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Immigration and Asylum

Scottish Parliament Oral Answers

Asylum (Placement of Unaccompanied Children)

Paul Sweeney (Labour): The First Minister may recall that, before Christmas, I put to her a question regarding councils placing unaccompanied children who are seeking asylum in hotels. Since then, there have been reports that at least 200 children are missing or have been abducted from six Home Office hotels in England. I know that the First Minister will share my horror at that, as—I am sure—will members in the chamber.

Regarding the safety of unaccompanied children in Scotland, can she give an assurance that that is being delivered here, regardless of which authority is providing their accommodation?

Is she aware of any instances occurring in Scotland that are similar to those that have been reported in England? Can she provide an update on what steps the Government is taking

to ensure that unaccompanied children are being moved from hotels into secure accommodation?

Reply from the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): I recall the question that was asked before Christmas. I will write to the member with any update that I can give him on actions that are being taken by councils in Scotland, supported where necessary and appropriate by the Scottish Government, to address those very real concerns. I will include any information that councils have about unaccompanied children in Scotland.

In relation to the general issue, I think that everybody must have been deeply shocked to hear this week the revelation that 200 children have gone missing when they should have been effectively in the care of the Home Office. What is perhaps even more shocking is how little attention seems to have been paid to that. If a child in this country goes missing, there is rightly a lot of attention paid, and that should be no different in the case of these unaccompanied children.

While those children are here, they are our responsibility, and we should care for them and love them and ensure that they are looked after. I will respond to Paul Sweeney's question in relation to local authorities in Scotland, but I hope that all members, on all sides of the chamber, can unite today to demand for everybody, but in particular for children, much more humanity in the United Kingdom Government's approach to immigration and asylum.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=14115&i=127864#ScotParlOR>

The question referred to above can be read at

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=14071&i=127428#ScotParlOR>

UK Parliament Debate

Draft Immigration (Leave to Enter and Remain) (Amendment) Order 2023

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-23/debates/906b6efc-337a-42c2-8e25-ccedd29f58db/DraftImmigration\(LeaveToEnterAndRemain\)\(Amendment\)Order2023](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-23/debates/906b6efc-337a-42c2-8e25-ccedd29f58db/DraftImmigration(LeaveToEnterAndRemain)(Amendment)Order2023)

UK Parliament, Ministerial Statement

Windrush: Lessons Learned Review Recommendations

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Suella Braverman) [HCWS523]

Today I am updating Parliament on Home Office delivery of the recommendations set out in the Windrush lessons learned review, published in March 2020.

Since my appointment as Home Secretary, I have made a commitment to resolving the outstanding issues related to Windrush and have met members of the Windrush Working Group both to hear their feedback and more formally at the most recent cross-government Windrush Working Group which I was honoured to co-chair with Bishop Derek Webley.

Since the injustices of Windrush came to light, there has been a concerted effort across the Home Office to right the wrongs suffered by those affected. This work continues and we are making sustained progress delivering on the recommendations and the commitments made in our comprehensive improvement plan.

In her report last year, Wendy Williams concluded that 21 out of 30 of her recommendations had been met or partially met. She acknowledged that the scale of the challenge she set the Department was significant and that change on this scale takes time. Since then, we have made further progress in delivering against Wendy Williams'

recommendations. For example, in June 2022, the “Serving Diverse Communities—Acting on Our Values” learning package was launched across the Home Office, starting with recommendations 24 (learning for senior civil servants) and 29 (diversity and inclusion). The learning package for recommendation 6—the history of the UK and its relationship with the rest of the world, will be launched in the coming weeks.

The Department continues to make progress on compensating those unfairly impacted. As of December 2022, the Windrush compensation scheme paid out or offered £64.08 million in compensation to Windrush victims across 1,417 claims. £53.98 million of this has been paid and over 59% of claims—3,025—have received a final decision.

The Home Office regularly reviews the best way to deliver against the intent of Wendy Williams’ Windrush lessons learned review. As such, after considering officials advice, I have decided not to proceed with recommendations 3 (run reconciliation events), 9 (introduce a migrants commissioner) and 10 (review the remit and role of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration) in their original format. Extensive consideration has been given to how to deliver these recommendations in appropriate and meaningful ways: ensuring that individuals have opportunities to tell their stories; amplifying the voices of individuals engaging with the immigration system; and driving scrutiny of the Department.

On reconciliation events specifically, on the balance of expert advice received on how to approach this incredibly sensitive subject, I am persuaded that there are more effective ways of engaging with those impacted.

The Department has undertaken a significant programme of face-to-face engagement with the communities impacted by the Windrush scandal since 2018. Surgeries were held in community halls and places such as churches, mosques and care homes, as and where the need was identified. The engagement events were held in most major cities across the UK and including regions such as the west midlands, London and south-west. The events were hosted by senior members of the Windrush programme and provided individuals with the opportunity to speak to them about the impact the scandal had had on their and their family’s lives. Over 3,000 people were reached through these events.

This engagement with communities is further supported by the £500,000 Windrush community fund which was launched in 2020 and provided funding to grassroots organisations and charities with grants of up to £25,000 each to promote the Windrush schemes in innovative ways. Regular dialogue hosted by senior officials are held in forums with external stakeholders from Windrush communities who provide feedback and scrutiny of our engagement and communication efforts. This type of engagement will remain an important part of our work. Further, I look forward to celebrating the contribution that the Windrush community has made to our country in the upcoming 75th anniversary celebrations.

Recommendations 9 and 10 relate to the establishment of a migrants commissioner and a review of the role of the ICIBI. As Home Secretary I remain committed to the importance of scrutiny, both internal and external. There are a number of ways in which we are inviting this challenge and scrutiny in a more efficient way. In October 2022, the Department established the Independent Examiner for Complaints. This office will ensure that customers who are not satisfied with the final response to their complaints have an opportunity to have their case reviewed independently by the IEC, helping the Home Office to identify learning and wider lessons from complaints to improve its service.

The IEC provides scrutiny of the Department’s complaints procedure. Beyond this, I remain committed to the importance of scrutiny. I welcome the insight and challenge that I and the wider Department have received from our colleagues in the Windrush Working Group. Professor Martin Levermore, in his role as independent advisor, has been constructively challenging and very supportive in the development of the Windrush compensation scheme. This has included proactively providing suggestions on improvements to the scheme, such as enhancing linkages between the compensation scheme and the

Windrush status scheme, which the Department is now actively working on delivering. External bodies are not the only source of scrutiny. As Wendy Williams identified, the very culture of the Department needed a fundamental shift, bringing policy development and service delivery into contact with those who are impacted by it, including those who might not agree with it. This is how we shift culture and subject ourselves to scrutiny and this is how we are changing.

I am proud of the efforts made by teams across the Home Office, but we know there is more to do. Many people suffered terrible injustices and the Department will continue working hard to deliver a Home Office worthy of every community served. Wendy Williams acknowledged that our ambition to achieve genuine cultural change requires ongoing reflection and a commitment to constant improvement. She acknowledged that the scale of the challenge she set the Department was significant and that change on this scale takes time. The Home Office keeps the Home Affairs Select Committee updated on progress against the recommendations and will continue to do so.

An update on each of the recommendations is provided in the table ...

[Table](#)

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-26/debates/23012627000014/WindrushLessonsLearnedReviewRecommendations>

The Lessons Learned 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

The Lessons Learned Review Progress Update referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065012/14.12_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_Accessible_6_.pdf

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Maternity Outcomes: Migrant Women

Taiwo Owatemi (Labour) [903307] What steps the Government are taking to reduce disparities in maternity outcomes for migrant women.

