am not able to answer the questions that she has raised about the numbers we are looking at and the forecast for our public services. I can say, however, that we are working very hard to improve the quality of the data we use for immigration forecasting. We are working very closely with the ONS and other parts of government to improve the quality and use of administrative data. We need a better understanding of how many migrants are in the UK, how long they stay for and what they are currently doing. The ONS will be reporting back within a year, and we look forward to its report.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-02-05/debates/536FE8DF-61EA-47B2-8DB0-1701F52529F9/ImmigrationWhitePaper>

Refugees: Teaching of English

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to provide additional resources to programmes for the teaching of English to refugees.

Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford): My Lords, the Government recognise the importance of the English language for refugee integration. The Government have provided additional funding of £10 million under the vulnerable persons relocation scheme for more English classes, childcare facilities and local co-ordination of English language provision. English language tuition is also available for refugees under the arrangements for adult learners.

Lord Alton of Liverpool: My Lords, I am grateful to the Minister for that Answer and for the very helpful meeting she had with me to discuss this. Since that meeting, has she had the chance to reflect on the 60% reduction in ESOL funding since 2010, the desirability of extending the guaranteed eight hours a week of teaching to all refugees, and the role that voluntary projects can play alongside statutory provisions? Is it not the case that language is the most important precondition for full participation in British society, and that if refugees are unable to speak English, it compromises their ability to integrate, with negative social, employment and security implications?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I totally agree with the noble Lord about English language skills being the key to employment, integration and contributing to wider society in general. As I said, we have made more than £10 million available over five years, and local authorities are required to arrange a minimum of eight hours' formal tuition a week within a month of arrival and for a period of 12 months, or until the individual reaches ESOL entry level 3.

Lord Kennedy of Southwark (Labour Co-op): My Lords, there has been a huge cut in the funding of ESOL, as the noble Lord, Lord Alton, said. Without being able to speak English, refugees, having fled conflict, have to cope with loneliness and isolation as well. Can the Minister explain to the House the Government's comprehensive strategy for ESOL in England and how they will co-ordinate it with the devolved institutions?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: For refugees, which is what the Question is about, our ESOL strategy is that local authorities have to arrange a minimum of eight hours' formal language tuition a week within a month of arrival and for a period of 12 months, or until that person reaches ESOL entry level 3. ESOL is a route to employment, and we want people who arrive here as refugees to be able to access the labour market as quickly as possible, because many of them will be quite highly skilled.

Baroness Warsi (Conservative): My Lords, I support the comments of the noble Lord, Lord Alton. Does my noble friend agree that, as well as resourcing, it is important that in teaching English as a second language the focus is on how we teach it, where we teach it and when we teach it, to allow full access for people coming into this country? Is she aware of a specific Department for Communities and Local Government programme which was put in place in 2013 to effectively expand the way in which English as a second language is taught? Can she tell us about the success of that programme and whether there are any plans to extend it?

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: If my noble friend is talking about the same programme I am thinking of, Talk English, it was an excellent initiative, of which I saw an example up in Manchester. The parents, in particular the mothers, dropped their children off at school and then went into the school and were taught English. Things like that not only make women feel part of their children's environment but also make them feel part of the community in which they live. I remember asking one mother what it was about Manchester that she liked so much. She said, "I love the rain".

Baroness Hamwee (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the Minister has referred to £10 million of funding over five years for additional ESOL teaching, and that is very welcome. But is it not the case that this will benefit only resettled Syrian refugees, meaning that the great majority of refugees in the UK are locked out? On investment for these programmes, the Minister should take comfort from the fact that there is huge public support for funding teaching English for all refugees.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: I certainly agree with the noble Baroness that refugees generally should be able to learn English. What I am talking about today is a £10 million fund for resettled refugees, but tuition is available to refugees under arrangements for adult learners as well. ...

Lord Hogan-Howe (Crossbench): My Lords, in 2016, Dame Louise Casey conducted a review on extremism. She stressed the importance of integration, which reduced the chances of extremism, and of course speaking English increases the chances of integration. The £10 million that the Minister referred to has certainly helped to assist resettled Syrians, but could that same commitment to provide eight hours of English training be provided to all other refugees as well? That might enhance the strategy mentioned by the Opposition.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: My Lords, as I explained to my noble friend Lady Warsi, English language tuition is also available to refugees under the adult learners scheme. But the noble Lord is absolutely right: integration is the key to tackling extremism and the English language is the key to enabling that integration.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-02-06/debates/0AE368FD-4F89-4FE6-8F53-3212CA1825DF/RefugeesTeachingOfEnglish>

Asylum Seekers: Legal Advice

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat): To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to ensure that every failed asylum seeker, and anyone facing removal from the United Kingdom for whatever reason, has access to adequate legal advice.

Reply from the Advocate-General for Scotland (Lord Keen of Elie): My Lords, legal aid is available for individuals faced with deportation where they are claiming asylum or challenging their detention. The Government have commenced the post-implementation review of legal aid, which will include the scope of legal aid for immigration and asylum cases.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno: My Lords, the Minister will be aware that many asylum seekers are unable to access legal advice, for different reasons. Some are penniless and others just do not know the procedures. The result is that many of the decisions made by the Home Office are unsound and reversed on appeal. In 2005, 13,000 appeals were allowed. In 2010, 35,000 were allowed and, in 2015, 17,000 were allowed. Therefore, in 10 years 250,000 appeals were allowed—a quarter of a million wrong decisions by the Home Office. Will the Minister please tell me what he is doing to remedy that situation so that we have a procedure that is fair and equitable?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, all persons detained in immigration removal centres now have access to a duty solicitor and therefore have access to legal advice.

Lord Beecham (Labour): My Lords, it should be axiomatic that legal assistance is available to people facing removal and the Minister has made it clear that that should be the case. However, surely the underlying problem is the shameful record of the Home Office in this area. We read regularly that people who have been living in this country for decades, often working and having led a successful life here, are now being ordered to depart. Will the Government review the performance of the Home Office and its policies in this very sensitive area?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, the period for which a person has remained illegally in this country should not be and is not a determinant of their right to remain here. It is necessary to apply the relevant law both to the issue of asylum seekers and those who arrive here unlawfully, not even seeking asylum.

