



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

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**The Scottish Parliament will be in recess until 4 May 2021.  
It will be dissolved on 5 May, and the elections will take place on 6 May 2021.**

## Immigration and Asylum

### UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answer

#### Topical Questions: Housing, Communities and Local Government

**Gareth Davies (Conservative):** I warmly welcome the recently announced package of support for those arriving from Hong Kong on British national overseas status. Will my right hon. Friend confirm that all corners of the United Kingdom will receive support to enable those who arrive to settle where they wish and contribute to our economy through, for example, setting up a business? (914420)

**Reply from Robert Jenrick:** As champions of freedom and democracy, we are living up to our historical responsibilities to the people of Hong Kong. I have made it the mission of my Department to ensure that all BNO status holders and their families have the very best start as soon as they arrive here. That includes an additional £43 million package across all UK nations to provide targeted support for new arrivals, including English language tuition where necessary and help with

housing costs for those who need it. We are creating 12 welcome hubs across the UK to give practical support for everything from applying for a school place and registering with a GP to setting up a business. This month, I met four Hong Kong families who have recently arrived in the UK, and their profound sense of optimism about the future reaffirmed my belief that this programme will enrich our country for generations to come.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-19/debates/1A738004-25B5-453E-BC73-586EBF57E20F/TopicalQuestions#contribution-63D64A16-2595-4B72-99F6-DC7B1EEAE5B3>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

### British Nationality: Children

**Drew Hendry (SNP)** [181338] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to review the level of the fee charged for the registration of children as British citizens.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Home Office has acknowledged the recent judgment and is reviewing the fee in line with its duties under Section 55. In the meantime, the fees set out in the Immigration and Nationality (Fees) Regulations 2018 continue to be charged.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181338>

*The judgement referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.judiciary.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/prcb-v-sshd.pdf>

### British Nationality and English Language: Assessments

**Sam Tarry (Labour)** [179663] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will take steps to review the English B1 and Life in UK Test for spouses and carers of disabled and extremely vulnerable patients in light of the role that carers and spouses have played during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Government believes those seeking to make a permanent home in the UK should be equipped to integrate successfully in the UK, with an appropriate level of English and an understanding of British life and society's expectations.

All applicants between the ages of 18 and 65 are therefore required to pass the Life in the UK test; and meet the English language requirement, either when applying for settlement or citizenship.

There is discretion to waive these requirements if a person's physical or mental condition means it would be unreasonable for them to have to pass the test or learn English. Applicants must submit a medical waiver form completed by a medical practitioner to support their request for exemption from these requirements.

Unless the requirement is met because the applicant is a national of a majority English-speaking country, or they have a degree taught or researched in English, we need to be satisfied as to their English language skills through the passing of a specified test at or above the required level.

We have established a range of measures to support those affected by the covid-19 outbreak. We continue to monitor the situation closely and take these exceptional circumstances into account.

Where a test centre is closed or inaccessible due to covid-19, an application will be put on hold and applicants are permitted to submit their test certificates at a later date. Further information about the current concessions in place can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>

If there is evidence the inability of an applicant to meet these requirements due to covid-19 will lead to significant detriment to the circumstances, dignity, and well-being of any disabled and extremely vulnerable patient who is dependent on them for their care, the Secretary of State has the power to grant leave on a discretionary basis outside the Immigration Rules. Further information on the requirements for cases considered outside the Immigration Rules can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/chapter-1-section-14-leave-outside-the-immigration-rules>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179663>

### **Migrants: Health Services**

**Clive Lewis (Labour)** [179287] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of eligible NHS and social care workers have been refunded the immigration health surcharge since the Prime Minister's announcement on 17 June 2020.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The information regarding proportion is not readily available nor held centrally and could only be obtained at disproportionate cost due to the fact the Immigration Health Surcharge is payable across multiple application routes. For example, where the customer is on a visa with a general right to work and subsequently takes up employment, we do not have a record who the employer is.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179287>

*The announcement referred to above can be read at*

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-06-17/debates/D91FE96D-8668-4B3C-AC27-A9CE9E961015/Engagements#contribution-AF247D0E-12F0-40C5-BF16-678B81A27847>

### **Migrants: Coronavirus**

**Marsha De Cordova (Labour)** [178597] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to ensure access to covid-19 vaccination for people on temporary visas.

**Reply from Nadhim Zahawi:** Anyone living in the United Kingdom, including those on temporary visas, can receive the vaccine free of charge in line with the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's prioritisation groups.

If individuals are registered with a general practitioner (GP), their GP will contact them in due course. If they are not registered with a GP, the GP COVID-19 vaccination programme 2020/21 Enhanced Service Specification enables practices working within their Primary Care Network groupings from shared vaccination sites to vaccinate unregistered patients provided they are eligible.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178597>

### **Visas: Coronavirus**

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [179511] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if her Department will take steps to ensure that covid-19 pandemic travel restrictions are taken into account when assessing evidence of relationships for future UK visa applications.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Home Office will take into account the impact of covid-19 pandemic travel restrictions on relationships. This can affect individual applicants in different ways, and full details of the evidential requirements for relationships can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-family-visa/provide-information>

Details of the concessions the Government has already put in place as a result of the covid-19 pandemic can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>  
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179511>

### **NHS: Migrant Workers**

**Drew Hendry (SNP)** [181337] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the potential merits of reducing the cost of visas for foreign national spouses of UK national NHS workers who have worked for the NHS during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Kit Malthouse:** The government is hugely grateful for the vital contributions made by NHS staff during the pandemic and have brought in a range of unprecedented measures to ensure the sector is supported fully.

This has included the introduction of a Health and Care Visa, which provides fast track entry, reduced fees and dedicated support for professionals and their families, along with exemption from the Immigration Health Surcharge. Further free 12-month extensions were also announced last week for crucial frontline health workers and their dependents.

Fees, however, apply equally to all those settled in the UK who are seeking to sponsor family members to come to the UK. Relaxing these fees for the family members of NHS workers only, would undermine this principle.

Fees are set taking account of the charging powers provided by Section 68(9) of the Immigration Act 2014, which include the ability set fees based on: the cost of processing the application, the benefits and entitlements provided by a successful application and the wider cost of the Border, Immigration and Citizenship system. Full details of which can be reviewed via the following link:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/22/section/68>

The Home Office keeps fees for immigration and nationality applications under review and ensures they are within the parameters agreed with HM Treasury and Parliament.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181337>

### **Visas: Married People**

**Stephen Farry (Alliance)** [179692] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the spousal visa minimum income requirement in allowing sufficient participation in everyday life to facilitate integration.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The purpose of the minimum income requirement, implemented in July 2012 along with other reforms of the family Immigration Rules, is to ensure family migrants are supported at a reasonable level so they do not become a burden on the taxpayer.

The UK Government is committed to promoting social cohesion, good relations and a sense of belonging for all members of society. The ability to participate in activities and organisations outside the home plays a part in this. The minimum income requirement is not the only factor which promotes the ability to participate, but the level at which it is set can mean one particular barrier is reduced.

The Supreme Court has endorsed our approach in setting an income requirement for family migration which prevents burdens on the taxpayer and promotes integration into our communities. In particular, it strikes a balance between the interests of those wishing to sponsor a partner from overseas and the community in general by ensuring migration to the UK is not based on access to services funded by UK taxpayers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179692>

### **Graduates: Visas**

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [179077] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the Answer of 24 February 2021 to Question 155013 on Graduates: Visas, for what reason people on a Tier 2 visa route cannot use time spent in the UK under a previous Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa to contribute towards their continuous residence requirement.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) was a temporary route designed to enable graduates to bridge the gap between studies and the Tier 1 (Entrepreneur)/ Innovator routes.

Time spent on temporary immigration routes do not lead to settlement, so would only contribute to meeting a continuous requirement under the provision for long term residents. This approach is consistent with other temporary routes.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179077>

*The answer referred to above can be read at*

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-19/155013>

### **Graduates: Visas**

**Paul Blomfield (Labour)** [179079] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the potential merits of enabling international students who have completed their studies and whose Tier 4 visa leave expires ahead of 1 July 2021 to submit an early application to the Graduate Route opening on that date.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Those whose permission expires prior to the launch of the route will not be eligible, but will still benefit from the favourable switching provisions into the Skilled Worker route.

The Doctorate Extension Scheme for PhD students will remain open up until the launch of the new route.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179079>

### **Au Pairs: Visas**

**Zarah Sultana (Labour)** [180624] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of allowing au pairs to travel to the UK under short term study visas.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Short-term Student (English Language) route is provided for the purpose of studying English at an accredited provider. The route is based on the principle a student's sole intention for making an application is to undertake an English language course at an accredited institution and this intention is considered by caseworkers during the application process.

Travelling to the UK to act as an Au Pair would not meet this requirement of the route, nor would it serve the policy purpose the route is provided for.

Short-term Students are not allowed to work in the UK, so permitting employment as an AU Pair under it would not be appropriate.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-13/180624>

### **Migrant Workers: Domestic Service**

**Jess Phillips (Labour)** [174858] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if the Government will take steps to tackle serious exploitation and abuse of migrant domestic workers by restoring the visa that was in place between 1998 to 2012 under which migrant domestic workers were workers in their own right and therefore able to (a) renew their visa and (b) change employer without restrictions.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Government does not intend to reinstate the visa category for Domestic Workers in a Private Household, which closed to new arrivals in April 2012.

The Overseas Domestic Worker (ODW) visa provides for domestic workers in a private household to accompany their employer, where their employer is visiting the UK. The ODW visa is valid for a maximum of 6 months and ODWs are expected to leave the UK at the end of their stay, in line with the purpose of the route.

ODWs are permitted to change employer at any time, for any reason, during the validity of their visa. A dedicated process exists for victims of modern slavery who entered the UK as a domestic worker. In addition to support provided by the Single Competent Authority, via the National Referral Mechanism, migrant domestic worker victims of modern slavery can apply for permission to stay for up to two additional years.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-24/174858>

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

#### **Windrush Generation: Compensation**

**Vicky Foxcroft (Labour)** [179274] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many claims to the Windrush Compensation Scheme from residents living in (a) Lewisham Deptford constituency, (b) London and (c) the UK have been fully settled.

**Vicky Foxcroft (Labour)** [179277] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many and what proportion of claims to the Windrush Compensation Scheme from residents living in (a) Lewisham Deptford constituency, (b) London and (c) the UK have been considered eligible for a preliminary payment under the terms of that scheme.

**Reply from Priti Patel:** The nationality and country of residence of applicants is published as part of the regular transparency data release which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-data-march-2021>

We do not currently record data in a way which allows us to report on the location of applicants in the UK.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179274>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179277>

*Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>*

#### **Windrush Generation: Compensation**

**Vicky Foxcroft (Labour)** [179275] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what provision has been made in the Windrush Compensation Scheme for claimants who die before their claim under that scheme is fully settled.

**Reply from Priti Patel:** Where individuals sadly pass away before their claim under the Windrush Compensation Scheme is fully determined and paid, the Home Office will work with their families to ensure compensation is still paid out.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179275>

*Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>*

#### **Windrush Generation: Compensation**

**Vicky Foxcroft (Labour)** [179276] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Windrush Compensation Scheme, what criteria her Department uses to determine the effect of the Windrush scandal on the lives of the claimants to that scheme.

**Reply from Priti Patel:** The Windrush Compensation Scheme awards compensation in thirteen different categories covering a range of impacts to individuals' lives. Compensation claims are determined in accordance with the scheme rules, which are available on gov.uk:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-compensation-scheme-full-rules>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179276>

*Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>*

### **Windrush Generation: Compensation**

**Vicky Foxcroft (Labour)** [179278] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her October 2019 report to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the Windrush scandal, how many of the families of the 14 Commonwealth citizens who died after having been removed from the UK by her Department since 2002 have applied for compensation under the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

**Reply from Priti Patel:** Representatives of the estate of affected individuals who have sadly passed away can claim compensation. Close family members of an eligible primary claimant, including in cases where the primary claimant has died, can also make a claim for compensation in their own right. Guidance and claim forms are available on GOV.UK.