Reply from the Minister for Women (Maria Caulfield): The MBRRACE report shows that women from black, Asian and mixed ethnic groups have worse maternity outcomes. That is why NHS England has published the equity and equality guidance for local maternity services, supported by £6.8 million of investment to focus on actions to reduce the disparities.

Taiwo Owatemi: Last year, the Government's maternity taskforce pleaded with the Government to provide better maternity care for migrant women, but eight in 10 refugee and migrant women are still waiting more than 10 weeks to get their first antenatal care. That is compounded by the fact that black women in this country are still four times more likely to die from childbirth. Can the Minister let us know when the taskforce will finish its inquiry and when the Government will start delivering better maternity care for women in this country?

Reply from Maria Caulfield: I thank the hon. Lady for highlighting the work of the maternity disparities taskforce, which this Government set up. I have been working with its co-chair, Professor Jacqueline Dunkley-Bent, and our next meeting will focus on some of the actions to tackle this issue. From October last year, each local area has produced a local maternity equity and equality action plan, targeting specific communities within the area to try to improve outcomes. I encourage all Members to look at their local action plan, and if they have concerns that it will not meet those needs, they should please come and see me. I am very happy to work with Members on this.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-25/debates/33EEE10A-E674-4C1E-BBC4-1D99D315344F/MaternityOutcomesMigrantWomen>

The report referred to above can be read at

https://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/assets/downloads/mbrace-uk/reports/maternal-report-2022/MBRRACE-UK_Maternal_MAIN_Report_2022_v10.pdf

Unaccompanied Asylum-seeking Children

Caroline Lucas (Green): To ask the Home Secretary if she will make a statement on what steps she is taking to find missing unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and to keep them safe.

Reply from the Minister for Immigration (Robert Jenrick): The rise in small boat crossings has placed a severe strain on the asylum accommodation system. We have had no alternative but to temporarily use specialist hotels to give some unaccompanied minors a roof over their heads while local authority accommodation is found. We take our safeguarding responsibilities extremely seriously and we have procedures in place to ensure all children are accommodated as safely as possible while in those hotels. This work is led on site by personnel providing 24/7 supervision, with support from teams of social workers and nurses. Staff, including contractors, receive briefings and guidance on how to safeguard minors, while all children receive a welfare interview, which includes questions designed to identify potential indicators of trafficking or safeguarding risks. The movements of under-18s in and out of hotels are monitored and recorded, and they are accompanied by social workers when attending organised activities.

We have no power to detain unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in these settings and we know some do go missing. Over 4,600 unaccompanied children have been accommodated in hotels since July 2021. There have been 440 missing occurrences and 200 children remain missing, 13 of whom are under 16 years of age and only one of whom is female.

When any child goes missing, a multi-agency missing persons protocol is mobilised alongside the police and the relevant local authority to establish their whereabouts and to ensure they are safe. Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced and located. Of the unaccompanied asylum-seeking children still missing, 88% are Albanian nationals, with the remaining 12% from Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Vietnam, Pakistan and Turkey.

As I have made clear repeatedly, we must end the use of hotels as soon as possible. We are providing local authorities with children's services with £15,000 for eligible young people they take into their care from a dedicated UASC—unaccompanied asylum-seeking children—hotel, or the reception and safe care service in Kent.

I fully understand the interest of the hon. Member for Brighton, Pavilion (Caroline Lucas), and indeed the whole House, in this issue and I am grateful for the opportunity to address it. I assure the House that safeguarding concerns are, and will remain, a priority for me and for my Department as we deliver the broader reforms that are so desperately needed to ensure we have a fair and effective asylum system that works in the interests of the British people.

Caroline Lucas: This is horrific. Vulnerable children are being dumped by the Home Office, scores of them are going missing, and I can tell the Minister that there is nothing “specialist” about these hotels. We are not asking him to detain children; we are asking the Home Office to apply some basic safeguarding so that we can keep them safe. Does he know how many have been kidnapped, trafficked, put into forced labour—where are they living, are they allowed to leave, are they in school? He should know because the Home Office is running these hotels. It has told me it is commissioning everything from social work to security, but it is still unclear whether it is prepared to take legal as well as practical responsibility.

Meanwhile, these children are in legal limbo. I was told before Christmas that Government lawyers were deliberating over their ultimate legal responsibility. We need to know the outcome today: what is it? We need to know why successive Home Secretaries have played into the hands of criminal gangs.

The Minister will talk of new money being given to local authorities, but where will they get the foster care capacity, which he knows is in seriously short supply? ...

Has the Minister taken up offers of help from charities working with children? What is the response to the migration watchdog's finding that some staff in these hotels were not DBS—disclosure and barring service—checked? What role is the Children's Commissioner playing? Why is not Ofsted inspecting these hotels regularly? Will he commit to publishing regular data on missing children—how long they have been missing, whether they are still missing, when they went missing? Where is the special operation to find the missing children? This feels like the plight of the girls in Rotherham who were treated like they did not matter and, frankly, it is sickening. Lastly, the use of these hotels must stop—when will that actually happen? ...

Reply from Robert Jenrick: If the hon. Lady has not visited the hotel in her constituency, or indeed in her neighbouring constituency, I would be happy to organise that. ...

As regards the level of support provided in that hotel, and indeed others elsewhere in the country, it is significant. On any given day, there will be a significant security presence at the hotel. Those security guards are there to protect the staff and the minors and to raise any suspicious activity immediately with the local police. I have been assured that that does happen in Sussex. A number of social workers are on site 24/7. There are also nurses on site and team leaders to manage the site appropriately. So there is a significant specialist team provided in each of these hotels to ensure that the young people present are properly looked after.

The report by the independent chief inspector of borders and immigration in October last year—I believe that Ofsted was involved in the inspection—did find unanimously that the young people reported that they felt safe, happy and treated with respect. Now, that does not mean that we have any cause to be complacent, because it is extremely concerning if young people are leaving these accommodation settings and not being found. I have been told that any young person leaving one of these hotels and not returning is treated in exactly the same way as any young person of any nationality or immigration status who goes missing anywhere else in the country and that the police follow up as robustly as they would in any other circumstances. That is quite right, because we have a responsibility to any minor, regardless of why they are here in the United Kingdom.

Working with police forces and local authorities, we have created a new protocol, known as “missing after reasonable steps”, in which further action is taken to find missing young people. That has had significant success: I am told that it has led to a 36% reduction in the number of missing people occurrences. We will take further steps, as required, to ensure that young people are safe in these hotels and not unduly preyed on by the evil people smuggling gangs that perpetuate the trade.

The key task ahead of us—other than deterring people from making dangerous crossings in the first place, of course—is to ensure that these young people are swiftly moved out of hotels, as the hon. Lady rightly said, and into more appropriate settings in local authorities. Since being in position I have reviewed the offer that we have for local authorities and significantly enhanced it. From next month—this has already been announced—any local authority will receive a one-off initial £15,000 payment for taking a young person from one of these hotels into their care in addition to the annual payment of about £50,000 per person. That is a significant increase in the amount of financial support available to local authorities.

The hon. Lady is right to say that money is not the only barrier to local authorities,

because there are significant capacity issues including a lack of foster carers, a lack of trained social workers and a lack of local authority children's home places. Those are issues that the Department for Education is seeking to address through its care review. The best thing that any of us can do as constituency Members of Parliament who care about this issue is speak to our local authorities and ask them whether they can find extra capacity to take more young people through the national transfer scheme so that we can close these hotels or, at least, reduce reliance on them as quickly as possible.

Tim Loughton (Conservative): ... Last year, the Home Office came in front of the Home Affairs Committee to be interrogated about this, and there was a particular problem with the hotel in Hove, which instigated the story in *The Observer* ... because the Home Office did not tell the local council when it was putting children there in the first place. However, there have not been any reports to Sussex police of children being snatched and abducted by gangs outside.