Lord Thomas of Gresford (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, a Bar Council report published last November found that at any one time more than 3,000 people, mostly failed asylum seekers, are held in administrative detention without being convicted of a crime, at a cost of £34,000 each. More than half are ultimately released into the

community when their appeals succeed. Last Friday, in the case of VC, an asylum seeker from Nigeria with mental problems, the Court of Appeal slammed the Home Office for misinterpreting its own policy and awarded damages. Will the Minister review the means and merits test applied by the Legal Aid Agency, which academic research shows operates to exclude detainees from legal aid by, “seizing upon the tiniest thing”, to declare their applications ineligible?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, the Legal Aid Agency is of course independent of Government for very proper and good reasons. The application of LASPO—the legal aid Act—is the subject of internal review at present following an announcement by the then Lord Chancellor in October last year.

The Lord Bishop of St Albans: My Lords, research by the Children’s Society shows that unaccompanied and separated children are particularly vulnerable. Only 12 grants for exceptional case funding were made in 2015-16, fewer than 1% of the expected number of cases under the previous system. Hundreds of children are being left without a legal safety net. Can the Minister confirm that the situation of these children will be specifically considered within the review of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, current figures show that 103 children were put into detention in immigration-related matters in 2016, of which 42 were under 12. Some of those may have been unaccompanied but, under the policy of the 2014 Act, unaccompanied children should not actually go into immigration removal centres; they should be held pending removal decisions. With regard to exceptional case funding, the figures for the first two quarters of 2017 indicate that the success rate for immigration-related applications was 73%. Some 652 applications were made during that period.

Lord Kirkhope of Harrogate (Conservative): My Lords, we should remember the United Nations convention, which originally set out the criterion for granting asylum: to people in great need of protection. Does my noble and learned friend agree that it is terribly important for us to restate that, and to make sure that asylum is not used as a vehicle for immigration rather than giving the protection that the most extreme cases require?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, it is clearly in the interests of genuine asylum seekers that the system for seeking asylum as permitted under the UN convention should not be abused and should not be seen to be abused.

Lord Bassam of Brighton (Labour): My Lords, according to an Amnesty report published in 2017, over 2,000 young people seeking refuge in the UK were deported to Afghanistan between 2007 and 2015, the majority of them since the legal aid cuts were introduced. Does the Minister agree with Amnesty that the UK is in breach of its international obligations and law, and if so what steps do the Government intend to take to put this right?

Reply from Lord Keen of Elie: My Lords, we do not agree that we are in breach of our international law obligations, nor is it obvious that there is a connection between the figures given by the noble Lord and the availability of legal aid.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-02-05/debates/2B107061-A9BD-414E-9D59-F19407B72324/AsylumSeekersLegalAdvice>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Visas: Children

The Lord Bishop of Gloucester [HL5149] To ask Her Majesty's Government how many applications were made on behalf of children for family reunion visas outside the rules due to exceptional circumstances, in (1) 2016, and (2) 2017; and of those, how many applications were successful.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Published statistics on visa applications in the Family category can be found online at the following address:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638590/entry-visas1-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods

The relevant information can be found in the attached table on Family Reunion Visas.

[Family Reunion Visas Table](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-29/HL5149/>

Asylum: EU Law

Lord Green of Deddington (Crossbench) [HL4919] To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the total number of requests made in 2016 to other EU member states for the transfer of those claiming asylum in the UK who were believed to have first arrived in the EU in another EU member state, in line with EU Regulation 604/2013; to which states the requests were made; and how many transfers actually took place.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The EU Regulation 604/2013 (Dublin III Regulation) is a long-standing mechanism between EU Member States to determine responsibility for examining asylum claims. It is not an application route for transfer to the UK. Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency, regularly publishes Member State figures, the latest release of which can be found at:

http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Asylum_quarterly_report

Outgoing requests can be found at:

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_dubro&lang=en

The list of transfers is available at:

http://appsso.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/nui/show.do?dataset=migr_dubto&lang=en

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4919/>

Asylum: Finance

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5252] To ask Her Majesty's Government what aid is available for destitute asylum seekers who are not allowed to work and are not entitled to benefits.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Asylum seekers and their dependents who would otherwise be destitute are provided with a weekly cash allowance and free accommodation.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-30/HL5252/>

Asylum: Finance

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5253] To ask Her Majesty's Government how the replacement of the Azure card by the Aspen card for asylum seekers was publicised.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: In order to publicise the replacement of the Azure card we wrote to all service users informing them of the change, and what the implications were for them. We briefed service providers and the voluntary sector about the forthcoming change to ensure that advice and guidance was available in case of difficulty.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-30/HL5253/>

Asylum: Drugs

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5254] To ask Her Majesty's Government what provision they have made for essential medication to be available to

displaced people on their migration journey before they arrive in the UK.

Reply from Lord Bates: The UK is providing essential medical care to vulnerable migrants and refugees on their journeys towards Europe and beyond. By the end of 2016 for example, UK aid had supported over 300,000 first aid interventions and medical consultations as part of the Mediterranean migration crisis response. We have also been at the forefront of medical relief provision to displaced people in areas affected by conflict. For instance, the UK has helped provide over 10.3 million medical consultations and over 8.3 million vaccines across Syria and the region since 2012.

The UK has also welcomed over 9,300 refugees under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme since it began in 2014. All refugees that are referred by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees for potential resettlement undergo a Health Assessment in the region. Details are passed to receiving local authorities so they can ensure that suitable treatment can be provided upon arrival.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-30/HL5254/>

Asylum: Mental Illness

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5251] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 29 January (HL5401), whether they are considering recording the number of asylum seekers who require treatment for mental illness.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: There are currently no plans to record the numbers of asylum seekers who require treatment for mental illness. Although every opportunity is afforded to asylum seekers to disclose this information during the process, there is no obligation on their part to do so. The staff working with asylum seekers are trained to identify mental health concerns but are not medically trained to identify the need for treatment. Where mental health concern is identified, the asylum seeker is referred or signposted to medical or support services.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-30/HL5251/>

The answer referred to above – which is actually HL5041 and not as stated above – can be read at

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-23/HL5041/>

Asylum: Children

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5140] To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding they have allocated to organisations dedicated to helping unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Home Office provides funding to all local authorities who look after unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC). The national rate is £41,610 per annum for under 16 year olds and £33,215 per annum for 16 and 17 year olds. We also provide local authorities with £200 per week for former UASC who turn 18 and qualify for leaving care support. These rates were increased significantly in July 2016 by 20%, 28% and 33% respectively. The Home Office provides funding to the Refugee Council to support UASC through the Children's Panel. The role of the Children's Panel is to advise and assist unaccompanied children through the asylum process, and to support them in their interactions with the Home Office and other central and local government agencies. Children making an asylum claim in their own right are also eligible for assistance in the form of legal aid.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-29/HL5140/>

Asylum: Children

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat) [HL5141] To ask Her Majesty's Government how much notice unaccompanied asylum-seeking children are given before (1) detention, and (2) deportation.

Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford: Unaccompanied children may only be detained in a very limited number of exceptional circumstances. Such detention is usually pending alternative care arrangements being made (with relatives or local authority children's services), would be for the shortest possible time, and would not take place in an immigration removal centre.

We do not return unaccompanied children with no lawful basis to remain in the UK, unless we can confirm there are safe and adequate reception arrangements in the country to which they will be returned.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-29/HL5141/>

Press Releases

A tailored migration system for Scotland

<https://news.gov.scot/news/a-tailored-migration-system-for-scotland>

Supreme Court judgement concerning British citizenship by descent

<https://www.supremecourt.uk/cases/docs/uksc-2016-0165-press-summary.pdf>

Bigger role for EU Investment Bank to tackle migration crisis

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/press-room/20180202IPR97033/bigger-role-for-eu-investment-bank-to-tackle-migration-crisis>

Migration to the EU: five persistent challenges

<http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2018/five-persistent-migration-challenges>

New Publications

Scotland's Population Needs & Migration Policy

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00531087.pdf>

Guidance for dependants of UK visa applicants (Tiers 1, 2, 4, 5)

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/680612/PBS_Dependant_Guidance_02-2018.pdf

The Outsider Project: Empowering Local Community Organising for Migrant Led Change

<https://migrantsrights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/outsider-project-empowering-local-community-organising-migrant-led-change-web.pdf>

Twelve months on: filling information gaps relating to refugees and displaced people in northern France a year on from the demolition of the Calais camp

http://refugeerights.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/RRDP_TwelveMonthsOn.pdf

Current migration situation in the EU: Impact on local communities (update)

http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-february-monthly-migration-report-focus-local-communities-update_en.pdf

Migration to the EU: five persistent challenges

http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2018-february-migration-report-focus-five-challenges_en.pdf

News

Refugee Festival Scotland

Refugee Festival Scotland is an annual Scotland-wide programme of arts, cultural, educational, heritage and sport events that brings refugee and local communities together and celebrates the contribution refugees make to life in Scotland and the welcome offered by local people. To register an event for inclusion in the national programme see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/open_programme

To apply for a grant to put on a Refugee Festival Scotland event, see the “[Funding Opportunities](#)” section below.

Migration cut 'could cost Scotland £10bn'

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-42972979>

Holyrood immigration plans would stop migrants moving to England

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/holyrood-immigration-plans-would-stop-migrants-moving-to-england-1-4685211>

Scottish government calls for devolution of immigration policy

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/feb/07/scottish-government-calls-for-devolution-of-immigration-policy>

Scotland-only migrants to aid workforce

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/scotland-only-migrants-to-aid-workforce-jbwxdtdzdd>

More than £500m spent on UK immigration detention over four years

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/uk-immigration-detention-centre-cost-taxpayer-brexit-eu-migrants-a8195251.html>

UK plans video campaign to deter African migrants

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/10/uk-video-campaign-deter-africa-migration-placating-british-voters>

Asylum seekers living in 'disgraceful, unsafe' housing, says report

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/feb/10/asylum-seekers-unsafe-housing-home-office-contractors>

Tory immigration chief leaves Mull kids in lurch after snubbing visa plea for Canadian Gaelic teacher

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/tory-immigration-chief-snubs-visa-11981501>

Refusal of leave to remain for seriously ill immigrants

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-07/register/refusal-of-leave-to-remain-for-seriously-ill-immigrants-6cj5f3pnw>

Cardiff baptisms for religious asylum seekers fleeing Iran

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-42891162>

Lack of migrant workers left food rotting in UK fields last year, data reveals

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/feb/09/lack-of-migrant-workers-left-food-rotting-in-uk-fields-last-year-data-reveals>

Migrant flower pickers support farmers arrested on suspicion of slavery

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-09/news/migrant-flower-pickers-protest-after-farmers-arrest-on-suspicion-of-slavery-p27nttnxl>

TOP

Community Relations

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-10303 Dean Lockhart (Conservative): Celebration of Scottish-Arabic Culture and Heritage – That the Parliament congratulates the Fife Arabic Society on successfully hosting a celebration of Scottish-Arabic culture and heritage at the Mercat Shopping Centre in Kirkcaldy on 27 January 2018; notes that the event enabled members of the public to take part in a variety of activities and workshops, including Arabic writing and initiatives to encourage Fife residents to learn more about how Arabic culture has shaped western civilisation and the modern world; welcomes the inclusivity of events such as these; notes the impact of these occasions on community cohesion, and wishes all involved the best of luck in the future.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10303>

News

Ethnic diversity in UK children's books to be examined

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2018/feb/07/ethnic-diversity-uk-childrens-books-arts-council-england-representation>

Ahmadi Muslims raise Islam awareness in Cardiff

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-south-east-wales-42990071>

Afua Hirsch: 'I'm British — why should I be grateful for that?'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news-review/afua-hirsch-im-british-why-should-i-be-grateful-for-that-qh7r332xz>

TOP

Equality

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

Apprenticeships

Jeremy Balfour (Conservative) (S5W-14130) To ask the Scottish Government what percentage of young people offered a job or apprenticeship through Scotland's Employer Recruitment Incentive (SERI) remained in employment after 13 weeks, broken down by (a) disabled people or people with a long-term health condition, (b) care-experienced young people, (c) carers, (d) people with convictions, including community payback orders, (e) early leavers from the armed forces, veterans or ex-forces personnel, (f) people unemployed for six months or more who are not on the Work Programme or a Community Work Placement, (g) people who have failed their ESA Work Capability Assessment, (h) Work Programme completers who remain unemployed, (i) ethnic minority groups, (j) people from the Gypsy/Traveller community, (k) partners of current or ex-Armed Forces personnel, (l) people requiring support with language, literacy or numeracy, including those for whom English is an additional language, (m) lone parents, (n) people with lower than SCQF Level 5 qualifications, (o) young people who received additional support for learning in school, (p) refugees or other people granted leave to stay in the UK, (q) homeless people, including those in temporary or unstable accommodation and (r) people affected by substance misuse.