The specific information requested on the number of Windrush Scheme overseas applicants who had passed away before the application process was completed is not included in statistical data published by the Home Office.

The Home Secretary provides updates to the Home Affairs Select Committee on the work of the department in connection with Windrush.

The updates can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/correspondence-on-the-work-of-the-home-office-windrush>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179278>

*Information about the Windrush Compensation Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-windrush-compensation-scheme>*

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/update-to-the-hasc-on-windrush-22-october-2019/update-to-the-hasc-on-windrush-22-october-2019-accessible-version>

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Peter Grant (SNP)** [181333] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps the Government plans to take in the event that an individual who is required to apply for EU Settled Status is unable to do so before the 30 June 2021 deadline.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** In line with the Citizens' Rights Agreements, the Government has made clear where a person eligible for status under the EU Settlement Scheme has reasonable grounds for missing the 30 June 2021 deadline for applications by those resident in the UK by the end of the transition period, they will be given a further opportunity to apply.

Non-exhaustive guidance on what constitutes reasonable grounds for missing the deadline can be found at pages 26 to 44 of the main caseworker guidance for the scheme, which is available here:

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-caseworker-guidance](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-caseworker-guidance)

The guidance will underpin a flexible and pragmatic approach to considering late applications under the scheme, in light of the circumstances of each case.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181333>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>*

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Peter Grant (SNP)** [181334] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment her Department has made of the need for paper applications to be made available for people with no access to online services or who are IT illiterate when applying for EU Settled Status.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Assistance for applicants to the EU Settlement Scheme is available via a network of 72 organisations across the UK, for which £22 million in grant funding has been made available by the Home Office, and via the Assisted Digital service, which can provide help over the telephone or in person in completing an application online.

Where a person needs to apply using a paper application form, this can be obtained from the EU Settlement Resolution Centre, which is open seven days a week to provide assistance over the telephone and by email.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181334>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>*

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Peter Grant (SNP)** [181335] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that the processing time for EU Settled Scheme applications is five working days.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** We currently have 1,500 UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) European Casework staff in post. We are committed to ensuring our operational teams have the resources they need to run an efficient and effective system, and we actively monitor workflows to ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet demand.

Our aim is to process all applications to the Scheme as quickly as possible. The majority of applications are concluded within 5 working days, but cases may take longer dependent on the circumstances of the case, for example if the applicant is facing an impending prosecution or has a criminal record.

The following link lists the expected processing times for EU Settlement Scheme applications, based upon current performance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/eu-settlement-scheme-application-processing-times/eu-settlement-scheme-pilot-current-expected-processing-times-for-applications>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181335>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at <https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>*

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Stuart C McDonald (SNP)** [182056] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to reduce the number of outstanding settled status applications ahead of the application deadline; and what steps she is taking to ensure that people with applications outstanding at that date (a) are protected from discrimination in (i) seeking work, (ii) renting accommodation and (iii) providing services and (b) retain full access to public services.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** We are committed to ensuring our operational teams have the resources they need to run an efficient and effective system, and we actively monitor workflows to ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet

demand. We currently have 1,500 UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) European Casework staff in post.

In line with the Withdrawal Agreement, the rights of someone who has made a valid application to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) before the deadline of 30 June 2021 will be protected while the outcome of the application is pending. This includes any appeal against a decision to refuse status.

Someone who applies by 30 June 2021 and has not yet been granted status under the EUSS can continue to live their life in the UK as now, until their application is finally determined.

Employers and landlords should provide individuals with every opportunity to demonstrate their right to work and rent and should not discriminate on the basis of race or any of the other protected characteristics.

Legislation provides for a Code of Practice on avoiding unlawful discrimination at:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checkscode-of-practice-on-avoiding-discrimination>
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-rent-landlords-code-of-practice>

From 1 July, individuals who have made an in time application and are awaiting a decision on their application, will be able to utilise their Certificate of Application as proof of their right to work or rent when verified by Home Office status checking services.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-16/182056>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Peter Grant (SNP)** [181332] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what recent assessment she has made of the potential merits of the Government directly contacting care home operators to ensure those operators are aware of the need for vulnerable and isolated residents to apply to the EU Settled Scheme.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Home Office officials have undertaken a range of work to reach care home operators and vulnerable applicants to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

The Home Office is also working closely with the Department for Health and Social Care, and the Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government to ensure local authorities and care provider organisations are aware of the need to support those in care to submit applications. NHS employers, Scottish Social services and Wales Social care also sit on EUSS advisory groups which have been running since the Scheme launched in 2018.

A comprehensive three-year campaign has increased awareness of the need to apply to EUSS, targeting employers, including social care sector employers, and EEA and Swiss citizens themselves.

The Home Office has also provided up to £17million in grant funding to a grant funded network of 72 organisations provide bespoke support to vulnerable and hard to reach EU citizens and their family members eligible to apply to EUSS. Grant funded organisations include the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS), and the Institute Organization for Migration (IOM) who work closely with local authorities. Earlier this year, the Home Office announced a further £4.5 million of funding to the 72 organisations to continue the support services well beyond the 30 June 2021 deadline.

As of 31 March 2021, 5.3 million applications had been received to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), and 4.98 million applications have been concluded,

delivering on the government's promise to secure the rights of millions of Europeans in UK law for years to come.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181332>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

### **Immigration: EU Nationals**

**Angela Crawley (SNP)** [179236] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many applicants to the EU Settlement Scheme have updated their birth name to their married name using the Update My Details service since March 2019.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The Home Office issues settled status documentation in the primary name which is used in the official documentation produced as part of an individual's application.

The Home Office does not capture data on the number of customers who have updated their birth name to their married name since being issued status. To capture numbers would require a manual trawl of data and to do so would incur disproportionate cost.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179236>

*Information about the EU Settlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

### **Asylum**

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [180498] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure that proposed changes to asylum policy do not lead to the stigmatisation of people who enter the UK illegally to claim asylum.

**Reply from Kit Malthouse:** The New Plan for Immigration published on 24<sup>th</sup> March set out the intended reforms to the end-to-end asylum system. We stand by the principle that people in need of protection should claim asylum in the first safe country they reach and not travel through multiple safe countries in an attempt to reach the UK illegally. Our proposals are designed to help discourage those perilous journeys, protect life and break the business model of criminal networks behind illegal immigration.

All policy development will be undertaken in line with the law, including our equalities duties and international obligations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-13/180498>

*The New Plan for Immigration, referred to above, can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration/new-plan-for-immigration-policy-statement-accessible>

### **Asylum**

**Navendu Mishra (Labour)** [181134] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the (a) performance of the National Referral Mechanism process and (b) effect of that mechanism on people applying for asylum.

**Reply from Victoria Atkins:** The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) has lifted thousands of modern slavery victims out of dangerous situations of exploitation, putting them in a position where they can begin to rebuild their lives. We know that the system is currently facing challenges, therefore it is right that we learn lessons and consider how we can continue to support victims in a way that is sustainable and centred on their needs. The Government has established the NRM Transformation Programme, which will address the challenges that the current system faces by resetting the system of identification and support. Building on the

successes of recent NRM reforms, the NRM Transformation Programme will make sure genuine victims have their cases settled promptly, receive support tailored to their needs, and are empowered to move on with their lives. We intend the NRM to be a world-class system that effectively identifies and delivers needs-based support for victims of modern slavery.

Where relevant, individuals are able to claim asylum whilst they are being supported by the NRM. Potential victims and victims of modern slavery are eligible for support through the Modern Slavery Victim Care Contract (MSVCC), including accommodation and financial support. Where appropriate, some support services may be delivered by the asylum support system for asylum seeking victims. Confirmed victims of modern slavery who are also asylum seekers may be eligible for a grant of leave as a confirmed victim of modern slavery, but this usually only needs to be considered if the asylum claim is refused. The published policy can be found on gov.uk ([Discretionary leave considerations for victims of modern slavery](#)) and gives a number of examples in which a grant of discretionary leave is appropriate.

As part of the New Plan for Immigration announced on 24 March 2021, we are consulting on a proposal that would enable confirmed victims with long-term recovery needs linked to their modern slavery exploitation to be considered for a grant of temporary leave to remain to assist their recovery. This builds on our end-to-end needs-based approach to supporting victims. We would also make clear that temporary leave to remain may be available to victims who are helping the police with prosecutions and bringing their exploiters to justice.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-14/181134>

*The New Plan for Immigration referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration/new-plan-for-immigration-policy-statement-accessible>

### **Asylum: Applications**

**Jack Lopresti (Conservative)** [180954] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans her Department has to reinstate face to face interviews for asylum and refugee applications.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** We recommenced face to face substantive interviews on 21 September 2020.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-14/180954>

### **Asylum: Clothing**

**Dawn Butler (Labour)** [183092] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to her Department's expenditure of £5,415.90 at Primark in September 2020 for the purpose of clothing people seeking asylum, which company her Department procured to distribute that clothing.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** Dangerous and unnecessary crossings of the Channel are made by migrants in small boats, which are often overloaded. Many of those arriving in this way are soaking wet and at significant risk of hypothermia if not changed into dry clothes quickly. The Home Office has a duty of care to those migrants and ordinarily has sufficient stocks of dry clothing on hand for arriving migrants. However, last September saw an unprecedented number of migrant arrivals in small boats and supplies ran low, requiring emergency replenishment from a local retail outlet. This is the basis of the expenditure at Primark quoted here. As the clothing was distributed directly to arriving migrants by HO officials, no third party company was employed in the distribution.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-19/183092>

### Asylum: Census

**Neil Coyle (Labour)** [179154] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she has taken to ensure that asylum seekers living in initial and dispersal accommodation have been encouraged to undertake the 2021 Census.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** Home Office officials have worked with colleagues within the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to support the completion of the Census, particularly in relation to those currently accommodated within IA / Contingency.

ONS officials are content they have appropriate arrangements in place for other asylum seekers accommodated within community settings.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179154>

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

### Asylum: Finance

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [183263] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what plans the Government has put in place to avoid the homelessness and rough sleeping of vulnerable migrants who have been in receipt of section 4 support and accommodation during the covid-19 outbreak when the ban of evictions ceases.

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [183264] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what (a) notice and (b) additional support her Department plans to give to (a) local authorities and (b) other relevant stakeholders supporting vulnerable individuals prior to the ending Section 4 support and the restarting of evictions.

**Dan Carden (Labour)** [183265] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what advice he has received from Public Health England on the implications for the health of (a) migrants, (b) communities and (c) the public to cease provision of support under Section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 and restart evictions during the covid-19 outbreak.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** All failed asylum seekers who would otherwise be destitute can obtain accommodation from the Home Office under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, provided they take reasonable steps to leave the UK or show there is a temporary obstacle preventing their departure. No failed asylum seeker therefore needs to be homeless. Failed asylum seekers should leave the UK and return to their country of origin - support will be given to them to do that via voluntary return or we will seek an enforced return.

Decisions to stop providing accommodation to failed asylum seekers who refuse to take steps to leave the UK, despite being able to, were suspended in November last year following the introduction of new Covid-19 restrictions. Now that step 2 of the Government's Covid-19 Recovery Roadmap has been reached (from 12 April) this blanket pause on all cessations of support has been replaced by an approach that allows them to take place on a case by case basis, though initially with a cap on the total number of cessations that can be made per week (175) and exceptions for those who are pregnant, elderly and clinically vulnerable. This approach will initially apply to those accommodated in England only, but is expected to be rolled out to the rest of the UK, subject to further discussions with officials in the devolved administrations. The policy approach has been developed following discussions with Public Health England, representatives of local authorities and NGOs.