There are two questions that the Minister may like to clear up. First, there is a grey area over who is responsible as the safeguarding body for children in hotels. Is it the Home Office or the local authority? ... Secondly, is he using specialist refugee children's charities, which have welfare and safeguarding training, to look after children in the hotels and ensure that they are not being taken advantage of, as he has done at Dover and other ports of entry? Those children are not criminals, and we cannot put them in a secure facility. They are free to come and go, but we need people keeping a special eye on them.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: ... He is right to make the final point, which is that these are not secure locations. Young people are not detained in them. We do not have the legal powers to do that and I do not think any right hon. or hon. Member from across the House would wish us to do that. It is inevitable that some young people will choose to leave these settings, as, very sadly, they do from local authority care homes, but that is not to diminish or renege on our responsibility to reduce that as far as we possibly can.

We have relationships with charities and the voluntary sector. I will happily take up with the Department whether there is more we can do there. We have made good use of those relationships in other settings, such as hotels for adults and Manston. As I said earlier, there is a very significant amount of specialist support in the hotels. I specifically asked the officials running them what we would find on any given day. It is several security guards, a number of nurses and a number of social workers, as well as team leaders running the operation. So they are well staffed by well-trained and professional individuals who are drawn from other settings where they are used to looking after vulnerable young people.

Lastly, on the first point my hon. Friend made, there is a challenge around the legal status of a local authority with respect to these hotels. Our objective is to reduce demand for hotels as fast as possible, so that young people are in this accommodation for a very short period of time while we get them to local authorities where they can be cared for properly in accordance with the law. ...

Yvette Cooper (Labour): The report from Sussex police is that one in four unaccompanied children in a Home Office hotel have gone missing—one in four—and that around half of them are still missing. It would appear from the figures the Minister has given that that means one hotel accounts for 40% of the missing children.

A whistleblower is reported as saying: "Children are literally being picked up from outside the building, disappearing and not being found. They're being taken from the street by traffickers".

Greater Manchester police warned that asylum hotels and children's homes are being targeted by organised criminals. There is a pattern here. The gangs know where to come to get the children—often, likely because they trafficked them here in the first place. There is a criminal network involved and the Government are completely failing to stop it. They

are letting gangs run amok. Last year, there was only one—just one—conviction for child trafficking, even though it is now believed to involve potentially thousands of British children, as well as the children targeted here.

Where is the single co-ordinated unit involving the National Crime Agency, the Border Force, the south-east regional organised crime unit and local police forces to hit the gang networks operating around this hotel and across the channel? Why are the Government still refusing to boost the National Crime Agency? Why have they repeatedly ignored the warnings about this hotel and unregulated accommodation for 16 and 17-year-olds being targeted by criminal gangs?

It is unbelievable that there is still no clarity on whether the Home Office or the council is legally responsible for these children. Will the Home Office now agree to immediately end the contract with this hotel and move the children out to safer accommodation? Will it set up a proper inquiry and team to pursue the links between organised crime, trafficking and the children in these hotels? This is a total dereliction of duty that is putting children at risk. We need urgent and serious action to crack down on these gangs, and to keep children and young people safe.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: I gave the figures the Home Office has at the start of this urgent question. Of the 4,600 unaccompanied children who have been accommodated in hotels since July 2021, 440 have gone missing at one point and 200 remain missing, so I am afraid the statistics the right hon. Lady quotes are not those that I have been given by the Home Office.

On press reports that individuals have been abducted outside the hotel, those are very serious allegations. I specifically asked the officials who run the hotel whether they have seen evidence of that, and I also asked the senior leadership of Brighton and Hove Council. I have not been presented with evidence that that has happened, but I will continue to make inquiries. Senior officials from my Department are meeting the Mitie security team in the coming days to ask them whether they have seen any occurrences, whether the individual quoted in the press as a whistleblower raised issues with Mitie, and, if they did, why those issues were not subsequently passed on to the Home Office. The right hon. Lady has my assurance that I will not let the matter drop. I am also going to meet a number of staff who work at the site in the coming days to take their opinions and reflections.

On the broader point the right hon. Lady makes about our policy, she is incorrect when she says the NCA is insufficiently financed. The Prime Minister announced at the end of last year that we would step up NCA funding. In fact, I visited the NCA just last week to be briefed on the work it is doing upstream throughout Europe and into Turkey, Iraq and a number of other countries. There is very significant activity happening to tackle the evil people-smuggling gangs. ...

Edward Timpson (Conservative): What assessment has my right hon. Friend's Department made of the availability of specialist foster carers able to accommodate unaccompanied asylum-seeking children? In light of the Abdulrahimzai case reported today, can he reassure the House that foster carers are provided with the information and support they need to keep both themselves and any young person in their care safe?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: My hon. and learned Friend raises a very important issue. There is, as he knows as well as almost anyone in this House, a lack of capacity in relation to specialist foster carers. That is why the Department for Education conducted its care review, is considering the findings, and will be bringing forward recommendations in due course. Most young people in the hotels we are discussing today are older—predominantly 16 and 17-year-olds—so it is about a national lack not only of foster care capacity, but of supported accommodation and the kind of settings that a 17-year-old, for example, might be placed in for a relatively short period of time before they move forward with their life. Those issues are very important to us, which is why, for my part, I have made

available significantly increased funding for local authorities so they can, for example, use that money to procure more supported accommodation. On the case my hon. and learned Friend referred to, that is a truly shocking case. We are reviewing how it has happened and how the individual was able to enter the UK posing as a minor. We will learn the lessons and set out more in due course. ...

Alison Thewliss (SNP): It is completely unacceptable that vulnerable young people who need care and support continue to vanish under the Home Office's watch. The Children's Commissioner for England made her concerns clear on the safeguarding of these young people. Has the Minister met the Children's Commissioner for England? Has he considered an equivalent to the Scottish Guardianship Service, which provides personalised and sustained support to unaccompanied refugee children? Would that be a useful model to keep young people safe?

Sussex police say 76 children are unaccounted for in this case. The Minister said that 440 children had gone missing and that 200 remained unaccounted for across the UK. Is he certain of those figures, and will he provide regular updates to the House on the number of children missing and still unaccounted for? Will he end the practice of putting children in hotels, a practice that many stakeholders and whistleblowers have repeatedly flagged as dangerous and putting children at risk?

Reply from Robert Jenrick: I want to end the practice of putting children in hotels, but the key to that is stopping people crossing the channel in the first place. If we continue to have tens of thousands of people, including very significant numbers of minors, crossing the channel every year, I am afraid that there is no choice but to accommodate people for a short period of time in hotels before they can flow into better accommodation within local authorities.

... this is a national emergency. It is part of a global migration crisis, and we need to take the most robust action we can to deter people from making the journey, or I am afraid that we will find this problem magnified in the years to come. That is why we have taken the steps that we have in the recent past; that is why the Prime Minister set out his plan at the end of last year; and that is why we will shortly be bringing forward legislation ...

I will certainly look into the Scottish guardianship model that the hon. Lady raises, but as I have said many times, it remains true that as a proportion of its population Scotland takes far fewer unaccompanied asylum-seeking children than England. One practical step that she could take would be to encourage the SNP Government and local authorities in Scotland to play a fuller part in ensuring that these young people are given the care and attention they deserve. ...

To read this very long question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-24/debates/290AF292-5D7E-411C-8FB8-A6E0F288365C/UnaccompaniedAsylum-SeekingChildren>

The report from the independent chief inspector of borders and immigration referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1111982/An_inspection_of_the_use_of_hotels_for_housing_unaccompanied_asylum-seeking_children_UASC_March_to_May_2022.pdf

Home Affairs evidence sessions relating to this subject can be read at

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/3370/html/>

and

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/10463/html/>

The Observer story referred to above can be read at

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/21/revealed-scores-of-child-asylum-seekers-kidnapped-from-home-office-hotel>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Channel Migrants

The following four questions all received the same answer

Human Trafficking: Criminal Investigation

Yvette Cooper (Labour) [128605] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many joint investigations have been opened into people smuggling by organised crime groups in (a) the past 12 months and (b) each of the past five years.