Reply from Jamie Hepburn: The percentage of young people supported into

employment, including apprenticeships, that remain in employment after 13 weeks is set out in the following table.

Eligibility*	Percentage sustained at 13 weeks 2016-17
Disability or long term health condition	90.1%
Care Experienced	81.0%
Carer	90.0%
Person with a conviction	88.5%
Early leaver from forces & veterans	100.0%
Partner of current or ex-armed forces	66.7%
Long term unemployed (6 months +)	93.1%
Failed ESA Work Capability Assessment	N/A
Work Programme completer - unemployed	100.0%
Ethnic minority groups	80.0%
Gypsy/Travelling community	N/A
Language, Literacy, Numeracy (inc ESOL)	100.0%
Lone Parent	75.0%
Person with lower than SCQF Level 5	90.0%
Received additional support-learning in school	93.3%
Refugee or other granted leave to stay in the UK	N/A
Person affected by substance misuse	100.0%
Homeless person	85.7%

* Eligibility for SERI changed in 2016-17. Figures for 2015-16 reflect broadly the same criteria however related to the outcome at 12 weeks rather than 13 weeks.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5W-14130>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

Ethnic Groups: Equality

Lord Ouseley (Crossbench) [HL4945] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action plans are in place to address the inequality deficiencies identified in the Race Disparity Audit; and what arrangements are in place to review and monitor developments and progress.

Reply from Lord Young of Cookham: The Government has made a commitment to explain or change key ethnic disparities highlighted by the Race Disparity Audit in the *Ethnicity facts and figures* website.

The Government has launched an initial programme of work to tackle some of the disparities highlighted, including targeted action in employment areas, a review of school exclusions and a commitment to take forward a number of recommendations in the recent Lammy Review of the criminal justice system.

Detailed analytical work and engagement with external partners is underway across Departments to bring forward further data driven policies to tackle disparities highlighted by the Audit and will be announced in due course.

The Race Disparity Unit in the Cabinet Office is responsible for coordinating and monitoring the progress of the Government's response to the Audit overseen by the Cabinet Office and the Race Disparity Inter-Ministerial Group.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-22/HL4945/>

The findings of the Race Disparity Audit, referred to above, can be read at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/650723/RDAweb.pdf

The Ethnicity facts and figures website, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/>

The Lammy Review, referred to above, can be read at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf

Apprentices: Travellers

Baroness Whitaker (Labour) [HL4901] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 15 January (HL Deb, col 432), how many young people from gypsy and traveller families have taken up apprenticeships in the last year for which figures are available; and how many of those people have accessed support provided for those with learning disabilities.

Reply from Lord Agnew of Oulton: The table (attached) provides the number of apprenticeship starts by Gypsy and Irish Traveller learners in each academic year from 2011, with breakdowns of age and learning difficulty and/or disability.

Further breakdowns and demographic information is available in our apprenticeship demographic pivot table:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/669034/201617_apprenticeships_detailed_demographic_tool_by_sector_subject_area.xlsx.

We cannot identify learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who have accessed support from the Individualised Learning Record. However, we want to ensure apprenticeship opportunities are open to people with disabilities. This includes recognising Education, Health and Care Plans in our funding and English and maths policies, and providing extra payments to training providers where an apprentice requires further learning support. Access to Work funding is also available from the Department for Work and Pensions to support adjustments apprentices may need in the workplace.

[Apprenticeship starts by age](#)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-18/HL4901/>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-01-15/debates/5A0C7EE3-7E72-4C57-AE8F-84772CEBC8E2/ApprenticeshipsDisabledStudents#contribution-FA806414-9AB8-407F-9480-4C47149F38FB>

Press Releases

Supporting workplace equality

<https://news.gov.scot/news/supporting-workplace-equality>

Defending human rights

<https://news.gov.scot/news/defending-human-rights>

New project launched to put human rights at heart of public sector budgets

<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/news/new-project-launched-to-put-human-rights-at-heart-of-public-sector-budgets/>

News

'Young black people can be heroes too': the campaign to send kids to see Black Panther

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/filmblog/2018/feb/09/black-panther-challenge-kids-race-identity-empowerment>

Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Motion

S5M-10373: Neil Findlay (Labour): The Power of Words on Holocaust Memorial Day – That the Parliament notes that school pupils from West Lothian joined one of many worldwide events at Howden Park to mark Holocaust Memorial Day 2018; understands that documentary films were shown and stories were read out that conveyed the hardships of the people persecuted; notes that the theme for this year's event was the Power of Words, focusing on the impact of language in inciting hatred, recording events and empowering resistance, and recognises that it is the responsibility of everyone to use their words to create tolerant, diverse and peaceful societies in which the atrocities of the Holocaust can never happen again.

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/28877.aspx?SearchType=Advance&ReferenceNumbers=S5M-10373>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

Religious Hatred: Islam

Baroness Tonge (Non-affiliated) [HL5262] To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the announcement by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on 22 January (HC Deb, col 18), that they are giving £144,000 of support jointly to the Holocaust Educational Trust and the Union of Jewish Students to tackle anti-Semitism, prejudice and intolerance on university campuses, how much money they are allocating, if any, to Muslim groups in the UK for tackling Islamophobia.

Reply from Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Hate crime of any kind, directed against any community, race or religion has absolutely no place in our society. Action Against Hate, the UK Government's Plan for tackling hate crime sets out how the Government will tackle this divisive crime. We have given since 2011 £1.9 million to Tell MAMA to tackle anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia. Tell Mama also offers support to victims and works with the criminal justice agencies to bring perpetrators to justice. We also provide £85,000 to the StreetWise 'Stand UP' project which works in schools to tackle anti-Muslim hatred and anti-Semitism.