The Home Office has been informing local authorities about the new policy approach, through letters and meetings and there will be further communication in the coming weeks. It is not possible at this stage to assess how many decisions are likely to be made in respect of individuals currently accommodated in Liverpool or other areas, as this depends on a range of factors, including whether the individuals now agree to leave the UK and can therefore remain in Home Office accommodation until their departure is arranged. As the picture becomes clearer

data will be shared with individual local authorities on the likely volumes of such cases in their areas.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-19/183263>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-19/183264>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-19/183265>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Barry Sheerman (Labour Co-op)** [178810] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to ensure the adequacy of accommodation for asylum seekers.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** We expect the highest standards from our providers, who are expected to conduct regular checks across the accommodation estate. The Home Office have access to providers' systems to monitor compliance. The Asylum Accommodation and Support Services contracts (AASC) have a robust performance management system, against which providers are expected to deliver. This is supplemented by a formal governance process which includes quarterly Strategic Review Management Boards and monthly Contract Management Groups. Service credits and subsequent improvement plans are discussed and monitored as part of this process. Service Delivery Managers speak daily with providers about service delivery and performance.

In response to the global pandemic, officials also have formal meetings on a weekly basis to ensure individuals are housed safely, services are delivered in line with their contractual obligations and adherence to guidance from Public Health England (PHE) is followed.

Asylum seekers can also raise specific issues or concerns about their accommodation through the 24/7 Advice, Issue Reporting and Eligibility (AIRE) service operated by Migrant Help. The Home Office and our providers receive feedback on complaints raised through our regular dialogue with Migrant Help, which enables attention to be focussed on particular areas of concern.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178810>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [175849] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the risk of transmission of covid-19 as a result of moving families of asylum seekers under his Department's programme entitled Operation Oak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The movement of service users as part of Operation Oak will be undertaken in accordance with all relevant national or local health restrictions.

The Home Office has robust contingency plans in place and continues to follow national guidance issued by Public Health England (PHE), Health Protection Scotland and the National Health Service (NHS). House moves are not prohibited under the PHE guidance and the avoidance of destitution is considered to be a critical service. The relevant PHE guidance can be found here:

[Government advice on home moving during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) outbreak](#)

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-25/175849>

### **Asylum: Housing**

**Jim Shannon (DUP)** [178604] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to improve the condition of housing offered to asylum seekers as part of Operation Oak.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** We expect the highest standards from our providers, who are expected to conduct regular checks across the accommodation estate. The Home Office have access to providers' systems to monitor compliance. The Asylum Accommodation and Support Services contracts (AASC) have a robust performance management system, against which providers are expected to deliver. This is supplemented by a formal governance process which includes quarterly Strategic Review Management Boards and monthly Contract Management Groups. Service credits and subsequent improvement plans are discussed and monitored as part of this process. Service Delivery Managers speak daily with providers about service delivery and performance.

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<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178604>

*The following three questions all received the same answer*

#### **Asylum: Military Bases**

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [181324] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress her Department has made in ending the use of former barracks to accommodate people seeking asylum.

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [181327] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration's key findings from site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks on 15 February 2021, what the safeguarding procedures and requirements are for housing asylum seekers in contingency accommodation.

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [181328] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration findings in his inspection of the use of contingency hotel accommodation and from site visits to Penally Camp and Napier Barracks of 15 February 2021, what mental health support is being provided to asylum seekers who are or were residents of either of those sites.

**Reply from Kevin Foster:** The use of contingency accommodation continues to be essential as we work to fix the broken asylum system. We must ensure our statutory obligations can always be met and ensuring we treat all asylum seekers humanely and with the dignity they deserve.

Penally provided emergency capacity in response to pressures put on the asylum estate during the pandemic. As those pressures have eased, we have decided not to extend emergency planning permission beyond six months and close Penally. Napier Barracks will remain in operation in accordance with current needs.

The Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration announced an inspection of contingency asylum accommodation on 25 January 2021. The department acknowledges the ICIBI's decision to publish on 8 March the initial findings from site visits to Napier Barracks and Penally.

The ICIBI's inspection continues and a full inspection report will follow. The duration of the inspection is a matter for the ICIBI and upon its conclusion, following standard procedure set out in the UK Borders Act 2007, the Department will issue a formal response alongside the inspection report as it is laid before Parliament and

published on Gov.UK.

Napier is being used to accommodate single, adult males. All asylum seekers are subject to an initial screening process by UK Visas and Immigration, which includes security and safeguarding checks and we are taking great care to ensure those with identified vulnerabilities are moved to appropriate accommodation. We will also take swift action in relation to any new safeguarding issues as they emerge (for example the identification of previously unknown vulnerabilities). Further checks are made, to confirm suitability for transfer to the accommodation, before individuals are moved to sites and asylum seekers will be briefed by the accommodation provider in advance of their move.

We work closely with our accommodation providers to ensure all asylum seekers in supported accommodation are aware of, and have access to, Migrant Help's helpline. This service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, if individuals need help, advice or guidance, including signposting to relevant mental and medical health services.

Regular welfare checks are conducted on individuals, including behavioural monitoring of those who show signs of vulnerability, and where appropriate safeguarding referrals are made to relevant bodies.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181324>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181327>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181328>

*The findings referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/an-inspection-of-the-use-of-contingency-asylum-accommodation-key-findings-from-site-visits-to-penally-camp-and-napier-barracks>

### **Human Trafficking: English Channel**

**John Hayes (Conservative)** [175703] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps her Department is taking to work with French authorities to identify and prosecute people traffickers operating across the English Channel.

**Reply from Chris Philp:** We will do everything we can to stop these crossings and make this route unviable.

The danger to life from Channel crossings and the criminality behind it are simply unacceptable.

These journeys are often illegally-facilitated and are totally unnecessary; France and other EU countries are safe with fully functioning asylum systems.

The UK and France jointly investigate criminal groups engaged in these crossings, sharing intelligence and prosecuting cases on both sides of the Channel. The Joint Intelligence Cell, founded in July 2020 and resourced by both UK and French staff, is central to those efforts, enabling the sharing of information between UK and French law enforcement

In 2020, we arrested 113 individuals and secured 56 convictions for facilitation related to small boats resulted in sentencing of over 29 years. A further 35 disruptions were recorded against gangs and individuals engaged in organised immigration crime related to small boats

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-25/175703>

## **UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers**

### **Immigration: Skilled Migrants from Commonwealth Countries**

**Lord Woolley of Woodford (Crossbench):** To ask Her Majesty's Government what

assessment they have made of reports that highly skilled migrants from Commonwealth countries who have lived in the United Kingdom for 10 or more years have been refused indefinite leave to remain.

**Reply from the Minister of State, Home Office (Baroness Williams of Trafford):**

My Lords, we do not believe that highly skilled migrants who came to the UK using the tier 1 general visa route have been incorrectly refused indefinite leave to remain.

There have been many cases of applicants appearing to deliberately misrepresent their earnings to qualify for leave to remain. We are giving applicants opportunities to respond to these concerns, and each case is being considered on its merits.

**Lord Woolley of Woodford:** My Lords, my understanding of the Home Office data, supported by the Migrants' Rights Network, shows that all highly skilled migrants who have been refused indefinite leave to remain are non-white and from six Commonwealth countries in south Asia and Africa. Given that the Institute for Fiscal Studies showed that 60% of all online self-assessment tax returns have discrepancies—the main reason for their refusal—can the Minister explain this worrying racial disparity, particularly coming after the Windrush review?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, I absolutely refute that this has anything to do with the Windrush generation. The noble Lord points out that a large proportion of the refusals were given to non-white people; the countries represented have populations that would normally be non-white—that is the link there. People falsified earnings: quite often, amendments were made to tax returns over three years after the original returns and often less than six months before making the ILR application.

**Baroness Verma (Conservative):** My Lords, will my noble friend also look into the fact that there will be many skilled migrant workers who, because of Covid, will also have lost their current regular income, which may impact on their applications to stay? Following on from the question of the noble Lord, Lord Woolley, would she look a little deeper into the fact that a number—indeed, all—of those who have been refused are people of colour?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, as I explained to the noble Lord, Lord Woolley, the fact that these are people of colour probably reflects the countries the applications came from. There were some fairly appalling practices with these applications, as I have outlined—and where ILR had been granted, we saw cases of applicants subsequently amending their tax records back down again not to have to pay additional tax. I totally get my noble friend's point, but we need to see these cases in perspective.

**Viscount Waverley (Crossbench):** My Lords, I believe that the noble Baroness's response is in order. However, circumstances exist that border on the inhumane and run counter to the spirit of the Commonwealth, and indeed elsewhere. If the Government can be considerate to Hong Kongers, would they consider a one-time amnesty to all those thus impacted, through no fault of their own, thereby doing the right thing in the right way?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Absolutely—we have humanitarian routes, which are used. The noble Lord talked about BNOs, and he is absolutely right: the people of Hong Kong are coming here legally—we have granted them leave to remain under the BNO route. Far from being inhumane, this country has a proud record of giving refuge to people who need it.

**Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale (Labour):** My Lords, on that point, there has been and continues to be a particular problem of young people and teenagers, who have spent a considerable number of years in this country, sometimes—through no fault of their own but because of the bureaucracy of the system, the decision-making and so on—finding themselves threatened with a return to the country of their parents' or their birth, despite having spent a number of years in this country, attending school here and experiencing the growing-up process here. Is that really a humane reaction, and is there a better way that the Government could handle these cases?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I totally get the point that the noble Lord is making about some of the humanitarian considerations that we should give to people who grew up in this country, but this is a very different issue. The cases we are talking about this afternoon are of people who falsified their earnings, claiming back tax on them in some instances, as I have said. It is absolutely right that we are not only tolerant and welcoming but that we stamp out fraud where we see it—and these cases were of fraudulently declared earnings.

**Baroness Hussein-Ece (Liberal Democrat):** My Lords, I refer to the Minister for Future Borders and Immigration's recent statement that highly skilled migrants should not face destitution or have their right to work refused while their case is being decided. In reality, nearly half are still experiencing destitution, and 55% have no right to work. What actions will the Government take to honour this, and will they consider compensation for the approximately 80% of the 1,697 cases of individuals who were later found not to have been dishonest in their tax discrepancies?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** Of the nearly 1,700 refusals, 88% had differences of more than £10,000, and the average difference across all cases was £27,600, so they were not small differences. On people facing destitution, of course people will be cared for while their applications are being considered. Of course, particularly during the Covid pandemic over the past year, it has been very important to be able to give people that bit of respite because of the difficulties that they will face, first, coming here and, secondly, going back, if their applications are refused.

**Lord Rosser (Labour):** My Lords, it is rather a serious step to refuse people indefinite leave to remain who have been in this country for 10 years or more. The Minister referred to the non-criminal historic tax discrepancies, which are the cause of the trouble. Will she tell us how long ago these tax discrepancies occurred, on the basis of which indefinite leave to remain is being denied? Have they been recent cases or ones of some 10 years ago? Can she assure me that the statements that the Government are now making from the Dispatch Box have been checked by Ministers to ensure that they are accurate and that these people really are being denied indefinite leave to remain for good, strong reasons?

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, most applications for settlement were made around 2016. Some of them go back some years. The reason why they were uncovered was because of the sheer volume that HMRC was noticing as a strange pattern of behaviour. It was sufficiently unusual to draw it to the attention of the Home Office. This is not an attempt to deny ILR—this was a deliberate attempt on the applicants' part to falsify records so that they matched the self-employed earnings previously declared in tier 1 applications.

**Lord Cormack (Conservative):** My Lords, I listened very carefully to what my noble friend has said. Is she absolutely convinced that these applications have been handled not only efficiently but sensitively, bearing in mind that we really owe a great deal to those who have provided wonderful services in our country for many years? We would all be extremely concerned if some fell through an imperfect net.