Human Trafficking: English Channel

Yvette Cooper (Labour) [128604] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many Joint Investigation Teams are currently in place to investigate people smuggling across the Channel by organised crime groups.

Yvette Cooper (Labour) [128606] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many National Crime Agency staff are currently in roles tasked primarily with the disruption of (a) organised immigration crime and (b) people smuggling across the English Channel.

Yvette Cooper (Labour) [128608] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what estimate her Department has made of the number of organised crime groups active in facilitating people smuggling across the English Channel.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government is resolute in its commitment to tackle Organised Immigration Crime (OIC).

Tackling people smuggling of all types is a priority for Immigration Enforcement, working through its international network upstream as well as conducting OIC investigations within the UK. Additionally, the dedicated multi-agency OIC Taskforce, led by the National Crime Agency, is committed to dismantling OCGs engaged in immigration crime internationally. The Taskforce is active in 17 countries worldwide, and its activities include supporting judicial and intelligence capacity building in source and transit countries, and intelligence sharing in key near Europe countries. The NCA undertakes investigations into complex and serious OIC offences, arresting offenders in the UK and overseas and bringing them to justice.

In addition to the Taskforce, the NCA has a network in excess of 140 International Liaison Officers (ILOs) based in more than 45 locations, covering over 100 countries. For operational security reasons, the NCA does not disclose those countries in which NCA Liaison Officers are based. The NCA also has intelligence and investigative teams that are deployed across the full range of Serious and Organised Crime threats, where tackling Organised Immigration Crime is a priority. The NCA overseas liaison officers network works with international partners and coordinates UK law enforcement overseas to gather intelligence, conduct operational activity (through agreement with partners) and enhance international delivery through a variety of means, including capacity building, training, joint European or international taskforces. The Liaison Officer network also includes officers based in the multilateral institutions of Europol and INTERPOL.

The tragedy in the Channel last December sadly demonstrates the extent to which OCGs endanger migrants' lives at sea. The NCA, Home Office, Ministry of Defence and UK police forces continue to collaborate with French counterparts to tackle the criminals behind the majority of these crossing attempts and protect lives at sea. Our joint efforts are resulting in continued arrests and prosecutions of these criminals, so that we deter, disrupt and dismantle the networks responsible for facilitating many of these crossings.

Joint Investigation Teams are another part of our toolkit to address cross border organised crime. JITs provide a legal framework for investigation teams set up for a fixed period between two or more countries to investigate a specific cross-border

case. The UK participates in multiple JITs with an Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) dimension; however, for operational reasons we cannot provide further detail. We also share information about criminality around small boats between international agencies. The UK-France Joint Intelligence Cell (known to France as the *Unité de renseignement opérationnel*, so URO or JIC) consists of UK and French officials, as well as a Europol embed, who collate and analyse operational intelligence to prevent crossings and to dismantle the gangs behind them. Since the JIC was established in July 2020, 59 organised criminal groups involved in small boats crossings in France have been dismantled. Our joint activity with the French saw nearly 400 arrests made in 2022 alone.

We also pursue those involved in the financial flows that support this activity. Using criminal powers in the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, an individual can be prosecuted for money laundering offences if sufficient evidence is obtainable and CPS agree to charging, or civil powers within the same act permit the action to be taken against the money concerned. Both these approaches are used to undermine the financial flows supporting small boat and wider clandestine smuggling, both in the UK and with foreign partners.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128605>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128604>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128606>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128608>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Afghanistan

Visas: Afghanistan

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [126659] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to the answer of 6 June to Question 9880 on Visas: Afghanistan, whether the policy applies to Afghani nationals seeking to enter the UK under family reunion applications; and if she will place in the library of the House a list of exceptional circumstances.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: English language tests are not a requirement under the Refugee Family Reunion route. Applicants are also exempt from the 'Knowledge of language and life in the UK' requirement at the settlement stage.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126659>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-05-26/9880>

The following four questions all received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Stephen Timms (Labour) [126513] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been resettled under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme: Pathway 2.

Stephen Timms (Labour) [126514] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there is a quota for the number of people who can be resettled under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme: Pathway 2.

Stephen Timms (Labour) [126515] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether there is a quota for the number of unaccompanied children who can be resettled under pathway 2 of the ACRS scheme.

Stephen Timms (Labour) [126517] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home

Department, what information her Department has shared with the UNHCR on the (a) procedure and (b) quotas for referral to the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme: Pathway 2.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We anticipate receiving referrals from UNHCR for up to 2,000 refugees during the first year of pathway 2, although this number will be kept under review. We will continue to receive UNHCR referrals to the scheme in coming years.

We have brought around 6,000 Afghans to the UK under ARAP and ACRS Pathway 1 since Operation Pitting and the fall of Kabul.

Statistics are available at [Afghan Resettlement Programme: operational data](#)

The Government has committed to welcoming up to 20,000 people over the coming years. The Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) will provide up to 20,000 women, children, and others at risk with a safe and legal route to resettle in the UK. UNHCR is responsible for making referrals onto the ACRS. UNHCR will refer individuals in accordance with their standard resettlement categories and policies, based on an assessment of protection needs and vulnerabilities, in line with their resettlement submission criteria. This includes women and girls at risk.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126513>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126514>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126515>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126517>

Information about Pathway 2, referred to above, can be read at

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

[13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Information about the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Stephen Timms (Labour) [126516] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish the (a) eligibility criteria, (b) prioritisation criteria and (c) guidance for caseworkers for pathway 2 of the ACRS scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Under Pathway 2 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) refer refugees who have fled Afghanistan to the scheme, based on an assessment of their protection needs and vulnerabilities.

UNHCR is responsible for out-of-country casework activity before individuals are referred to the Home Office.

The seven resettlement submission categories used by UNHCR are:

- Legal and or Physical Protection Needs
- Survivors of Torture and/or Violence
- Medical Needs
- Women and Girls at Risk
- Family Reunification
- Children and Adolescents at Risk; and
- Lack of Foreseeable Alternative Durable Solutions

We are pleased to have welcomed the first arrivals to the UK under this pathway

and we will continue to receive further referrals.

Further information on the referral process can be found on the UNHCR website: <https://help.unhcr.org>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126516>

Refugees: Afghanistan

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [126658] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, when she plans to publish a timeline for the opening of Pathway 3 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Government received over 11,400 expressions of interest (EOI) under Pathway 3 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS), which we have been assessing against the eligibility criteria. We have informed just under 200 individuals that they are eligible in principle for resettlement, subject to passing security checks. Including their dependents, this accounts for over 750 of the 1500 available places on Pathway 3 in year one. We will not be commenting on individual cohort numbers or timeframes while EOIs are still being processed and security checks are outstanding. As initial security checks are completed, we are providing further information on next steps to eligible individuals. We will update Parliament further once we have completed the allocation process, have notified all those who submitted EOIs of the outcome and have assured data to share.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126658>

Information about Pathway 3, referred to above, can be read at

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/220613500016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

[13/debates/220613500016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/220613500016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3)

Refugees: Afghanistan

Angela Crawley (SNP) [123993] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what progress she has made on establishing a reunification process for people brought to the UK under the Afghan Citizen Resettlement Scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: In line with our existing policy on resettlement, those resettled under the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) may be able to be accompanied by their immediate family members (their spouse or partner, and children under 18).