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-01-30/HL5262/>

The announcement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-01-22/debates/5A413939-9FFB-4FB3-BF12-573D81835DDC/Anti-SemitismAndHolocaustDenial#contribution-D32BCA3A-ABD1-4661-BEE8-C7BACE7EE37D>

“Action Against Hate”, referred to above, can be read at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/543679/Action_Against_Hate_-_UK_Government_s_Plan_to_Tackle_Hate_Crime_2016.pdf

Press Releases

Moderator condemns antisemitic hate incidents

http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news_and_events/news/2018/moderator_condemns_antisemitic_hate_incidents

Man sentenced for stirring up hatred against Muslims on Facebook

<https://www.cps.gov.uk/cps/news/man-sentenced-stirring-hatred-against-muslims-facebook>

News

'I carry a personal alarm' SNP minister Humza Yousaf fears for his life after racist death threats

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/i-carry-personal-alarm-snp-11968115>

Anas Sarwar lays out plan to combat racism amid claims Scottish Labour has taken 'backward step'

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/politics/labours-anas-sarwar-lays-out-11975680>

Racism row deepens as Anas Sarwar snubs Richard Leonard

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/politics/racism-row-deepens-as-anas-sarwar-snubs-richard-leonard-1-4686268>

'Lenient' treatment of race remark MP splits Labour's front bench

http://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15983515.Lenient_treatment_of_race_remark_MP_splits_Labour_s_front_bench/

We need to be honest about the pervasive Islamophobia that plagues our society

http://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/15986712.We_need_to_be_honest_about_the_pervasive_Islamophobia_that_plagues_our_society/

Fascists hijack Scottish soldier's tragic death to push far-right message of hate

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/scottish-news/fascists-hijack-scottish-soldiers-tragic-11975432>

Exposed: Vile racist who called 12 year-old girl "black rat" as she shopped with pals

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/news/local-news/exposed-vile-racist-who-called-11972164>

Nazi obsessive who threatened to bomb mosques after Manchester attack jailed

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/nazi-obsessive-threat-bomb-mosques-manchester-attack-crime-latest-a8204046.html>

SNP claims of more egalitarian society 'are undermined by racial injustice'

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-05/scotland/snp-claims-of-more-egalitarian-society-are-undermined-by-racial-injustice-2vmh70s86>

Kick It Out alarmed by spike in abuse against 'backdrop of rising hatred'

<https://www.theguardian.com/football/2018/feb/07/kick-it-out-alarm-spike-abuse-football>

Police investigate after woman filmed racially abusing post office worker

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/feb/09/police-investigate-after-woman-filmed-racially-abusing-post-office-worker>

Police investigation launched after woman filmed on camera racially abusing post office employee

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/woman-racial-abuse-post-office-footage-police-investigation-racism-a8204261.html>

Scout master fired for 'Darth Vader' veil jibe

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/scout-master-fired-for-darth-vader-veil-jibe-8796b8rs1>

Alert over Muslim boy's water pistol

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/alert-over-muslim-boys-water-pistol-w0hmmjg6b>

King and queen of world's largest mediaeval re-enactment group wear swastikas to coronation

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/society-for-creative-anachronism-swastikas-king-queen-worlds-largest-mediaeval-reenactment-group-a8199891.html>

TOP

Other Scottish Parliament and Government

New Publication

There shall be a Scottish Parliament – Powers

Animated video guide to the powers of the Scottish Parliament

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zKif-hv90n0>

TOP

Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Prime Minister's Questions

Q3. **Rehman Chishti (Conservative):** While I have been travelling around the country to meet people from diverse communities, members of the Jewish and the Muslim communities have raised the point that the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 should specifically take into account people's faith considerations, because in their faiths, loved ones must be buried within 24 hours. Will the Prime Minister join me, my hon. Friend the Member for Maidstone and The Weald (Mrs Grant) and faith communities in looking at this very important matter?[903808]

Reply from the Prime Minister: I thank my hon. Friend for raising that point on behalf of communities across the country, which he does from the unique position of his own experience and understanding of these issues. It is important that we take account of specific requirements of someone's faith, especially when they have lost a loved one and are grieving. Although, as he will be aware, coroners are independent judicial office holders, I understand that the Ministry of Justice is speaking to the Chief Coroner about this point to see what more can be done. I am sure that my right hon. Friend the Lord Chancellor will be happy to meet my hon. Friend to discuss the issue further.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-07/debates/B3EF2D42-D1CF-4293-BCB1-FE3086EB84AD/Engagements#contribution-546BE669-11CA-4D60-ACCB-620C0FCDCE4A>

Female Genital Mutilation: Prosecution Rates

John Whittingdale (Conservative): What steps the CPS is taking to increase the rate of prosecution of people responsible for female genital mutilation. [903849]

Reply from the Solicitor General (Robert Buckland): FGM is a crime. It is abuse against children and women. The CPS has introduced a series of measures to improve the handling of such cases, including appointing a lead FGM prosecutor in each area and delivering training to police and prosecutors across

John Whittingdale: I welcome this week's announcement of extra funding to tackle FGM in Africa and beyond. With over 5,000 cases reported in a year in this country, does my hon. and learned Friend share my concern that we are still to bring a successful prosecution?

Reply from the Solicitor General: My right hon. Friend is correct to raise some of the obstacles that prosecutors have faced over the years, and barriers have caused real issues in the investigation of such cases. I am glad to say that a case is currently before the courts—I will not comment on it—but it is also important to remember that protection and prevention is vital, and our FGM protection orders are being used to good effect, with 179 having been granted to the end of September last year.

Kerry McCarthy (Labour): ... the fact that we have not yet had a single conviction is still a sticking point. What more can the Solicitor General do liaise with the police? Local prosecution services tell me that they are being prevented from taking things further because the police are not bringing cases to them.

Reply from the Solicitor General: The hon. Lady is right to press me on this issue. With the appointment of lead FGM prosecutors in each CPS area and agreed protocols with local police forces, I am glad to say that there should be a greater and deeper understanding among officers, police officers in particular, of the tell-tale signs of female genital mutilation and of what to do about them. Getting early investigative advice from the CPS is vital in such cases.

Nick Thomas-Symonds (Labour): The Solicitor General is right to identify specific issues that need to be tackled on FGM. However, if we are to increase prosecution rates right across the range of offences, we need a properly resourced and robust disclosure system. The former Conservative politician and barrister Jerry Hayes has said:

“The CPS are under terrible pressure, as are the police. Both work hard but are badly under-resourced.” He is right, is he not?

Reply from the Solicitor General: The hon. Gentleman will know that I was directly involved in the prosecuting and defending of serious criminal cases for over 20 years, and I am well familiar with the long-standing challenge of disclosure. Prior to recent revelations, I am glad to say that the Attorney General and I instituted a thoroughgoing review not only of our guidelines, but of the entire culture. The police and prosecutors—everybody involved at all stages—have to realise that disclosure must be achieved early and efficiently to protect not just defendants, but victims.