**Reply from Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, I would share my noble friend's concern if people were to fall through an imperfect net. We must not conflate them with the Windrush generation, who were genuinely and rightfully here and to whom we owe a debt of gratitude. The people we are talking about have falsified earnings in order to come to this country.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-04-19/debates/419808A2-F558-4BF8-9169-59183D6AD5AC/ImmigrationSkilledMigrantsFromCommonwealthCountries>

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answer

### Immigration: Poland

**Lord Patten (Conservative)** [HL14808] To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the prevalence of xenophobic acts against Polish citizens resident in England.

**Reply from Lord Greenhalgh:** We are clear that all forms of hatred, including that based on race, are unacceptable and will be tackled. We have a strong legal framework in place to deal with the perpetrators of hate crime, and we have asked the Law Commission to undertake a full review of the coverage and approach of current hate crime legislative provisions, which will further strengthen this.

The Government is now considering a range of options to tackle hate crime beyond the current hate crime action plan. We will work with other departments and civil society partners to explore possible approaches, and to ensure a range of views from communities, including Polish, are taken into consideration.

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities was also launched to conduct a detailed, data-led examination of inequality across the entire population, and to set out a positive agenda for change. The Government will now consider the recommendations in detail and will respond before the summer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/hl14808>

Information about the review referred to above can be read at

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/hate-crime/>

The report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, referred to above, can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331 - CRED Report - FINAL - Web Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

## Press Release

**Martin Levermore appointed as new Windrush independent adviser**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/martin-levermore-appointed-as-new-windrush-independent-adviser>

## New Publication

**“I sat watching life go by my window for so long”: The experiences of people seeking asylum living in hotel accommodation**

<https://media.refugeecouncil.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/22152856/I-sat-watching-my-life-go-by-my-window-for-so-long-23rd-April-2021.pdf>

## News

**Home Office policy of deporting rough sleepers branded 'inhumane'**

<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/19249171.home-office-policy-deporting-rough-sleepers-branded-inhumane/>

**Ministers in immigration row over raising cap on seasonal farm labour**

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ministers-in-immigration-row-over-raising-cap-on-seasonal-farm-labour-x7fqp5xpp>

**Young Hong Kongers fleeing Beijing's clampdown left in 'danger' as they miss out on British asylum**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/24/young-hong-kongers-fleeing-beijings-clampdown-left-danger-miss/>

**Asylum seekers treated 'in dehumanising way' by UK host hotels**

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/apr/23/asylum-seekers-treated-in-dehumanising-way-by-uk-host-hotels>

**'Dehumanising': Asylum seekers in hotels left without shoes and given 'inadequate' food, report finds**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/asylum-seekers-hotels-refugee-council-home-office-b1835832.html>

**Report condemns Home Office failures at barracks used to house asylum seekers**

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2021/apr/23/report-condemns-home-office-failures-at-barracks-used-to-house-asylum-seekers>

**Illegal immigration 'crackdown' nets only 71 prosecutions from 17,000 caught**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/19/illegal-immigration-crackdown-nets-71-prosecutions-17000-caught/>

**UK Home Office charts its first ever deportation flight to Vietnam**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/20/uk-home-office-charters-its-first-ever-deportation-flight-to-vietnam>

**Concerns raised over legal advice for Vietnamese migrants deported from UK**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/22/home-office-breaches-own-rules-deporting-vietnamese-migrants>

**Domestic abuse in Scotland: How some women are refused a safe refuge because of their immigration status**

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/opinion/columnists/domestic-abuse-in-scotland-how-some-women-are-refused-a-safe-refuge-because-of-their-immigration-status-mariam-ahmed-3211954>

**New Scots prepare to vote in May elections**

<https://www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk/new-scots-prepare-to-vote-in-may-elections/>

**Scottish election 2021: Right to vote 'changes my life', says Syrian refugee**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-north-east-orkney-shetland-56829089>

TOP

## Equality

### UK Parliament Debate

**Black Maternal Healthcare and Mortality**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-19/debates/6935B9C7-6419-4E7B-A813-E852A4EE4F5C/BlackMaternalHealthcareAndMortality>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Ministerial Statement and Q&A

### Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

*col 867* **The Minister for Equalities (Kemi Badenoch):** ... The Government are committed to building a fairer Britain and taking the action needed to promote equality and opportunity for all. We do, however, recognise that serious disparities exist across our society, and are determined to take the action that is required to address them. Following the events of last summer, our nation has engaged in a serious examination of the issue of race inequality, and the Government have been determined to respond by carefully examining the evidence and data. We need to recognise progress where it has been made, but we also need to tackle barriers where they remain. That was why, last summer, the Prime Minister established the independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities. It was tasked with informing our national conversation on race by carrying out a deeper examination of why disparities exist and considering how we can reduce them. After careful study, the commission made evidence-based recommendations for action across Government, the private sector and other public bodies. The commission was established with 10 experts drawn from a variety of fields, spanning science, education, economics, broadcasting, medicine and policing. With one exception, all are from ethnic minority backgrounds. ...

It is right to say that the picture painted by this report is complex, particularly in comparison with the way that issues of race are often presented. The report shows that disparities do persist, that racism and discrimination remain a factor in shaping people's life outcomes, and it is clear about the fact that abhorrent racist attitudes continue in society, within institutions and increasingly online. It calls for action to tackle this.

However, the report also points out that, while disparities between ethnic groups exist across numerous areas, many factors other than racism are often the root cause. Among these are geography, deprivation and family structure. ...

The report also highlights the progress that Britain has made in tackling racism, and the report's data reveal a range of success stories. ...

*col 868* Let me be clear: the report does not deny that institutional racism exists in the UK. Rather the report did not find conclusive evidence of it in the specific areas it examined. It reaffirms the Macpherson report's definition of the term, but argues that it should be applied more carefully and always based on evidence. ...

This Government welcome legitimate disagreement and debate, but firmly reject bad-faith attempts to undermine the credibility of this report. Doing so risks undermining the vital work that we are trying to do to understand and address the causes of inequality in the UK, and any other positive work that results from it. For that reason it is necessary to set the record straight. This report makes it clear that the UK is not a post-racial society and that racism is still a real force that has the power to deny opportunity and painfully disrupt lives. ...

The Government even more firmly condemn the deeply personal and racialised attacks against the commissioners, which have included death threats. ...

It is, of course, to be expected that Members will disagree about how to address racial inequality and the kinds of policies that the Government should enact. However, it is wrong to accuse those who argue for a different approach of being racism deniers or race traitors. It is even more irresponsible—dangerously so—to call ethnic minority people racial slurs like “Uncle Toms”, “coconuts”, “house slaves” or “house negroes” for daring to think differently.

*col 869* Such deplorable tactics are designed to intimidate ethnic minority people away from their right to express legitimate views. ...

The commissioners' experience since publication only reinforces the need for informed debate on race based on mutual respect and a nuanced understanding of the evidence. ... In recognition of the extensive scope of recommendations, the Prime Minister has

established a new inter-ministerial group to review the recommendations. It will ensure that action is taken to continue progress to create a fairer society. As sponsoring Minister, I will provide strategic direction with support from my officials in the Race Disparity Unit. The group will be chaired by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. ...

**Marsha De Cordova (Labour):** ... Following the Black Lives Matter movement, the commission had an opportunity meaningfully to engage with structural racism in the UK. Instead, it published incoherent, divisive and offensive materials that appear to glorify slavery, downplay the role of institutional and structural racism, and blame ethnic minorities for their own disadvantage. If left unchallenged, the report will undo decades of progress made towards race equality in the UK. ...

*col 870* The Minister says that commissioners followed the evidence, but this report marks a major shift away from the overwhelming body of data on institutional and structural racism. The Office for National Statistics finds that the unemployment rate for black people is now 13.8%—triple the rate for white people—so why does the report conclude that young black people should “examine the subjects they are studying”, instead of addressing the systemic inequalities within the labour market? Black women are four times more likely to die in pregnancy and childbirth, but the report says that these numbers are so low that it is “unfair” to focus on this disparity. ...

It is our job as elected representatives to level the playing field, so I want to end by giving the Minister the chance to reject this report and tell the House instead what she is doing to implement the 231 recommendations in the Timpson, McGregor-Smith, Williams, Angiolini and Lammy reviews. What is she doing to comply with the public sector equality duty, and why is she not publishing equality impact assessments? This is what her Government would be focused on if they were serious about ending structural racism. ...

*col 871* **Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** ... I completely reject all the assertions that the hon. Lady has made—many of them false and many of them hypocritical. ...

We should go back to the substance of what this report is saying, rather than continuing to try to slander the people who have written it. ...

We will not withdraw the report. We will look at what recommendations to take forward. The Government have still not provided a response, but there are many issues around that structural inequality that we want to have dealt with. However, I reiterate that, just because there is a disparity, it does not mean that discrimination is the cause. If we continue to identify discrimination right from the beginning without looking at the root cause, we will continue to offer solutions that do not improve the situation. ...

*col 872* **Peter Bottomley (Conservative):** ... The commission had to put out a statement on 2 April contradicting most of the ill-informed criticisms. At the end, it said: “The 24 recommendations we have made will, in our view, greatly improve the lives of millions of people for the better if they are all implemented.”

The second sentence of the first paragraph said that the report “stated categorically that ‘we take the reality of racism seriously and we do not deny that it is a real force in the UK.’” That seems plain and clear. ...

*col 873* **Kirsten Oswald (SNP):** ... A United Nations working group strongly rejected this report, saying that it “further distorted and falsified historic facts”, could fuel racism and twists data, among other pointed criticisms. The Minister just spoke about the lack of evidence of institutional racism, but the Runnymede Trust rightly points out that evidence of institutional racism was submitted to the commission. Twenty thousand people joined the Runnymede Trust and Amnesty International in calling for the report’s withdrawal, and 36 trade union general secretaries have repudiated the report. ...

How can the Minister justify a report that says policies such as the hostile environment were not deliberately targeted at the UK’s ethnic minorities? Leading clinicians have said the report will worsen systemic health inequalities. The NHS Race and Health Observatory

has declared that institutional racism exists in the UK, the health and care system and across wider public bodies. In the light of those responses, will the Minister repudiate the report's glossing over of the impact of covid on ethnic minority groups? ...

**Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** ... Regarding the statement by the UN experts, the group grossly misrepresented the commission's report; the statement is clearly born of the divisive narratives perpetrated by certain media outlets and political groups that are seeking to sow division in our ethnic minority communities. ...

**col 874 Diane Abbott (Labour):** ... Nobody denies that there has been progress on racial justice in this country. ... However, this is widely seen—particularly by people who have been quoted and misquoted—as a shoddy, cynical report that, to quote the UN working group, “repackages racist tropes and stereotypes into fact, twisting data”. ...

... surely black and brown British people who have contributed so much to this country deserve better than this report. ...

**col 877 Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat):** Ethnic minority communities have suffered disproportionate numbers of deaths from covid-19. The Sewell report fails to recognise that structural racism underlies many socioeconomic inequalities. There is an interconnectivity between different forms of disadvantage and discrimination but, at the heart of it, is structural racism. It is important for the Government to recognise that. ...

**col 880 Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** ... We need to focus on what works and why, as well as what does not and why, so that we can target our resources where they will be most effective. The report looks at why certain groups that are very similar end up with completely different outcomes, which is why institutional racism cannot be the defining reason. When black African and black Caribbean groups, and Indians and Pakistanis, have diverging outcomes, it is clear that something else is going on. ...