For those evacuated from Afghanistan under the ACRS without their immediate family members, further information will be made available in due course about options for reuniting with them.

Those referred by UNHCR under the ACRS will have refugee status and will therefore be able to access the refugee family reunion route. Those without refugee status wishing to bring family members would need to apply through the regular family visa route under Appendix FM of the Immigration rules.

The Government remains committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan. However, the situation is very complex and presents significant challenges, including how those who are eligible for resettlement in the UK can leave the country. This includes eligible immediate family members of those being resettled under the ACRS.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/123993>

Information about the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Refugees: Afghanistan

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [126576] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will make (a) an estimate of the number of people awaiting and (b) an assessment of the potential merits of taking steps to facilitate family reunion for Afghans on Pathway One of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme who were evacuated under Operation Pitting.

Tim Farron (Liberal Democrat) [126577] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will (a) consult and (b) take steps with agencies that have experience of family reunion processes to design a mechanism that will enable family reunion for Afghans on Pathway One of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme who were evacuated under Operation Pitting.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The government remains committed to providing protection for vulnerable and at-risk people fleeing Afghanistan, and we engage regularly with resettlement partner organisations in the UK and overseas further our work.

The situation in Afghanistan is very complex and presents significant challenges, including how those who are eligible for resettlement in the UK can leave the country. This includes the eligible family members of those being resettled under the ACRS. For those evacuated from Afghanistan under the ACRS without their immediate family members, further information will be made available in due course about options for reuniting with them.

In line with our existing policy, those resettled under ACRS may be able to be accompanied by their immediate family members - that is their spouse or partner, and dependent children under 18.

Those referred by UNHCR under the ACRS will have refugee status and will therefore be able to access the refugee family reunion route.

Those without refugee status wishing to bring family members would need to apply through the regular family visa route under Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules. Whilst the UK has made a generous resettlement commitment, we must bear in mind the capacity of the UK to resettle people is not unlimited and therefore difficult decisions about who will be prioritised for resettlement have to be made.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126576>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126577>

Information about the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Ukraine

Homes for Ukraine Scheme

Rosena Allin-Khan (Labour) [125429] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to the press release by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities entitled New over £650 million support package for Ukrainians sees increased thank you payments for longer-term hosts, published on 14 December 2022, if she will make an assessment of the potential merits of providing similar financial support to people hosting Ukrainian refugees under the Ukraine Family Scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Ukrainian nationals coming to the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme are given the same access to work, benefits and public services as those coming here under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme, as laid down in Appendix Ukraine to the Immigration Rules, details of which can be found at: [Immigration Rules - Immigration Rules Appendix Ukraine Scheme - Guidance](#).

The Ukraine Family Scheme does not require sponsors to provide accommodation. Therefore, the Government has not extended the 'thank you' payment offered to those providing a home to refugees arriving in the UK under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme.

Sponsoring family members able to provide appropriate accommodation can choose to sponsor their family members under the Homes for Ukraine Scheme in order to become eligible for the 'thank you' payment. They must undergo all the relevant local authority checks before their family member arrives in the UK.

The conditions attached to both Ukraine Scheme visas are identical in terms of length of permission to stay, entitlements to work and access to public funds. Local authorities also have flexibility as to how they use the £150 million funding for the Homes for Ukraine scheme to support Ukrainians on the Ukraine Family Scheme.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-17/125429>

The press release referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-over-650m-support-package-for-ukrainians-sees-increased-thank-you-payments-for-longer-term-hosts>

Information about the Ukrainian Family Scheme and Homes for Ukraine Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members/immigration-information-for-ukrainians-in-the-uk-british-nationals-and-their-family-members>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

MV Empire Windrush

Bell Ribeiro-Addy (Labour) [130070] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether her Department plans to allocate (a) funds and (b) other resources for celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the MV Empire Windrush in Britain.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: DLUHC is the lead Government department for Windrush Celebratory events and DLUHC officials are further exploring what else we can do to make even more of an impact for these celebrations. Further funding will be allocated to further developing an educational component on the National Windrush Monument website, in time for National Windrush Day 2023 and the 75th anniversary celebrations.

The 75th anniversary of the arrival of MV Empire Windrush at the Port of Tilbury marks a seminal moment in our nation's shared history. £750,000 in grant funding will be provided by government for the Windrush Day Grant Scheme to celebrate Windrush 75. Community groups and local authorities in England and Northern Ireland can apply for up to £50,000 for events and activities that mark the annual Windrush Day on 22 June.

As of today, HM Government has dedicated £3.75 million in funding toward honouring the Windrush legacy. This includes £2.75 million across five years of the Windrush Day Grant Scheme, and £1 million allocated to the National Windrush Monument.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-23/130070>

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

Kate Osamor (Labour Co-op) [125426] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, pursuant to her answer of 17 January 2023 to question 119209 on Windrush

Lessons Learned Review, what additional steps her Department plans to take to implement Wendy Williams's recommendation to run a programme of reconciliation events with members of the Windrush generation.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: We understand the importance and value of engaging with communities impacted by the Windrush scandal through face-to-face engagement. The Home Office has held over 200 public engagement and outreach events across the country to raise awareness of the Windrush Schemes. This includes 120 one-to-one surgeries attended by Windrush Help teams, to support people applying for documentation.

We recognise parliament has a keen interest in the progress of Wendy Williams's recommendations. The Home Office keeps HASC and members of both houses updated on progress and will continue to do so.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-17/125426>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/119209><https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/124085>

The Lessons Learned 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

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

Ruth Jones (Labour) [124085] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether she has had discussions with Wendy Williams on the Windrush Lessons Learned Review.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Following the initial Windrush Lessons Learned Review (WLLR) report, published in March 2020, Wendy Williams revisited the department and in March 2022 published the 'Windrush Lessons Learned Review – Progress Update'. This report outlines the work undertaken by the Home Office in response to her original review.

Wendy Williams concluded that there are several areas where very good progress has been made but rightly holds us to account in areas and on recommendations where we have not made sufficient progress. A range of options have been considered for delivering the Windrush recommendations, including discussions with external stakeholders. We will also keep the Home Affairs Select Committee updated on the progress of all the WLLR recommendations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/124085>

The Lessons Learned 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

The Lessons Learned Review Progress Update referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065012/14.12_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_Accessible_6_.pdf

The following two questions both received the same answer

Windrush Compensation Scheme

Ruth Jones (Labour) [124081] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many people have been helped through the Windrush Compensation Scheme since its establishment.

Ruth Jones (Labour) [124082] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the effectiveness of the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: Information relating to the number of people that have been helped through the Windrush Compensation Scheme since its establishment is included in Windrush Compensation Scheme Transparency Data which is published regularly, together with the Windrush Compensation Scheme Fact Sheet which can be found here: [Windrush Schemes factsheet – November 2022](#)
The effectiveness of the Windrush Compensation Scheme is kept under constant review. The Home Office works hard to streamline processes and make policy improvements where necessary. The Windrush Compensation Scheme Fact Sheet provides further information.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/124081>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/124082>

Asylum: Syria

Rupa Huq (Independent) [125424] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what steps she is taking to accelerate the decision-making process for asylum applications from people from Syria.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: All asylum claims are considered on a case by case basis and in line with published policy. Claims by Syrian nationals will be considered in the same way as claims from any other nationality.

We are taking immediate action to rapidly speed up processing times and eliminate the backlog of people waiting for initial asylum decisions by the end of 2023.