Nick Thomas-Symonds: I appreciate that there is a review, and I appreciate that there are long-standing issues, but there is also no doubt that social media—things like WhatsApp—and the examination of mobile telephones present new challenges that are time intensive and resource intensive. Surely it is the case that, without proper resources on those things, we will not have the system of disclosure that we need.

Reply from the Solicitor General: I remind the hon. Gentleman that one of the main issues in this area has not been that these items have not been obtained but the timeliness in which they are eventually disclosed. That is the issue, and bearing down on that factor will encourage and increase both police awareness and the priority that the police need to place on making sure that all this material is gathered at the earliest opportunity.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2018-02-08/debates/70A9662C-8EB9-4ED7-91F5-795FEDE3C76B/FemaleGenitalMutilationProsecutionRates>

Abattoirs: Ritual Slaughter

Lord Trees (Crossbench): To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to minimise the number of animals slaughtered without stunning in abattoirs in the United Kingdom.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord Gardiner of Kimble): My Lords, EU and domestic legislation require all animals to be stunned before slaughter, with a long-standing exception for Jewish and Muslim communities to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs. We recently asked the Food Standards Agency to conduct a survey of slaughterhouses that included looking at different slaughter methods. The survey's results should help to ascertain the volumes of meat arising from different slaughter methods.

Lord Trees: I thank the Minister for his reply and congratulate the Government on the number of measures they have announced recently to improve animal welfare in this country. They are progressive and very welcome. However, on non-stunned slaughter, I am afraid we have not made much progress. The latest Food Standards Agency figures to which the noble Lord alluded show that the number of sheep slaughtered without stunning in Britain in 2017 doubled in the six years from 2011 to over 3 million sheep. That is 3 million sheep that had their throats cut without being rendered unconscious first. Does the Minister agree that, in that aspect of animal welfare, we are going backwards?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, that is why it is important that we first look at the results of the 2018 survey. The last full survey was in 2013, so it is important that we hear about the issue again. The Government would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, but we have been very clear over a long period—since the 1933 Act—that we respect the rights of the Jewish and Muslim communities to consume meat in accordance with their religious practices. However, we expect our announcement on CCTV, affecting all slaughterhouses, to be an advance in animal welfare.

Lord Rooker (Labour): Does the Minister realise that there is a partial solution to this, particularly in respect of the Muslim community? All New Zealand lamb that arrives in this country is halal and all the animals were stunned prior to slaughter. If it is good enough to have a standard in New Zealand that classifies as halal, why do we put up with a local decision, which is not an international rule? There is a perfectly good arrangement from the other side of the world, which has led so much in food safety and farming practices. Why can we not adopt the New Zealand practices in respect of the Muslim community?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, my understanding is that there are different requirements in different parts of the Muslim community. The noble Lord, with all his experience, is absolutely right, but certain parts of the Muslim community are prepared to have stunned halal meat and other parts are not. I return to the fact that we have this long-standing reasoning behind permitting the communities to eat meat in that way. We certainly want to enhance animal welfare, and that is why the official veterinarians must be in every part of the slaughterhouse.

Viscount Hailsham (Conservative): My Lords, may I support the position adopted by my noble friend? It is very important to carry the Muslim and Jewish communities with us and I hope they will be tightly involved in any consultations that may take place.

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, as I say, we do not intend to move away from this long-standing right, but we want, with the other measures that we are considering, to ensure that all slaughtermen hold a certificate of competence, which is clearly essential, and that the official veterinarians can see from the video footage that everything done in all slaughterhouses is carried out in a proper manner. We certainly want to advance animal welfare in all slaughterhouses.

Lord Stoneham of Droxford (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, the growth figures that the noble Lord, Lord Trees, talked about are in excess of what is needed to meet religious needs for the slaughtering of animals without stunning. We have been leaders in the European Union on animal welfare, so have the Government looked at the German system of quotas as a way of bringing the numbers down, and if not, why not?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, we should get the figures in March and we will want to look at the survey, which will be put in the public domain at some point this year. It is also important to say that we want to see what proportion of this meat is going for export. We want to look at where the livestock is sourced and the market distribution, including exports. Once we know that, we will be in a position to give this issue the consideration it deserves.

Lord Cunningham of Felling (Labour): My Lords, is it not the case, as the noble Lord, Lord Trees, accurately pointed out, that the number of animals, in this case sheep, being killed without stunning is rising dramatically? I am sure that is not mirrored by a rise in the population who demand halal meat. What is the Minister's explanation for the number of animals having risen so sharply in the UK?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The noble Lord has raised a number of points. I understand that people in the Muslim community eat more sheepmeat than the rest of the British population and that the number of Muslims who are looking to have non-stunned halal meat has also increased because of enhanced religious observance. As I say, with this survey we want to look at the reasons behind this. Obviously, our intention is to allow an exemption for religious communities, but not that this meat should go into the wider market.

Baroness Masham of Ilton (Crossbench): My Lords, is the Minister aware of the horrifically cruel treatment of sheep in a slaughterhouse near Thirsk? The animals were not stunned, rather they were kicked and mutilated; what they went through is really horrifying. The men involved will be tried in court in Leeds very soon. Can the Minister say when CCTV will be operational in all slaughterhouses?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, we intend to lay legislation on this matter very shortly. I wish I could give the noble Baroness and the House a precise date, but we want to bring it forward as soon as possible. CCTV will be installed in all areas where live animals are present. We want animals to have a good life and a respectful end to their lives. I think this will advance that.

Lord Hodgson of Astley Abbotts (Conservative): My Lords, of course we must wholeheartedly and unreservedly respect freedom of religious belief, but there are among us those who would prefer not to eat meat that has been slaughtered using a mechanism that we believe causes unnecessary suffering. Will the Government now grasp this nettle and arrange for a labelling mechanism so that those of us who do not believe in following this practice have the freedom of our own belief?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, the labelling issue is very important. We think it is absolutely essential that everyone can make an informed choice. We will be considering this issue in the context of our departure from the EU. I also say to my noble friend that farm assurance schemes, such as Red Tractor and the RSPCA Assured scheme, require stunned slaughter. That is an important feature.