**To read the statement and very lengthy Q&A in full, see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-20/debates/1502466F-D06B-402A-B7C0-03452FFB1DA9/CommissionOnRaceAndEthnicDisparities>

*The report of the Commission for Race and Ethnic Disparities, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331\\_CRED\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_CRED_Report_FINAL_Web_Accessible.pdf)

*The Timpson Review, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/807862/Timpson\\_review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807862/Timpson_review.pdf)

*The McGregor-Smith Review, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf)

*The Williams Review, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/874022/6.5577\\_HO\\_Windrush\\_Lessons\\_Learned\\_Review\\_WEB\\_v2.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/874022/6.5577_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_WEB_v2.pdf)

*The Angiolini Review, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/655401/Report\\_of\\_Angiolini\\_Review\\_ISBN\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/655401/Report_of_Angiolini_Review_ISBN_Accessible.pdf)

*The Lammy Review, referred to above, can be read at*  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/643001/lammy-review-final-report.pdf)

*The Commissioners' statement, referred to above, can be read at*  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities-statement>

*The UN working group statement referred to above can be read at*  
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27004&LangID=E>

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Ministerial Statement and Q&A

### Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

**The Ministerial statement made by Kemi Badenoch in the House of Commons (see above) was read in the House of Lords**

**col 1853 Baroness Wilcox of Newport (Labour):** ... Following the Black Lives Matter movement, the commission that produced this report had an opportunity meaningfully to engage with structural inequality and racism in the UK. Disappointingly, and incredulously, they have produced a divisive and downright offensive piece of material. It seems to glorify slavery and within the underplay of institutional racism appears to blame ethnic minorities for their own disadvantage. This report must be rigorously challenged to prevent the decades of progress that we have made in our efforts to develop race equality in the UK. ... The data is misleading and incoherent, and its conclusions are ideologically motivated and divisive. ...

Despite the overwhelming body of evidence, why does this report seek to downplay the role of institutional and structural racism in the UK? Does the Government share its view? ...

Does the Minister agree with the foreword by the chair of the report? There he remarks: "There is a new story about the Caribbean experience which speaks to the slave period not only being about profit and suffering but how culturally African people transformed themselves into a re-modelled African/Britain." Will her Government reject these abhorrent remarks? ...

**col 1854** The report appears to soften the role of structural racism in the labour market, but the latest ONS unemployment figures show that the unemployment rate for ethnic minorities is more than 9.5%—more than double the rate for white people at 4.5%. What steps, therefore, will the Government take to address structural racism in the labour market? ...

The report appeared to downplay the role of structural racism in health inequalities despite the hugely disproportionate number of deaths of black and Asian people from Covid-19 over the past year and is out of step with the analysis of the ONS. Does the Minister agree that this section is an insult to black, Asian and ethnic minority people who have suffered the worst fatal and financial consequences of the pandemic?

The report also downplays the role of structural inequalities in our education system, despite very recent data that shows that black Caribbean children are more than five times more likely to be excluded from school in parts of the UK. There have been 60,000 racist incidents in schools in the past five years. What steps will the Minister take to address the deep-rooted, structural racial inequalities within the education system? ...

Finally, the language in the report appears to regress to blame black, Asian and ethnic minority people for their own disadvantage. Mentions of family structure and culture misrepresent the reality of structural racism and turn back the clock on how we talk about race and structural inequality. Will the Minister reject this report before us today in this Chamber? ...

**col 1855 Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education and Department for International Trade (Baroness Berridge):** ... In the areas the commission was reporting on, the evidence base did not support structural racism findings. However, the report is incredibly clear that racist incidents, racist prejudice and racism exist today in this country and should be dealt with and condemned wherever they are found. It is not an offensive report. It does not glorify racism but stands against it. ...

The noble Baroness is, though, right to draw attention to the fact that, unfortunately, Covid has led to a recent increase in young, black unemployment. We are looking at the response to that. ...

*col 1856* It is important to outline the commission's response to the criticism of its remarks about slavery. It says this: "There has ... been a wilful misrepresentation by some people of the Commission's view on the history of slavery. The idea that the Commission would downplay the atrocities of slavery is as absurd as it is offensive to every one of us. The report merely says that in the face of the inhumanity of slavery, African people preserved their humanity and culture. ...

We have seen an incredible rise in particular in the number of black African boys going on to higher education at the moment. I do not recognise the noble Baroness's characterisation of structural racism across our system. That is not to say that there are not incidents within our schools that need to be dealt with as and when they happen, and we would of course expect any member of teaching staff treating any pupil in that way to be subject to disciplinary measures. ...

*col 1857* **Lord Lucas (Conservative):** My Lords, will my noble friend join me in thanking all those millions of people who, over the last 50 years that I have been politically conscious, have made this country a much friendlier place for ethnic minorities? The noble Baroness, Lady Wilcox, reports that, on average, there is one report of a racial incident at a school every two and a half years—it would have been more like every two and a half hours when I was young. ...

**Reply from Baroness Berridge:** ... We applaud all those people who have stood against the injustices that we have seen decline over the years. We recognise that anywhere racist incidents exist, we all have a responsibility. It is not just government; wherever we see such incidents—many of us will have seen them in our own lives on public transport and places such as that—we must all speak up. We all have a responsibility to get to a racially fair society. ...

*col 1858* **Lord Dholakia (Liberal Democrat):** ... My Lords, the Statement does nothing to allay the fears of the black and ethnic minority community about this report. ... racism and racial discrimination are a daily reality in the lives of the black and ethnic minority community in Britain. Socially and economically they occupy the same place that was allocated to them in the earlier days, and institutions and organisations have little awareness of our culturally different communities. ... I want to see the day when black and brown faces in this country do not have to look over their shoulder to see if they are welcome. ...

*col 1859* **Lord Woolley of Woodford (Crossbench):** ... Yesterday the government Minister Kemi Badenoch ... stated, to my great relief, that no one, not least the Government, is denying institutional racism as distinct from verbal racism. She went on to say that it is not everywhere, and I think we can all agree with that. But the report said, and the Minister confirmed, that Dr Sewell and his commissioners did not find systemic racism in this report from the deluge of evidence, including from myself. Given that dramatic but welcome U-turn in acknowledging systemic race inequalities, were the commissioners incompetent or in wilful denial?

**Reply from Baroness Berridge:** My Lords, as I have outlined, the evidence that was considered by the commissioners, as we understand it, is that they did not find institutional racism in any of the sectors. ... institutional racism is a concept that we respect and understand, and the commission stood by the Macpherson definition, but there was not the evidence base here. ... when the evidence does not lead you to that conclusion then we have to respect that. ...

**To read the statement and lengthy Q&A in full, see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-04-21/debates/DBF1EF40-EC56-4244-BB6A-D020CDB6480D/CommissionOnRaceAndEthnicDisparities>

The report of the Commission for Race and Ethnic Disparities, referred to above, can be read at [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331\\_CRED\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_CRED_Report_FINAL_Web_Accessible.pdf)

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

### Equality Act 2010

**Daisy Cooper (Liberal Democrat)** [179578] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of bringing forward amendments to the Equality Act 2010 to include caste as a protected characteristic.

**Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** This Government completely opposes any discrimination because of a person's origins, including any perceptions of their caste.

The *Tirkey v Chandhok* case in 2014 established that it is likely that anyone who believes that they have been discriminated against because of caste could bring a race discrimination claim under the existing ethnic origins limb of the race provisions in the Equality Act because of their descent.

The Government considers, having also taken into account over 16,000 responses to a 2017 consultation on this issue, that the *Tirkey* judgment serves as a welcome clarification of the existing protection under the Equality Act – helping to deter those inclined to treat others unfairly or unequally because of conceptions of caste.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179578>

The Employment Appeal Tribunal Judgement referred to above can be read at

[https://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKEAT/2014/0190\\_14\\_1912.html](https://www.bailii.org/uk/cases/UKEAT/2014/0190_14_1912.html)

### Equality

**Zarah Sultana (Labour)** [180623] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, whether the Government plans to re-examine the findings of the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, published March 2021, in response to feedback on that report's conclusions on inequality.

**Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities' report makes an important contribution to both the national conversation about race, and our efforts to level up and unite the whole country.

We are carefully considering the report's findings and recommendations. We will publish a Government response in due course. This Government remains fully committed to building a fairer UK and taking the action needed to address disparities wherever they exist.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-13/180623>

The report referred to above, can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331\\_CRED\\_Report\\_FINAL\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_CRED_Report_FINAL_Web_Accessible.pdf)

### Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [179517] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the report of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities published on 31 March 2021, to what extent that Commission participated and engaged with (a) people and (b) organisations in order for those people and organisations to be listed in (i) Appendix C: commissioned research and (ii) Appendix D: Stakeholders of that report.

**Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** The Commission sought new and existing research and analysis from individuals and organisations to aid their work – they are listed in 'Appendix C: Commissioned research' of the Commission's report.

The Commission met with many individuals and organisations during the course of its work, either to hear evidence or to discuss recommendations – they are listed in ‘Appendix D: Stakeholders’ of the Commission’s report.

To note – the Commission included names of individuals and organisations in the Appendices of the report to acknowledge and thank them for their contributions as a courtesy – and advises that their being named should not be taken as an endorsement.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179517>

*The report referred to above, can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331 - CRED Report - FINAL - Web Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

### **Ethnic Groups: Human Rights**

**Zarah Sultana (Labour)** [180622] To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what plans the Government has to implement the recommendations of the Joint Committee on Human Rights report entitled Black people, racism and human rights, published in November 2020.

**Reply from Kemi Badenoch:** The UK has made significant progress over the years in tackling racism. This Government made manifesto commitments to tackle prejudice, racism and discrimination and is committed to making further progress. The Government has considered the recommendations and conclusions in the Joint Committee on Human Rights report. We have responded to each of these in turn in our [response to the Committee’s Eleventh Report of Session 2019–21](#) published on 11 February 2021.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-13/180622>

*The report referred to above can be read at*

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/3376/documents/32359/default/>

### **Homelessness: Ethnic Groups**

**Marsha De Cordova (Labour)** [179523] To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps he is taking to tackle the increase in homelessness for Black residents of England and Wales in 2020.

**Reply from Eddie Hughes:** The latest data relating to ethnicity breakdown of homeless households in England can be found in the annual homelessness statistics and live homelessness tables here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

Housing is a devolved issue and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government does not collect homelessness data for Wales.

The Government is committed to tackling homelessness and is investing over £750 million this year to tackle homelessness and rough sleeping in England.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179523>

### **Unemployment: Ethnic Groups**

**Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op)** [179346] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Office for National Statistics’ labour market statistics data published in February 2021, what steps she is taking to tackle the disproportionate rise in unemployment among (a) Black African, (b) Black Caribbean and (c) Black British people compared to white people in the UK from 2019 to 2020.

**Reply from Mims Davies:** The Government is committed to levelling up and uniting the country, including improving the employment outcomes of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Throughout these unprecedented times the Government has provided a crucial safety net to record levels of claimants, ensuring all our

customers receive the support they need, when they need it.

We have focussed on providing financial and extensive support through our Plan for Jobs. This will protect, support and create jobs, targeting young people, the long term unemployed, and those in need of new training and skills. The Plan for Jobs includes the Kickstart scheme, an expanded youth offer, and the expansion of the Work and Health Programme, all offering new support to those, including those from ethnic minority backgrounds, who lose their job during the pandemic.

The Government is also considering the recommendations on how to increase opportunity and ensure fairness for all made in the recent independent Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities report.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179346>

*The report referred to above, can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331 - CRED Report - FINAL - Web Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

### **Employment: Ethnic Groups**

**Cat Smith (Labour)** [180547] To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment she has made of the effect of job (a) losses and (b) insecurity as a result of the covid-19 outbreak on Black, Asian and ethnic minority young people.

**Reply from Mims Davies:** Data from the Annual Population Survey shows a rise of 5.2 percentage points year on year in the unemployment rate for BAME young people. It also suggests they are over-represented in sectors such as Accommodation and Food Services and Wholesale and Retail which have been particularly affected by the pandemic.