To accelerate decision making we are driving productivity improvements by simplifying and modernising our system. This includes: shorter, more focussed interviews; removing unnecessary interviews; making guidance simpler and more accessible; dealing with cases more swiftly where they can be certified as manifestly unfounded; recruiting extra decision makers; and allocating dedicated resources for different nationalities.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-17/125424>

Asylum: Iran

Caroline Lucas (Green) [127731] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many asylum claims from Iranian (a) women and (b) nationals are outstanding; and how many and what proportion of those claims have been outstanding for more than (i) six months, (ii) one year and (iii) three years.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The Home Office publishes data on asylum and resettlement in the '[Immigration Statistics Quarterly Release](#)'. Data on the number of asylum claims awaiting an initial decision are published in table Asy_D03 of the [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#). Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data relates to 30 September 2022.

The published data is broken down by claims awaiting a decision for (i) 6 months or less and (ii) more than 6 months, and by nationality. The published data is not broken down by sex.

Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-19/127731>

Asylum: Families

Damien Moore (Conservative) [128706] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education on ensuring that the families of asylum seekers are located in areas with services supporting vulnerable children and families.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The government is working to ensure the needs of asylum seekers on asylum support, including those with dependant family members, are met. We engage with Local Authorities to ensure asylum seekers have access to healthcare and social care services as well as education.

We work closely with the Department for Education. The latest published statistics from the Department for Education, for the year ending 31 March 2022, show there were 5,540 UASC being cared for in England alone, an increase of 34% from the previous reporting year and not reflecting the high intake seen last summer.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-20/128706>

Asylum: Young People

Angela Crawley (SNP) [123992] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what assessment she has made of the (a) number and (b) quality of age assessments carried out by social workers following visual assessments by her Department's officials for the purposes of immigration and asylum; and whether she has made an assessment of the potential merits of establishing an independent oversight body to conduct or commission analysis on age assessments.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: If an assessment is conducted by a local authority the Home Office considers the assessment alongside other relevant evidence before a final decision is made for immigration purposes – this includes checking whether the assessment was conducted in compliance with caselaw. Decisions on age for immigration purposes fall within the remit of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration which monitors and reports on the effectiveness of the Home Office's immigration and asylum functions.

The Home Office publishes data on the number of age disputes and outcomes in table Asy_D05 of the [asylum and resettlement detailed datasets](#). Information on how to use the datasets can be found in the 'Notes' page of the workbook. The latest data covers up to November 2022. Information on future Home Office statistical release dates can be found in the '[Research and statistics calendar](#)'. The statistics do not currently distinguish between those who have been assessed to be significantly over 18 and others who have been age disputed but referred directly to a local authority for further assessment.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-16/123992>

Asylum: Children

Seema Malhotra (Labour Co-op) [129806] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will take steps to establish an inquiry into missing unaccompanied asylum-seeking minors.

Reply from Robert Jenrick: The safety and wellbeing of those in our care is our primary concern. We have robust safeguarding procedures in place to ensure all unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC) in emergency interim hotels are safe and supported whilst we seek urgent placements with a local authority. Young people are supported by team leaders and support workers who are on site 24 hours a day. Further care is provided in hotels by teams of specialist social workers and nurses.

We have no power to detain unaccompanied asylum seeking children in hotels and we know some do go missing. Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced and located. Children's movements in and out of hotels are monitored and recorded and they are accompanied by support workers when attending organised activities and social excursions off-site, or where specific vulnerabilities are identified.

When a young person goes missing the 'missing persons protocol' is followed and led by our directly engaged social workers. A multi-agency, missing persons

protocol is mobilised alongside the police and local authorities, to establish their whereabouts and to ensure that they are safe

Regarding an inquiry; the Home Secretary is taking advice from officials and considering the appropriate next steps.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-23/129806>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Oral Answers

Children Seeking Asylum: Safeguarding

Lord Scriven (Liberal Democrat): To ask His Majesty's Government what action they are taking to safeguard unaccompanied children seeking asylum, and prevent them going missing from hotels.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Murray of Blidworth): The rise in small boat crossings has meant that we have had temporarily to accommodate children in hotels while local authority accommodation is found. When a child goes missing, a multiagency missing persons protocol is mobilised. Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced and located. We must end the use of hotels, and as such we are providing local authorities with children's services the sum of £15,000 for every eligible young person they take into their care from a UASC—that is, an unaccompanied asylum-seeking child—hotel by the end of February 2023.

Lord Scriven: ... As the chief constable of Great Manchester Police has said, these vulnerable young people are going missing after they have been snatched by those involved in drug crime and child sex trafficking. Experts indicate that the present system is not working as well as it should and suggest one major change that the Home Office could implement. That is that the Home Office becomes the corporate parent of those young people until such time as the local authority has completed the assessment and arrangements have been made. Will the Home Office look into that and implement it?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: There are many reasons why children go missing from care generally. This is true also of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. We are not in a position—and it would be wrong—to make generalisations regarding the reason for their going missing. I will take back to the department the suggestion that the Home Office could become a corporate parent.

Lord Trefgarne (Conservative): My Lords, what is the minimum age at which an unaccompanied minor can apply for asylum?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: There is no minimum age for application for asylum.

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): My Lords, is it not deplorable that over an 18-month period, some 600 unaccompanied children have disappeared from this hotel and some 79 are still missing? What can the noble Lord tell us about the fate and the plight of those missing children? What were their countries of origin? What safeguarding is now in place at that hotel? Most importantly of all, the noble Lord has said the use of such hotels will be phased out, so how long will that take?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: ... Clearly, the statistics he cited are not entirely correct. Let me put on record what they are. The Department for Education collects data annually on the number of looked-after children in England, as well as missing, unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. The Home Office has no power to detain unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in those hotels, and we know that some of them go missing. Many of those who have gone missing are subsequently traced and located, as I have already said. The numbers are as follows. Over 4,600 children have been accommodated in hotels since they were opened in July 2021. Of the 440 missing episodes—the term “episode” is used, as

some children go missing and are then located but subsequently go missing again—all have been male save for four who have been female. Two hundred of the children remain missing, and only one of them is female; 88% are Albanian nationals and 13 are under the age of 16. The average length of stay in hotels for UASCs is 18.23 days. I am afraid I cannot give an exact answer to the second part of the noble Lord's question, on how long it will be until we can phase out the use of hotels. Our hope is to phase them out as soon as we can.

Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top (Labour): The people I have spoken to who have been to visit the hotels have come away very anxious about the lack of knowledge or ability of anyone around or outside the hotel in safeguarding; and, as the Minister has just said, they cannot detain children. They know that predators are around, and we know that predators are one step ahead in terms of trafficking and indeed child sex abuse of most of the organisations that are around to safeguard. This is a huge issue. It is a shaming issue, and I hope the Government take it very seriously and work very hard to make sure that trafficking, as we now know it, is not being fuelled by the policy around children unaccompanied in hotels.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: I can assure the noble Baroness that the Home Office takes very seriously the safeguarding of the young people who are in the hotels. Their safety and well-being are our primary concern. As I have already said, we have no power to detain them; however, children's movements in and out hotels are monitored and recorded. They are also accompanied by support workers when attending organised activities and social excursions off site, or where specific vulnerabilities are identified.

When a young person goes missing, the missing persons protocol is followed, led by our directly engaged social workers. We have a protocol called "missing after reasonable steps", which enables children's homes and supported accommodation placements to have more ownership over the missing episodes of children in their care. It is a set of forms that helps with safeguarding, planning and prevention prior to a child being reported missing; it also encourages lines of inquiry, as is expected of a person with responsibility for that child. When used correctly, similar protocols in police forces have safely reduced the number of missing episodes from placements by 36%. ...