Baroness Jones of Whitchurch (Labour): My Lords, we all welcome the introduction of compulsory CCTV in slaughterhouses, which should assist with proper welfare standards. The noble Lord will know, however, that the recent incident at 2 Sisters came to light not because of the CCTV but because of undercover reporters. Unless the Food Standards Agency has the proper resources to look at the footage, we will get no further forward. Will the Minister explain what extra resources will be put in place so that the CCTV footage is used and not just sitting there in a dead camera?

Reply from Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Lords, it is very important that the official veterinarian takes his or her duties extremely seriously. That is why the footage will need to be stored by the slaughterhouse operators for 90 days. The

official veterinarians will have access to the CCTV systems and their recorded images. It is important that CCTV recording may be used as evidence. On resources, the official veterinarians, who are essential to this, have their duties. There have to be official veterinarians in slaughterhouses. As I said, this will be an important part of the work of enhancing animal welfare at the end of animals' lives.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2018-02-07/debates/F6F1A838-A275-4205-A2C9-EFBE097F63AE/AbattoirsRitualSlaughter>

New Publication

International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation, 6 February 2018

<http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2018-0019/LLN-2018-0019.pdf>

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New Publication

European Commission - Fact Sheet Questions and Answers about Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C)

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release MEMO-18-602_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_MEMO-18-602_en.htm)

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Other News

We'll stand up for schools that ban hijabs and fasting, pledges minister

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/we-ll-stand-up-for-schools-that-ban-hijabs-and-fasting-pledges-minister-f88nbv0d0>

A culture of fear and intimidation cannot pass through the school gates

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/a-culture-of-fear-and-intimidation-cannot-pass-through-the-school-gates-psbm70z5j>

Schools that ban hijabs or fasting will get Government backing if they face backlash, says minister

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/schools-ban-hijabs-fasting-lord-agnew-government-backing-backlash-minister-a8204876.html>

Ofsted head to be questioned over backing for hijab ban

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/feb/09/amanda-spielman-ofsted-head-questioned-mps-over-backing-headteacher-hijab-ban>

With rising number of girls at risk, world in 'race against time' to end female genital mutilation – UN

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58537#.Wnm7spP1WnY>

Female genital mutilation 'not acceptable' in the 21st century – UN envoy on youth

<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=58535#.Wnm7t5P1WnY>

Joint Statement on the International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation

[http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release STATEMENT-18-601_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_STATEMENT-18-601_en.htm)

Food labels set to show if animals were not stunned

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/edition/news/meat-labels-set-to-show-if-animals-were-not-stunned-zqrr3fsbv>

Judge orders demolition of Abbey Mills mosque in Stratford, east London

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/past-six-days/2018-02-07/news/judge-orders-demolition-of-abbey-mills-mosque-in-stratford-east-london-m79757bk0>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Offensive Behaviour at Football and Threatening Communications (Repeal) Bill

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/105269.aspx>

UK Parliament

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/immigrationcontrolgrosshumanrightsabuses.html>

Children Act 1989 (Amendment) (Female Genital Mutilation) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/childrenact1989amendmentfemalegenitalmutilation.html>

EEA Nationals (Indefinite Leave to Remain) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/eeanationalsindefiniteleavetoremain.html>

**** European Union (Withdrawal) Bill**

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/europeanunionwithdrawal.html>

Scottish Parliament Finance and Constitution Committee: evidence session

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=11343&i=103194#ScotParlOR>

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/humantraffickingchildprotection.html>

Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaverytransparencyinsupplychains.html>

Modern Slavery (Victim Support) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/modernslaveryvictimsupport.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionbill.html>

Refugees (Family Reunion) (No. 2) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/refugeesfamilyreunionno2.html>

Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/unaccompaniedasylumseekingchildrenlegaladviceandappeals.html>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

EU funds in the area of migration (closing date 8 March 2018)

https://ec.europa.eu/info/consultations/eu-funds-area-migration_en

Electoral Reform (closing date 12 March 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00529431.pdf>

Human Rights (closing date 16 March 2018)

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/106453.aspx>

A Connected Scotland: Tackling social isolation and loneliness and building stronger communities (closing date 27 April 2018)

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0053/00530204.pdf>

Police Scotland: Your view counts (open all year)

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/decision-making/public-consultation/local-policing-consultation>

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Job Opportunities

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

[Click here](#) to find out about Graduate, Modern, and Foundation Apprenticeship opportunities.

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Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

**** Creative Communities Fund: Refugee Festival Scotland**

Closing date for applications: 6 March 2018

Community groups from across Scotland that are led by refugees or that have a focus on working with refugees and asylum seekers are invited to apply for up to £500 to deliver an arts and cultural event or activity as part of Refugee Festival Scotland 2018.

This fund is designed to enable these groups to participate in Refugee Festival Scotland 2018 by delivering an event or activity with their members and local public that will help

the group to strengthen their connections, partnerships and networks with receiving communities. For information and to apply see http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/news_and_events/refugee_festival_scotland/community_celebrations

**** Workplace Equality Fund**

Closing date for applications: 29 March 2018

Scottish Government funding to support private businesses in reducing employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers in the workplace. Grants of between £5,000 and £50,000 are available. In exceptional circumstances, applications of up to £100,000 will be considered. To be eligible applicants should be a private business or a third sector organisation whose project proposes to work with private business.

The funding will support employers in reducing employment inequalities, discrimination and barriers particularly across the arts, culture, leisure, tourism, finance, manufacturing, construction, agriculture and fishing, transport and communication and STEM sectors.

For information and to apply see <https://www.voluntaryactionfund.org.uk/funding-and-support/workplace-equality-fund/>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

**** this week!**

Introduction to Policing Programme

18 February 2018 in Edinburgh

24 February 2018 in Tulliallan

4 March 2018 in Edinburgh

10 March 2018 in Edinburgh

Police Scotland four-day course for people from minority ethnic communities to provide an insight into being a police officer. Includes input from specialist departments, fitness test, and an opportunity to visit the unique training facility at Tulliallan. For information see https://www.scojec.org/memo/files/18ii_ps.pdf or contact

recruitmentpositiveactionteam@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals

20 February 2018 in Edinburgh (9.30-12.30)

27 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-12.30)

PAiH training to explain fundamental issues of housing, employment and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals and we will explore how service users might prepare themselves to avoid possible threats of Brexit. For information see