The Government is committed to levelling up and uniting the country, including improving the employment outcomes of people from ethnic minority backgrounds. Throughout these unprecedented times the Government has provided a crucial safety net to record levels of claimants, ensuring all our customers receive the support they need, when they need it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-13/180547>

### **Maternal Health: Ethnic Groups**

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [181325] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to end the disparity in maternal health outcomes between white women and black, asian and minority ethnic women.

**Reply from Nadine Dorries:** We have established the Maternity Inequalities Oversight Forum to bring together experts to address the inequalities for women and babies from different ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic groups. Additionally, the Chief Midwifery Officer for England is leading work to understand why mortality rates are higher, consider evidence about what will reduce mortality rates and take action to improve equity in outcomes and experience of care for mothers and their babies.

Under measures set out in the 2021/22 Planning Guidance, most women from black, Asian and mixed ethnicity backgrounds will be placed on a continuity of carer pathway by March 2022. This will ensure that thousands of women receive safe and personal maternity care, improving outcomes for both mother and baby and reducing health inequalities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181325>

*The Guidance referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/B0468-nhs-operational-planning-and-contracting-guidance.pdf>

### **Free School Meals: Ethnic Groups**

**Marsha De Cordova (Labour)** [179524] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, whether her Department collects data on free school meals by ethnicity.

**Reply from Vicky Ford:** Data on free school meals is collected in each term of the school census. Breakdowns by ethnicity are collected in the spring school census. The most recent figures for number of pupils eligible for and claiming free school meals by ethnicity were published in the response to parliamentary question UIN 63494, tabled on 23 June 2020. This is available here:

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2020-06-23/63494>  
<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179524>

### **Swimming: Ethnic Groups**

**Catherine West (Labour)** [181363] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps he is taking to increase participation in swimming and aquatics for black swimmers.

**Reply from Nigel Huddleston:** The Government is committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in sport and physical activity, including swimming. Our strategy 'Sporting Future' sets out a clear ambition to increase levels of physical activity amongst under-represented groups, working closely with the sector to achieve this. We support the efforts of groups helping to promote diversity and inclusion in sport, including the Black Swimming Association who are working to increase swimming participation levels for black swimmers.

Sport England, DCMS's arm's length body for grassroots sport in England, recently launched their new ten year strategy, Uniting the Movement. This reinforced their commitment to diversifying participation and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Sport England have invested £12.6 million in Swim England to promote participation in swimming, including support for people from ethnically diverse backgrounds. Recently Swim England and the Black Swimming Association have announced a partnership to further increase numbers of participation in aquatic activity, which we welcome.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-15/181363>

*The Strategy documents referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/486622/Sporting\\_Future\\_ACCESSIBLE.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/486622/Sporting_Future_ACCESSIBLE.pdf)

and

<https://www.sportengland.org/why-were-here/uniting-the-movement>

## **Press Release**

**Board of Deputies publishes landmark report on racial inclusivity in the Jewish community**

<https://www.bod.org.uk/board-of-deputies-publishes-landmark-report-on-racial-inclusivity-in-the-jewish-community/>

## **New Publication**

**Report: Commission on Racial Inclusivity in the Jewish Community**

<https://www.bod.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Commission-on-Racial-Inclusivity-in-the-Jewish-Community.pdf>

## News

**Equality watchdog raised concerns about UK race report, documents show**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/22/equality-watchdog-raised-concerns-about-uk-race-report-documents-show>

**No 10 race report tries to normalise white supremacy, say UN experts**

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/19/no-10-race-report-tries-normalise-white-supremacy-un-experts>

**Sewell report response: what does the data really tell us?**

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/blog/sewell-report-response-what-does-data-really-tell-us>

**Are black women getting enough support for mental health?**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-56765171>

**Church shortlists for senior posts 'must include ethnic minorities'**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56838739>

**Church of England must shortlist minority ethnic candidates for bishop roles – report**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/22/church-of-england-must-shortlist-minority-ethnic-candidates-for-bishop-roles-report>

TOP

## Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

### UK Parliament House of Commons Ministerial Statement and Q&A

#### **Commonwealth War Graves Commission: Historical Inequalities Report**

*col 1160* **The Secretary of State for Defence (Ben Wallace):** ... Today the [Commonwealth War Graves Commission] findings are published. They make for sober reading. The first world war was a horrendous loss of life. People of all class and race from all nations suffered a great tragedy, which we rightly remember every year on Remembrance Sunday. Just over 100 years ago, what emerged from that atrocity was a belief by the survivors that all those who lost their lives deserved to be commemorated.

When the Imperial War Graves Commission was established, its founding principle was the equality of treatment in death. Whatever an individual's rank in social or military life and whatever their religion, they would be commemorated identically. Unfortunately, the work of this report shows that it fell short in delivering on that principle. ...

Given the pressures and confusion spun by such a war, in many ways it is hardly surprising that mistakes were made ... What is surprising and disappointing, however, is the number of mistakes—the number of casualties commemorated unequally, the number commemorated without names, and the number otherwise entirely unaccounted for. That is not excusable. In some circumstances, there was little the IWGC could do. With neither bodies nor names, general memorials were the only way in which some groups might be commemorated at the time.

None the less, there are examples where the organisation also deliberately overlooked the evidence that might have allowed it to find those names. In others, commission officials in the 1920s were happy to work with local administrations on projects across the empire that ran contrary to the principles of equality in death. Elsewhere, it is clear that commission officials pursued agendas and sought evidence or support locally to endorse 67 courses

of action that jeopardised those same principles. ...

*col 1161* The report concludes that post-world war one, in parts of Africa, the middle east and India, the commission often compromised its principles and failed to commemorate the war dead equally. Unlike their European counterparts, the graves of up to 54,000 mostly Indian, east African, west African, Egyptian and Somali casualties were not marked by individual headstones. Some were remembered through inscriptions on memorials. The names of others were only recorded in registers, rather than memorialised in stone. A further 116,000 personnel, mostly east African and Egyptian, were not named or possibly not commemorated at all.

There can be no doubt that prejudice played a part in some of the commission's decisions. In some cases, the IWGC assumed that the communities of forgotten personnel would not recognise or value individual forms of commemoration. In other cases, it was simply not provided with the names or burial locations.

On behalf of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Government of the time and today, I want to apologise for the failures to live up to the founding principles all those years ago and express deep regret that it has taken so long to rectify the situation. While we cannot change the past, we can make amends and take action. ...

First, the commission will geographically and chronologically extend the search in the historical record for inequalities in commemoration and act on what is found. Secondly, the commission will renew its commitment to equality in commemoration through the building of physical or digital commemorative structures. Finally, the commission will use its own online presence and wider education activities to reach out to all the communities of the former British empire touched by the two world wars to make sure that their hidden history is brought to life. ...

Furthermore, to honour the contribution to our armed forces by our friends from the Commonwealth and Nepal, the Home Secretary and I will shortly be launching a public consultation on proposals to remove the visa settlement fees for non-UK service personnel who choose to settle in the UK. ...

*col 1162* **John Healey (Labour):** ... I thank the Secretary of State for his apology on behalf of both the Government of the time and the commission. This is an important moment for the commission and the country in coming to terms with past injustices and dedicating ourselves to future action. ...

This issue has been part of Britain's blind spot to our colonial past, and we have been too slow as a country to recognise and honour fully the regiments and troops drawn from Africa, Asia and the Caribbean. Today is a reminder of the great contribution and sacrifice that so many from these countries have made to forging modern, multicultural Britain.

*col 1163* What matters now is what happens next. ... In conclusion, no apology can atone for the injustice, the indignity and the suffering set out in this report. ...

Today, belatedly, we aim to commemorate in full the sacrifice of many thousands who died for our country in the first world war and who have not yet been fully honoured. We will remember them.

*col 1165* **Martin Docherty-Hughes (SNP):** ... Although we have become used to the Windrush post-war framing of immigration and diversity on these islands, is it not the case that people of many cultures have fought for, if not enjoyed the benefit of, our freedoms for an awful lot longer than that? We must think of the hundreds of thousands of Muslims, Sikhs, Hindus and animists, and those of no religion, who have not been commemorated because they did not fit the white ideal of what is supposed to fit into uniform. It is important that those of all faiths and none are assured that they are valued not only in our armed forces but in the police, the NHS or wherever they serve. ...

*col 1167* **David Lammy (Labour):** ... This is most definitely a watershed moment in the life of this country. ...

For all of us in the Chamber—this is still the case in this country—when we think of the first

world war, we think of the western front, the poems of Wilfred Owen and the battle of the Somme. We do not think of where the first bullets were fired in the first world war, which were, in fact, in Africa, in the east African campaign. On this sombre, but important, day, I am thinking of the King's African Rifles and the many, many thousands of men who were dragged from their villages to be in the Carrier Corps on behalf of the then British Empire. There is no higher service than to die for your country in war, and it is the case that every single culture on the planet honours those who die in those circumstances. It is a great travesty and a stain and a shame that this country failed to do that for black and brown people across Africa, India and the middle east, but we have come to this very, very important moment, 100 years on, and I thank the Secretary of State for his leadership and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission for the work that it has done to get us to this point.

May I just say to the Secretary of State that further resources will be necessary, particularly in those countries, to commemorate in the appropriate way. Necessary resources will also be needed to revisit the archives in those countries to find names where there are names, but to appropriately commemorate where those names do not exist. We use the word "whitewash" for a reason. Let there be no more whitewashing. The unremembered will be remembered and future generations of young people in our own country and the Commonwealth will understand their sacrifice.

**Reply from Ben Wallace:** On the right hon. Gentleman's last point, it is, "will, should and must understand their sacrifice". That is really important. Exactly as he said, it was the east African campaign that saw the early salvos of the first world war. Was I taught about that at school? No. How many in this House were? Probably almost none at all. ...

*col 1169 Philip Dunne (Conservative):* ... Over 100 years ago, the War Graves Commission was established with the specific remit to commemorate the first world war dead of the then British empire and to do so defined by the principle of equality of treatment in death, whatever their rank, religion or race. This happened in Europe and I am not proud that this did not happen across Africa, the middle east and India. ...

*col 1171 Reply from Ben Wallace:* ... One answer to why commemoration has taken so long is that, if people had been educated about what we did, the next question would have been "So how do I commemorate it?" but because it was not taught, no one asked the question or created the pressure to find out. I think that that has started now. ...

**Stevan Bonnar (SNP):** Underpinning all the past commemoration decisions were the entrenched prejudices and rampant racism of imperial attitudes. We know that the empire is over, but those attitudes linger on—if they do not, why does the UK Government's report on racism, which the UN has described as "reprehensible" and an attempt to "normalize white supremacy", push back against calls to decolonise the curriculum? ...

*col 1174 Reply from Ben Wallace:* I would like first of all to place on record that this commission and some of the previous commissions have taken some really strong steps to fix what was wrong when it was identified. The area of regret is that we did not do a lot of this much earlier. I would also like to say that we should not forget that, whatever the circumstances were, many of those people gave their lives to defeat fascism and to defeat people who challenged our freedoms, both for themselves and for us. That sacrifice was, in my view, worth it, given the freedoms that we enjoy. It is really important not to forget, in this report, that it was not for nothing. Those people did not give up their lives, whatever the circumstances were, for nothing. Certainly in the second world war and others, the threat to our freedoms was real. ...

I will continue to ensure that the commission is supported by the Department and by me as its chair and as Defence Secretary, as the members of the commission continue to work to ensure that we always commemorate our dead and those who

made sacrifices, whether in the first world war, the second world war or in all the other conflicts. We owe it to them. ...