The Lord Bishop of Durham: My Lords, I thank the Minister for the care with which he is responding today; it is appreciated. Can he say how well qualified the social workers and others are to support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, because there are particular issues around them? Would it not be better if we had a system of placing an advocate for each child, who could help them through the system, as soon as they arrive?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Clearly, the move into hotels is as swift as we can make it once the unaccompanied asylum-seeking child comes to the attention of the authorities. The hotels have staff consisting of team leaders and social workers, all of whom are fully trained and able to work with the young people. All the children receive a welfare interview, which includes questions designed to identify any potential indicators of trafficking or safeguarding issues. I assure the right reverend Prelate that the steps are taken seriously among the staff of the hotels to assist the children in so far as they can. ...

Baroness Hamwee (Liberal Democrat): ... Sadly, children going missing from care is not a new issue, as the Minister said. What is being learned from the two situations? What information and experience are being swapped, including on identifying the fact that traffickers, criminals and other dodgy people are hanging around outside different establishments hoping to catch a hold of their victims, as I shall call them as well as children?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: ... An important feature of the hotel accommodation specifically provided for UASCs is the security for each hotel

facility. Clearly, that security then matches the layout of each hotel and, as I say, residents are asked to sign in and out. Any suspicious activity identified by the security contractors is reported to the police and should be investigated by them if they think that there are grounds to do so.

Lord Austin of Dudley (Non-affiliated): My Lords, the Minister has just told us that, on his own figures, hundreds of children have gone missing. Has he asked his officials what investigations that department has made to find out where they have gone, who they are with and what risks they face?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: I hope that, as I have already set out, as with children's homes more generally, when there is a missing person episode, the missing person protocol is followed, which involves investigation by the police. The Home Office is obviously not in a position to replace the police in that investigatory task and, accordingly, that is how the children are identified when they can be.

Lord Coaker (Labour): We are all horrified by what we have heard and read about these cases of children going missing—I will say “kidnapped”—from some of these homes. Is it true that the Home Office were warned months ago about these problems? Is it true that the Home Office ignored those warnings and failed to act? If so, that is a failure of the state to act as a parent. With Home Office sources denying that these children have been kidnapped, can the Minister at least confirm that the department accepts legal responsibility for their safety now, even if it did not in the past?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Certainly, the department does not know of any cases of kidnap. The reports in the media over the weekend are of course the subject of investigation within the Home Office but, at the moment, nothing like that has been reported to us to my knowledge.

Baroness Butler-Sloss (Crossbench): My Lords, as a matter of law, the children are in the care of the local authority of the particular hotel, so I am not sure about corporate parenthood. It may be a very important situation, but I suspect that it is not a legal situation. What is perhaps more important is the Government giving additional money to the local authorities where these hotels are to get foster parents and homes for the children so that they do not stay in hotels.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: I entirely agree with the legal analysis by the noble and learned Baroness. As I hope I made clear in my earlier Answer, further money is provided—I mentioned £15,000—to each local authority in relation to the unaccompanied asylum-seeking child.

Baroness Fox of Buckley (Non-affiliated): My Lords, I have listened carefully to the answers given. Having read the lurid headlines and newspaper reports, I was under the impression that people trafficking of these young people was a given. It is possible that I am confused, so can the Minister clarify that there is no evidence of what has happened or why these children have gone missing? If there is no evidence, is it not attendant on all of us in this place not to allege what we do not know to be true as though it were fact?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The noble Baroness is very perceptive. Unfortunately, there is a temptation to adopt the most lurid interpretation but, as I said a moment ago, there are many reasons why children go missing. There is no basis on which to make generalisations as to those reasons.

To read this very long question and answer session in full see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-01-23/debates/2BEF91B6-389B-46E4-86EF-C93331267E9C/ChildrenSeekingAsylumSafeguarding>

Asylum Seekers: Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran and Sudan

The Lord Bishop of Durham: To ask His Majesty's Government what forecast they have made of the number of people from Syria, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, and Sudan who will travel to the United Kingdom via a safe route in order to seek asylum in 2023.

Reply from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord

Murray of Blidworth): The United Kingdom welcomes vulnerable people in need of protection through our relocation and resettlement schemes. The number of people coming to the UK via safe and legal routes depends on many factors, including local authorities' capacity to support them and the extent to which community sponsorship continues to thrive. There is no explicit provision within our Immigration Rules for someone to be allowed to travel here to seek asylum or temporary refuge.

The Lord Bishop of Durham: ... We know from the latest available numbers that between September 2021 and September 2022, only close to 1,400 people were resettled to the UK through the specific safe routes of resettlement. This figure is 75% lower than in 2019, and the number of family reunion visas issued is 36% below the pre-pandemic figure. As the Minister knows, all the countries referred to in my Question have an asylum grant rate of over 80%, with Afghanistan, Syria and Eritrea sitting at over 97%. The number of individuals claiming asylum from these nations stood at more than 26,500. Now that the Government are deciding admissibility on the basis of arrival, will they establish further safe routes for high grant rate countries such as Sudan, Eritrea, Syria and Iran, to reduce the need for asylum seekers to travel irregularly?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The principle is clear in the refugee convention that people claiming asylum need to be in the country in which they seek refuge, having come directly from that country. While we sympathise with people in many difficult situations around the world, we are not bound to consider asylum claims from the large numbers of people overseas who might like to come here.

Lord German (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, we learned from the Home Secretary and her team giving evidence to the Home Affairs Select Committee that a hypothetical 16 year-old orphan from an African country such as Sudan or Eritrea fleeing war and religious persecution, with siblings legally in the United Kingdom, has no safe or legal route to seek refuge in the United Kingdom. Why has this happened?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: ... the principle is that you claim asylum in the first safe country you reach. ... depending on the country you are from, you could engage with the UNHCR; that would be a way of getting leave to enter the UK in order to put in an asylum claim, but clearly, there are some countries where that would not be possible.

Lord Clark of Windermere (Labour): My Lords, I am disappointed with the Minister's negative reply. If we take one country alone, Afghanistan, have the Minister and the Government forgotten that thousands upon thousands of Afghans, in the 40 years of war, sided with and fought for Britain there? Why are they neglecting them now and going back on their earlier promises?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Government certainly have not forgotten the people of Afghanistan. As the noble Lord will remember, Operation Pitting was the largest UK military evacuation since the Second World War, during which we evacuated about 15,000 individuals to the UK. In the year since the evacuation began on 14 August 2021, a further 6,000 arrived in the UK via neighbouring countries.

Lord Alton of Liverpool (Crossbench): My Lords, notwithstanding what the Minister has said about the importance of addressing the right reverend Prelate's Question about safe and legal routes, does he not accept that, with the UNHCR that he has just referenced saying that there are now between 75 million and 80 million people displaced in the world, this is a global problem that requires international solutions? Should the Government not be leading the way in drawing countries together to look at the root causes of the displacement, and trying to stop these terrible, perilous journeys in small boats, whether across the channel, the Aegean or the Mediterranean, leaving a trail of sorrow behind them?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: There is much in what the noble Lord says. It is sadly the truth that we cannot help everyone, with worldwide displacement now standing at around 100 million, not merely 70 million as the noble Lord suggested. The Government continue to offer safe and legal routes for those in need of protection. Since 2015, we have resettled more than 28,000 refugees from regions of conflict and instability through the global UK resettlement scheme, community sponsorship and the mandate schemes, under which the UNHCR will refer the most vulnerable refugees from across the globe for resettlement to the UK.

Viscount Stansgate (Labour): My Lords, whatever the outcome of Operation Pitting, it did leave behind people who should have been included. Do the Government remain committed to helping the families of interpreters who work for British military personnel and political leaders visiting the country, including the former Prime Minister, who were unable to get out and who remain in terrible danger in Afghanistan?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The answer to the noble Viscount's question is yes. The Afghan relocations and assistance policy, launched on 1 April 2021, offers relocation to eligible Afghan citizens who worked for or with the United Kingdom Government locally in Afghanistan. The ARAP recognises the service of eligible Afghan citizens and the risks arising to them and their dependent family members as a result of their work.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (Crossbench): My Lords, can the Minister tell the House what provision in the refugee convention permits us to refuse to even consider someone who arrives on our shores seeking asylum?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The provision is Article 31(1).