<http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers

20 February 2018 in Edinburgh (1.30-4.30)

27 February 2018 in Glasgow (1.30-4.30)

PAiH training to explore how the asylum system works from the perspective of a claimant and the process involved in making a claim for asylum. The course will also explore the barriers faced by both refugees and asylum seekers building a new life in Scotland and their respective entitlement to services. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/>

or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

**** The Gathering**

20-21 February 2018 in Glasgow

SCVO annual event to find out more about the Third Sector in Scotland with over 100

exhibitors, and more than 60 workshops, seminars and training sessions. For information see <https://scvo.org.uk/events/a1vb0000007fc04aaa-the-gathering>

Age Assessment Awareness

21 February 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

The Age assessment process is used to establish the approximate age of an unaccompanied young person who may have been trafficked or otherwise separated from their families, so that their Rights and entitlements can be fulfilled. This Scottish Refugee Council course provides social workers and other relevant staff with an awareness of the components that are used to build a picture of a person's age. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8f2z7p4> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Challenging Perceptions – Breaking Barriers for Muslim Women In Scotland

21 February 2018 in Dundee (10.00-2.00)

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre conference to explore the rich diversity of Scotland's Muslim community, the barriers experienced by Muslim women when seeking paid employment and income generation, examples of best practice in providing front-line service provision, and future-proofing employability support. For information see <http://www.mwrc.org.uk/events/1347/> or contact 01382 787 450 / info@Mwrc.org.uk

Supporting Those Affected by Forced Marriage

21 February 2018 in Edinburgh (10.00-4.00)

Scottish Women's Aid workshop to demystify forced marriage and help those attending to gain the knowledge they need to provide appropriate support to those affected. For information contact 0131 226 6606 / info@womensaid.scot or see <http://womensaid.scot/training-event/supporting-affected-forced-marriage/>

Lunchtime Equality Workshop: Gender Paygap Reporting

21 February 2018 in Kirkcaldy (12.00-1.30)

Fife Centre for Equalities workshop to provide information about the Equality Act 2010 and how it applies to yourself and your organisation. For information contact 01592 645 310 / elric@centreforequalities.org.uk

New Scots: Refugees and the Asylum Process

1 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

17 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine why people might need to flee their own country, how they seek asylum in the UK and what opportunities they have for rebuilding their lives here in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/z68a5k8> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

**** Scottish Apprenticeships, Careers & Volunteering Event**

2 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-2.30)

BEMIS event providing an opportunity to chat informally to over 40 employers, training providers and support agencies to gain knowledge and information in accessing your future career. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/y8rm79dy> or contact 0141 548 8047 / ma@bemis.org.uk

Working with Interpreters

8 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

22 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the process of using an interpreter, where

the responsibility lies for the success of the interpreted session, examines the pitfalls and their consequences, and sets out best practice for using interpreters. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/zy436gr> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Immigration Act 2016: “The Hostile Environment” basics

13 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-12.30)

PAiH training for people providing services to or working with immigrants need up to date information to make sure their clients are able to access services without delay and prepare for being excluded when it is inevitable. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

**** Introduction to Scottish Politics**

16 March 2018 in Glasgow (10.00-4.00)

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights training to explore political structures in Scotland and the UK, look at how legislation is developed, and think about effective political lobbying. For information contact Rebecca rebecca@crer.org.uk

Equality and Diversity in the Workplace

20 March 2018 in Perth (9.30-12.30)

20 March 2018 in Perth (1.30-4.30)

PAiH training outlining the fundamentals of how to create a respectful, supportive and inclusive working environment for a diverse staff and volunteer group. For information see <http://www.paih.org/training/> or contact 0141 353 2220 / home@positiveactionh.org

Refugee Rights to Housing

21 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to identify the different groups of asylum seekers and refugees most likely to seek housing in Scotland, learn how to identify their legal rights, and the duties and obligations on local authorities and other housing organisations towards them. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y9pvp15r> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery in Scotland: Raising Awareness, Strengthening Collaboration, Breaking the Chains

23 March 2018 at the Scottish Parliament

UN House Scotland conference to raise awareness of human trafficking and modern slavery, building new and strengthening existing partnerships to make Scotland slavery free. For information see <https://www.unhscotland.org.uk/human-trafficking-conference> or contact 0131 220 6870 / hello@unhscotland.org.uk

Engaging Hard to Reach Groups

28 March 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course looking at the various approaches, tools and techniques we can adopt to reach out to people who are seldom heard. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y8tg2x4k> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

New Scots: Refugees and VPRS Resettlement

19 April 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course to examine the issues facing Syrian refugees as they move from countries around Syria to the UK, and highlight the challenges and

opportunities they face as they build new lives in Scotland. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/it93fog> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

Unaccompanied Refugee Children

2 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.30-4.30)

Scottish Refugee Council Course to better understand where unaccompanied refugee children are, and how you can help them in their journey. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information see <http://tinyurl.com/y7mz5uuu> or contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

First World Congress on Migration, Ethnicity, and Health

17-19 May 2018 in Edinburgh

('earlybird' deadline (for reduced fee) is 3 February 2018)

The aims of the Congress include improved research, population health and health care for migrants and other discriminated-against populations, and considering the health effects of social, environmental and demographic change associated with population migration, and the effects on diseases and their causes. For information see <http://www.merhcongress.com/> (full programme now available on the conference website) or contact merh@in-conference.org.uk / 0131 336 4203.

Refugee Community Sponsorship

24 May 2018 in Glasgow (9.15-4.30pm)

Scottish Refugee Council course. Reduced rates available for small voluntary organisations. For information contact Martha Harding 0141 248 9799 / martha.harding@scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

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Useful Links

Scottish Parliament <http://www.parliament.scot/>

Scottish Government <http://www.gov.scot/>

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

GovUK (links to UK Government Departments) <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations>

UK Government Honours system <https://www.gov.uk/honours/overview>

European Parliament <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/>

One Scotland <http://onescotland.org/>

Scottish Refugee Council <http://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk>

Interfaith Scotland <http://www.interfaithscotland.org/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/>

Equality Advisory Support Service <http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com>

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

ACAS www.acas.org.uk

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

Volunteer Development Scotland <http://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

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

Scottish Fundraising Standards Panel <https://www.goodfundraising.scot/>

Central Registered Body for Scotland (CRBS) www.volunteerscotland.net/disclosure-services

Disclosure Scotland <https://www.mygov.scot/working-jobs/finding-a-job/disclosure/>

BBC News <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/>

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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 Charitable Incorporated Organisation 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. (Scottish Charity, no. SC027692) <http://www.bemis.org.uk/>



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

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