**To read the statement and lengthy question and answer session in full see**

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2021-04-22/debates/81850D1C-F3A8-4130-A808-6666B7C0D65E/CommonwealthWarGravesCommissionHistoricalInequalitiesReport>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.cwgc.org/media/noantj4i/report-of-the-special-committee-to-review-historical-inequalities-in-commemoration.pdf>

## UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

### Schools: Hate Crime

**Preet Kaur Gill (Labour Co-op)** [179339] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, pursuant to the answer of 31 March 2021 to Question 174230, on Hate Crime: Young People, when his Department last undertook an assessment of the efficacy of its policies on the prevention and reporting of hate crimes in schools.

**Reply from Nick Gibb:** The Government, alongside schools and teachers, is committed to supporting children and young people to thrive and reach their potential in a safe and respectful environment. Schools continue to play an important role in preparing children and young people for life in modern Britain, supporting them to understand the society in which they are growing up and teaching about respect for other people and tolerance.

We continue to work with colleagues across Government, as well as those in the school sector and communities to better understand issues around discrimination, hatred, and prejudice on an ongoing basis. For example, the Department has provided funding to anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying, including projects targeting bullying of particular groups, such as those who are victims of hate related bullying. These grants ended in March 2021, and grant holders are currently working to finalise independent evaluations of their programmes, which will be published in due course. The Department has considered next steps for anti-bullying support in schools, working closely with external stakeholders, and will shortly be running a procurement exercise to fund activity in 2021-22.

Having supported the creation and delivery of the Government's hate crime action plan (2016-2020), officials from the Department continue to work with Home Office officials on the development of the Government's next strategic response to hate crime. We are also currently considering recommendations from the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities on education in detail.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179339>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-03-23/174230>

The hate crime action plan referred to above can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/927673/2016\\_Hate\\_Crime\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/927673/2016_Hate_Crime_Action_Plan.pdf)

with an update at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/748175/Hate\\_crime\\_refresh\\_2018\\_FINAL\\_WEB.PDF](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF)

The Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities recommendations referred to above can be read at

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/974507/20210331\\_-\\_CRED\\_Report\\_-\\_FINAL\\_-\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/974507/20210331_-_CRED_Report_-_FINAL_-_Web_Accessible.pdf)

*The following two questions both received the same answer*

### **Universities: Antisemitism**

**Nickie Aiken (Conservative)** [179553] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate his Department has made of the number of universities that have adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

**Nickie Aiken (Conservative)** [179554] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department has taken to encourage a higher number of universities to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism.

**Reply from Michelle Donelan:** This government abhors antisemitism and has been clear that we expect universities to be at the forefront of tackling the challenge of antisemitism, making sure that higher education is a genuinely fulfilling and welcoming experience for everyone.

The government has asked all English higher education providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) to adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism. The IHRA definition is an important tool in tackling antisemitism. Adopting this widely recognised definition sends a strong signal that higher education providers take these issues seriously. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Education, wrote to higher education leaders most recently in October 2020 to reiterate the importance of the definition and to urge all providers to consider adopting it.

The government is pleased to report that at least 91 providers have now adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism, with many more preparing to adopt. The decision on adoption of the definition rests with individual providers, but the government will continue to urge them to adopt the definition, and ensure that higher education is a genuinely fulfilling and welcoming experience for everyone.

I am proud that so many providers have taken a positive step towards eradicating antisemitism by adopting the IHRA definition, but further progress is still needed to stamp it out. This is why, in the Secretary of State's most recent strategic guidance letter to the OfS, the government asked the OfS to undertake a scoping exercise, to identify providers which are reluctant to adopt the definition. The letter asked them to consider introducing mandatory reporting of antisemitic incident numbers by providers, with the aim of ensuring a robust evidence base, which the OfS can then use to effectively regulate in this area.

The Secretary of State also asked the OfS to ensure that, if antisemitic incidents do occur at a provider, they should consider if it is relevant in a particular case whether the provider has adopted the IHRA definition when considering what sanctions, including monetary penalties, would be appropriate to apply.

We will continue to work across government to ensure that racism and religious hatred of any kind is not tolerated anywhere, including in our world-leading universities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179553>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179554>

## **Press Releases**

**UN Experts Condemn UK Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities Report**

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=27004&LangID=E>

**Statement from the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities to remember Stephen Lawrence**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-from-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>

**White supremacist group, Atomwaffen Division, banned in the UK**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/white-supremacist-group-atomwaffen-division-banned-in-the-uk>

## New Publications

**Commonwealth War Graves Commission: Report of the Special Committee to Review Historical Inequalities in Commemoration**

<https://www.cwgc.org/media/noantj4i/report-of-the-special-committee-to-review-historical-inequalities-in-commemoration.pdf>

**Commonwealth War Graves Commission Response to the Report of the Special Committee and its Review into Historical Inequalities in Commemoration**

<https://www.cwgc.org/media/mhnjtpka/commissioners-response.pdf>

**Inequalities in commemorating war dead: Commonwealth War Graves Commission and Government response**

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/inequalities-in-commemorating-war-dead-cwgc-and-government-response/>

## News

**'Pervasive racism' blamed for failure to commemorate black and Asian troops**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56840131>

**Commonwealth war graves: PM 'deeply troubled' over racism**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-56840131>

**War graves racism: 'No doubt prejudice played a part in decisions' - Wallace**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-56845401>

**'Prejudice played a part' in failure to commemorate fallen black and Asian troops, Government admits**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/04/22/government-apologises-for-failure-commemorate-black-asian-ww1/>

**UK inquiry blames 'pervasive racism' for unequal commemoration of troops**

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/21/uk-inquiry-blames-pervasive-racism-for-unequal-commemoration-of-black-and-asian-troops>

**Boris Johnson apologises after 'pervasive racism' led to failure to commemorate Black and Asian troops**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/government-racism-troops-black-asian-b1835723.html>

**'Pervasive racism' caused failure to commemorate Black and Asian troops, report finds**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/war-graves-racism-black-asian-troops-b1835491.html>

**Commonwealth panel acknowledges racism in honoring war dead**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/commonwealth-panel-acknowledges-racism-in-honoring-war-dead-commonwealth-london-british-empire-indians-david-lammy-b1835678.html>

**'Apartheid' left black and Asian war dead unhonoured, says David Olusoga**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/pervasive-racism-left-non-white-war-dead-unnamed-and-unhonoured-d6hbt0qz>

**Clergy speak out over 'racism in Church of England'**  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56779190>

**Justin Welby tells Church of England to stop using NDAs amid racism claims**  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-56817048>

**Justin Welby demands ban on NDAs in Church of England after racist abuse exposed**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/church-of-england-ban-ndas-after-racist-abuse-exposed-xg6v77t6s>

**Church of England 'buys silence of racism victims'**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/church-of-england-buys-silence-of-racism-victims-5zbsxfzhi>

**Racially abused church staff 'forced to sign gagging orders to buy their silence'**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/19/racially-abused-church-staff-forced-sign-ndas-buy-silence/>

**Justin Welby: Church must not use gagging orders to silence abuse victims**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/20/justin-welbychurch-must-not-use-gagging-orders-silence-abuse/>

**Church of England clergy 'paid off to keep quiet about racism'**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/19/church-of-england-clergy-paid-off-keep-quiet-racism-bbc>

**Archbishop of York commits C of E to racial justice after 'sobering' week**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/23/archbishop-of-york-commits-c-of-e-to-racial-justice-after-sobering-week>

**Justin Welby says Church of England has failed to tackle racism**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/justin-welby-says-church-of-england-has-failed-to-tackle-racism-fnw2djwwp>

**Church and racism: 'This time has got to be different'**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/church-and-racism-this-time-has-got-to-be-different-363khv75p>

**Church of England should stop 'celebrating' slave traders with statues, says anti-racism report**  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2021/04/22/church-england-should-stop-unconditionally-celebrating-slave/>

**Synagogues and Jewish venues urged to avoid racial profiling in security searches**  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/22/synagogues-and-jewish-venues-urged-to-avoid-racial-profiling-in-security-searches>

**Discrimination is keeping UK bench white, say judges**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/discrimination-is-keeping-uk-bench-white-say-judges-88hv8db0r>

**Racism made me want to reclaim the countryside**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/racism-made-me-want-to-reclaim-the-countryside-nz2jlInm>

**Almost half of UK population thinks systemic racism plagues society, survey suggests**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/systemic-racism-opinium-race-report-b1834727.html>

**Think racism isn't a problem in Britain? What happened to me at the weekend proves otherwise**  
<https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/racism-britain-lockdown-nhs-b1834996.html>

**Ondrej Kudela appeals ten-match ban for racial abuse of Glen Kamara**  
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/ondrej-kudela-appeals-ten-match-ban-for-racial-abuse-of-glen-kamara-pwbv235mh>

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## Other Scottish Parliament and Government

### New Publication

**Recorded Crime in Scotland: March 2021**  
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/recorded-crime-scotland-march-2021/>

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## Scottish Parliament Elections

### New Publications

**Conservative Party Manifesto**  
<https://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Digital-Manifesto-Final.pdf>

**Financial supplement to the 2021 Scottish Conservative Manifesto**  
<https://www.scottishconservatives.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Costing-Doc.pdf>

**Labour Party Manifesto**  
<https://scottishlabour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Scottish-Labours-National-Recovery-Plan.pdf>

## News

### **Scottish election 2021: Scottish Conservatives manifesto at-a-glance**

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56750898>

### **Scottish election 2021: Scottish Conservative policies explained**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56750759>

### **Scottish election 2021: Scottish Labour manifesto at-a-glance**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56750856>

### **Scottish election 2021: Scottish Labour policies explained**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-scotland-politics-56750836>

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## Other UK Parliament and Government

### UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Slaughterhouses: Animal Welfare**

**Tulip Siddiq (Labour)** [179311] To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment he has made of the potential merits of (a) regulating the number of animals that can be slaughtered without being stunned and (b) banning the export of meat from animals that have not been stunned before slaughter.

**Reply from Victoria Prentis:** We would prefer all animals to be stunned before slaughter, but we respect the rights of Jews and Muslims to eat meat prepared in accordance with their religious beliefs.

We have recently concluded a review of the welfare of animals at time of killing legislation and this identifies potential improvements that might be made. We are carefully considering the issues raised in the review.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179311>

*The review referred to above can be read at*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/955031/welfare-animals-time-of-killing-regs-2015-post-implementation-review.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/955031/welfare-animals-time-of-killing-regs-2015-post-implementation-review.pdf)

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## Health Information: Coronavirus (COVID-19)

### NHS

#### **Scottish COVID-19 vaccination helpline and booking service**

The Scottish COVID-19 vaccination helpline and booking service is available from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week on 0800 030 8013.

<https://nhs.uk/services/our-covid-19-response/covid-19-vaccination-helpline-and-booking-service>

### **Coronavirus helpline**

People living in Scotland who don't have any symptoms but are looking for general information can call the coronavirus helpline. If you're a non-English speaker you can still use this service. Phone 0800 028 2816, tell the call handler that you need an interpreter, give the name of your preferred language and you will be connected to a Language Line interpreter. You will not have to pay for this.

### **NHS Inform (Scotland)**

Latest guidance about COVID-19 from NHS Scotland and the Scottish Government, including social distancing and stay at home advice.

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/coronavirus>

### **Protect-Scot contact tracing app**

<https://protect.scot/how-it-works>

### **Healthcare for refugees and asylum seekers**

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/care-support-and-rights/health-rights/access/healthcare-for-refugees-and-asylum-seekers>

### **NHS Near Me (Scotland)**

Near Me is a video consulting service that enables people to have health and social care appointments from home or wherever is convenient. All you need is a device for making video calls like a smartphone and an internet connection. Near Me is a secure form of video consulting approved for use by the Scottish Government and NHS Scotland.

<https://www.nearme.scot/>

### **NHS (England and Wales)**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

## **UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers**

### **Coronavirus: Vaccination**

**Thangam Debbonaire (Labour)** [155154] To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what proportion of vaccine recipients have (a) stated an ethnicity on their vaccination form, (b) explicitly refused to do so and (c) have not responded.

**Reply from Nadhim Zahawi:** NHS England and NHS Improvement are currently publishing weekly vaccinations by ethnicity. This includes a 'Not stated/Unknown' category. We do not collect data on those who refuse to state their ethnicity.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-19/155154>

### **Travel Restrictions: Coronavirus**

**Afzal Khan (Labour)** [179509] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the effect of not allowing travel to attend a commemorative event under the current covid-19 regulations on different religious groups whose practices require those commemorative events to take place quickly.

**Reply from Nigel Adams:** The guidance for travel exceptions from the United Kingdom can be found at

[www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-declaration-form-for-international-travel#permitted-reasons-for-international-travel](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-declaration-form-for-international-travel#permitted-reasons-for-international-travel)

The guidance notes that travel for funerals falls under a reasonable excuse, but commemorative events do not.

All policies that were related to staying at home were applied equally and without prejudice - regardless of the event, religious belief or any other factor. For some time, the government has focused on ensuring the public know how to travel safely, however they decide to travel. This is important because people feel more confident travelling when they see other people complying with the same rules, for example wearing a face covering unless they are exempt.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/179509>

## UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth (Conservative)** [HL13376] To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to promote take-up of COVID-19 vaccines amongst black and other ethnic minority communities.

**Reply from Lord Bethell:** We frequently engage with local authorities, faith leaders and black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) organisations to provide advice and information about COVID-19 vaccines and how they will be made available. Our communications include targeted information and advice via TV, radio and social media. This has been translated into 13 languages. Print and online material, including interviews and practical advice has appeared in hundreds of national, local and specialist titles including BAME media outlets. In addition, since February a number of mosques and other places of worship have been hosting pop-up COVID-19 vaccination centres.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-22/hl13376>

### Coronavirus: Vaccination

**Baroness Young of Old Scone (Labour)** [HL13149] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to lift the embargo on sharing local COVID-19 vaccination uptake data (1) by priority group, and (2) by ethnic group, with primary care networks and clinical commissioning groups; and what assessment they have made of whether sharing this data would increase the effectiveness of local vaccination efforts.

**Reply from Lord Bethell:** There is no embargo on sharing local COVID-19 vaccination data. This data is published weekly online by NHS England and NHS Improvement. We are also collecting and monitoring uptake data to drive and improve the national deployment plan, as well as sharing data to support local uptake action and decision-making.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-02-08/hl13149>

## Scottish Government Press Releases

### Moving to Level 3

<https://www.gov.scot/news/moving-to-level-3/>

### Regular rapid testing for everyone

<https://www.gov.scot/news/regular-rapid-testing-for-everyone/>

## Scottish Government Publications

### Coronavirus (COVID-19): daily data for Scotland

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-daily-data-for-scotland/>

## Coronavirus (COVID-19): trends in daily data

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-trends-in-daily-data/>

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) update: First Minister's statement – 20 April 2021

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-update-first-ministers-statement-20-april-2021/>

## UK Government Press Release

### Government launches COVID-19 Antivirals Taskforce to roll out innovative home treatments this autumn

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-covid-19-antivirals-taskforce-to-roll-out-innovative-home-treatments-this-autumn>

## UK Government Publications

### The R value and growth rate

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/the-r-value-and-growth-rate>

### PM statement at coronavirus press conference: 20 April 2021

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pm-statement-at-coronavirus-press-conference-20-april-2021>

## News

### Covid: BAME inequalities remain in vaccine uptake

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-56801998>

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## New Publications

### Personal Safety Tips for Ramadan

<https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/resources/TellMAMA-RAMADAN-PERSONAL-SAFETY-TIPS-2021.pdf>

### Safety tips for Mosques (Masjids) Ramadan 2021 (1442 hijri)

<https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/resources/TellMAMA-RAMADAN2021MOSQUESAFETYTIPS-Single-Page.pdf>

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## Bills in Progress

\*\* new or updated this week

## UK Parliament

### Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2699>

## **Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2638>

## **Asylum Support (Prescribed Period) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2535>

## **European Citizens' Rights Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2704>

## **Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2660>

## **Immigration Control (Gross Human Rights Abuses) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2574>

## **Immigration (Health and Social Care Staff)**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2770>

## **Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

## **Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2538>

## **Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (Legal Advice and Appeals) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2611>

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## **Consultations**

\*\* new or updated this week

**\*\* closes this week!**

**Ethnicity and Justice Research and Data Priorities - Survey for Academics / Researchers**  
(closing date 27 April 2021)

<https://response.questback.com/scottishgovernment/justiceandethnicity>

**Meeting the Charity Test Guidance – updates** (closing date 5 May 2021)

<https://www.oscr.org.uk/news/consultation-on-our-meeting-the-charity-test-guidance-updates/>

**New Plan for Immigration** (closing date 6 May 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>

**Patient Safety Commissioner role for Scotland** (closing date 28 May 2021)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/consultation-patient-safety-commissioner-role-scotland/>

**\*\*Possible changes to the immigration and asylum rules in relation to tribunal reform [in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland]** (closing date 14 July 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/possible-changes-to-the-immigration-and-asylum-rules-in-relation-to-tribunal-reform>

**Black Lives in Scotland** (closing date not stated)  
<https://blacklivesinscotland.typeform.com/to/YFrnnHSC>

**Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19**  
(closing date not stated)  
<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

**Experiences of people with refugee status who are renting private property in Scotland**  
(closing date not stated)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YDR67MN>

**Experiences of Islamophobia** (closing date not stated)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/amina-islamophobia>

**Raising skills and standards of supporters of refugees and asylum seekers**  
(closing date not stated)  
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/3R8SDYN>

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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

### **Grants online: Coronavirus**

A number of Community Foundations and other organisations have launched funding programmes to assist local organisations in responding to the challenges of the Coronavirus Pandemic. To read a list of organisations and the types of funding they have made available, see <https://www.grantsonline.org.uk/coronavirus.html>

### **Equality and Human Rights Fund**

*Closing date 14 May 2021*

Scottish Government funding to support work which advances human rights, promotes equality and tackles discrimination around age, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability and race. Grants will support projects over the next three years, and there is no minimum or maximum amount that can be applied for. For information and to apply see <https://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/what-we-do/our-funds/equality-and-human-rights/>

See <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8240754> for a series of short presentations introducing the Equality and Human Rights Fund.

Short one-to-one surgery sessions will be available every Wednesday afternoon until 28 April. This is an opportunity to speak with one of the Equality and Human Rights Fund team and ask any questions specific to your organisation and proposed application. See <https://www.picktime.com/a7e36ee9-56cd-4891-8179-262758c331a7> to book a session.

## **New Scots Refugee Integration Delivery Project**

*Closing date 22 May 2021*

Scottish Government funding for organisations and community groups across Scotland involved in supporting refugees and people seeking asylum. Projects will enable refugees in Scotland to live in safe, welcoming and cohesive communities where they are able to build diverse relationships and connections; understand their rights, responsibilities and entitlements and exercise these to pursue full and independent lives; access well-coordinated services, which recognise and meet their rights and needs; and ensure their rights, needs and aspirations inform the policy, strategic planning and legislation which impacts upon them. For information see

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/new-scots-refugee-integration-delivery-fund-guidance/pages/background/>

## **Adapt and Thrive**

*Running until June 2021*

This programme, which is part of the Scottish Government Community and Third Sector Recovery Programme, offers grants of up to £75,000, loans, and specialist advice to organisations across the third sector to adapt to the challenges presented by COVID-19 and build back better to thrive in the future. For information see

<https://scvo.scot/support/coronavirus/funding/scottish-government/community-recovery/atf>

## **Vaccine Information Fund**

*Running until August 2021*

Grants of up to £1,000 are available to eligible organisations to create appropriate resources and activities to ensure that all people in Scotland have informed and equal access to information about the vaccine. For information see <https://bemis.org.uk/vif/>

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## **Events, Conferences, and Training**

\*\* new or updated this week

**\*\* registration closes this week!**

### **Network Meeting with Oxford Vaccine Research Team**

*Registration extended to 26 April 2021*

29 April 2021 (online, 10.00–11.30)

BEMIS is providing an opportunity for open discussion and Q&A with two members of the Oxford AstraZeneca Vaccine team. This is an opportunity to ask any questions about the vaccine or get more information about people under 30 being offered an alternative vaccine. For information and to register, contact [danny.boyle@bemis.org.uk](mailto:danny.boyle@bemis.org.uk)

**\*\* this week!**

### **Windrush engagement events**

27 April 2021 (online, 5.00–6.00)

25 May 2021 (online, 5.00–6.00)

Home Office events to raise awareness of the Windrush Compensation Scheme and the work of the Windrush Taskforce. For information see

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/windrush-engagement-events>

**\*\* this week!**

### **No Recourse to Public Funds**

28 April 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

30 June 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

27 October 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

26 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH workshop to help frontline workers identify a tenant's current status, clarify what this means in terms of access to public funds and plan effective support where difficulties arise. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

## **\*\* Scotland's Human Rights Report Card Session 2: Drafting a report for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) - guidance and top tips**

12 May 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

Scottish Human Rights Commission session focussing on the importance of building coalitions to send out strong messages, guidance and top tips on writing a report for consideration in the UPR process, and how to use UPR recommendations to create policy change. For information contact [events@scottishhumanrights.com](mailto:events@scottishhumanrights.com)

## **\*\* What Went Wrong? COVID-19, Accountability and Building Back Better**

17 May 2021 (online, 10.00–3.00)

Amnesty International in Scotland / Human Rights Consortium Scotland event to reflect on the experience of human rights during the pandemic in Scotland. It will also address the future – what should COVID recovery look like if human rights protection is central to this? What about human rights accountability? For information see <https://tinyurl.com/2jdn38f2>

## **Rights and Entitlements of EEA Nationals**

9 June 2021 (online, 10.30–12.30)

4 August 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

6 October 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

12 January 2022 (online, 10.30–12.30)

2 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH training on fundamental issues of housing, homelessness and welfare entitlements of EEA nationals, and look at how service users might prepare themselves to avoid the threats of Brexit. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

## **Rights of Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

16 June 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

18 August 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

20 October 2021 (online, 10.00–12.30)

19 January 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

9 March 2022 (online, 10.00–12.30)

PAiH course 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 <https://tinyurl.com/24ba4stk>

## **Scottish Interfaith Week 2021**

31 October to 7 November 2021 (Scotland-wide)

Scottish Interfaith Week will coincide with COP26 (United Nations Climate Change Conference 2021). The theme for 2021 is Together for Our Planet and individuals, faith communities and organisations across Scotland will be encouraged to host climate-related events for the week. For information see <https://scottishinterfaithweek.org/> or sign up to the [Scottish Interfaith Week newsletter](#).

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## Useful Links

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

**Scottish Government** <https://www.gov.scot/>

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

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

**European Parliament** <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/portal/en>

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

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

**Refugee Survival Trust** <https://www.rst.org.uk/>

**Freedom from Torture** <https://www.freedomfromtorture.org/>

**Interfaith Scotland** <https://interfaithscotland.org/>

**Equality and Human Rights Commission** <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en>

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

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

**ACAS** <http://www.acas.org.uk/>

**SCVO** <https://scvo.org.uk/>

**Volunteer Scotland** <https://www.volunteerscotland.net/>

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

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

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

**Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services**  
<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/disclosure-services/>

**BBC News** <https://www.bbc.com/news>

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**SCoJeC**  
Scottish Council of  
Jewish Communities

Representing, connecting, and supporting Jewish people in Scotland



The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438) <https://www.scojec.org/>



**BEMIS** is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. (Scottish Charity, no. SC027692) <http://www.bemis.org.uk/>



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

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