Lord Coaker (Labour): My Lords, the asylum system is in chaos: 140,000 asylum seekers, and rising, are waiting for an initial decision; 90,000 have been waiting for over six months, and more than 40,000 for between one and three years. It is also reported that 725 claimants, of whom 155 are children, have been waiting over five years. How many of these cases apply to these five countries? Will the Minister join the Prime Minister in promising to clear the asylum backlog by the end of the year? It is action we need, not gimmicks.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The noble Lord is entirely right: it is action we need, and I can certainly recommit to the ambition, outlined by the Prime Minister in his statement, to clear the backlog. As to the various countries within the backlog, those statistics exist but I am afraid I do not have them to hand, so I will need to write to the noble Lord about them.

Lord Bellingham (Conservative): My Lords, can the Minister say something about the Government scheme for allowing direct applications from people in Syrian refugee camps? This is surely a far better route than the much more perilous one used by those trying to come here illegally.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: I entirely agree with my noble friend and clearly, that is the purpose of the UK resettlement scheme. Perhaps it would assist if I outlined that between 2015 and September 2022, we offered a place to nearly 450,000 men, women and children seeking entry via safe and legal routes, including those from Syria but also those from Afghanistan, Ukraine and Hong Kong, as well as the family members of refugees.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (Liberal Democrat): My Lords, when the folk arrive here, they are given an ASPEN card, which did provide £35 a week for their subsistence. Has that gone up with inflation? What is the value now? Is it still £35, as it was 10 or 15 years ago, or has it gone up?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: I can certainly provide detailed information on the asylum support provisions. Clearly, those in hotels have their accommodation provided for them and are provided with food and a small amount of money for expenditure on essentials. Those in dispersal accommodation receive

a financial sum, which has changed with inflation. I will be able to provide the noble Lord with the precise statistics by letter; I am afraid this is quite a long way from the topic of the Question.

Lord Singh of Wimbledon (Crossbench): My Lords, the UK says that asylum seekers must go to the first safe country, but the United Nations commissioner for human rights says that that is incorrect. Would the Minister like to comment?

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Government's position is clear: Article 31 requires that a person comes directly to the first safe country and is therefore obliged to claim in that country. Indeed, it is upon that principle that the European Union agreed the Dublin provisions about the return of asylum seekers to places where they made their first claim.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-01-24/debates/4C58C4CC-23F9-415D-B840-7C24C7F4A38B/AsylumSeekersSyriaAfghanistanEritrealIranAndSudan>

The Home Affairs Committee evidence session referred to above can be read at
<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/11600/html/>

Article 31(1) of the Refugee Convention, referred to above, can be read on pp201-2 of
<https://www.unhcr.org/4ca34be29.pdf>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Asylum: Rwanda

Lord Rosser (Labour) [HL4736] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the UK–Rwanda Migration and Economic Development Partnership on (1) the reduction in the number of individuals illegally trafficked to the UK, and (2) the reduction in the number of criminal gangs involved in human trafficking; and whether they have annual targets for each of these.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office is committed to ending people smuggling. The Migration and Economic Development Partnership (MEDP) between the UK and Rwanda is part of a suite of measures aimed at dismantling the business model of organised crime gangs.

The Secretary of State has received advice on all aspects of the policy and its impact. This will include evidence of reduced people smuggling and attempted re-entry.

To date, legal proceedings have prevented relocations to Rwanda taking place. Until relocations are operational, we would not expect to achieve any sustained deterrent impact from the policy.

Once operational, we will carefully monitor the impacts of the MEDP.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4736>

The following two questions both received the same answer

Asylum: Rwanda

Lord Rosser (Labour) [HL4737] To ask His Majesty's Government whether under their current immigration policy Ukrainian nationals could be removed from the UK to Rwanda for Rwanda to assess asylum applications.

Lord Rosser (Labour) [HL4738] To ask His Majesty's Government whether under their current immigration policy (1) Afghan nationals, and (2) Syrian nationals, could be removed from the UK to Rwanda for Rwanda to assess those individuals' asylum applications.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: With the exception of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, any individual who has arrived in the UK through

dangerous, illegal and unnecessary methods since 1 January 2022 may be considered for relocation to Rwanda. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, and nobody will be relocated if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them. Everyone considered for relocation will be screened and have access to legal advice.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4737>

and

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4738>

Asylum: Rwanda

Baroness Lister of Burtersett (Labour) [HL4582] To ask His Majesty's Government, following the comments by Lord Murray of Blidworth on 20 December 2022 (HL Deb cols 1072 and 1076), and by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 21 July 2022 (HL Deb col 2122), whether there are any circumstances in which unaccompanied asylum-seeking children could be removed to Rwanda; and if so, what they are.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Unaccompanied asylum-seeking children will not be considered for relocation to Rwanda under the MEDP, in line with our inadmissibility guidance.

No one undergoing an age assessment, or legally challenging the outcome of an assessment, will be relocated until that process is fully concluded.

Everyone considered for relocation will be screened and have access to legal advice. Decisions will be taken on a case-by-case basis, and nobody will be relocated if it is unsafe or inappropriate for them.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4582>

The comments referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-12-20/debates/F7CBAA55-F538-4574-82C8-572B9EDBC0D4/MigrationAndEconomicDevelopmentPartnershipWithRwanda#contribution-9EE19AFA-EF39-48AF-94B5-33CBCD307398>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-12-20/debates/F7CBAA55-F538-4574-82C8-572B9EDBC0D4/MigrationAndEconomicDevelopmentPartnershipWithRwanda#contribution-3FBD5CB5-B222-4F7E-8809-B255D66B71C3>

and

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2022-12-20/debates/F7CBAA55-F538-4574-82C8-572B9EDBC0D4/MigrationAndEconomicDevelopmentPartnershipWithRwanda#contribution-3FBD5CB5-B222-4F7E-8809-B255D66B71C3>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Channel Migrants

Undocumented Migrants: English Channel

Lord Rosser (Labour) [HL4733] To ask His Majesty's Government further to the Written Answer by Lord Murray of Blidworth on 19 December 2022 (HL4032) stating "there have been fatalities, including the Purfleet incident in 2019 when 39 Vietnamese nationals sadly lost their lives", how many such fatalities took place in each year since 2010.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: Official records of deaths are not held on any data base within Border Force.

These dangerous concealments are facilitated by people smugglers, putting profits above the lives of vulnerable people. The Government is determined to prevent further loss of life and break the business model of dangerous criminal people smugglers.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4733>

The answer referred to above can be read at

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2022-12-05/hl4032>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Afghanistan

Refugees: Afghanistan

The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative) [HL4720] To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made over the last 12 months on the Home Office's Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) towards their pledge to resettle up to 20,000 Afghans, including an aim to settle 5,000 people in its first year; how many Afghans have been resettled in the UK through the scheme since 6 January 2022, particularly those in Pathway 3; and what information they hold on the situation of those eligible at-risk Afghans who have applied under the scheme, but who have not yet been resettled.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: To date the government has issued Indefinite Leave to Remain to over 6,300 individuals under Pathway 1 of the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme (ACRS) and we continue to welcome arrivals under this pathway who were called forward during the evacuation but were not able to travel.

Since September 2022, we are pleased to have welcomed the first families under Pathway 2.

Under Pathway 3, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office received over 11,400 Expressions of Interest (EOIs). They are in the process of assessing their eligibility and have started notifying individuals of the outcome.

We recognise that there are many vulnerable people who remain in Afghanistan and the wider region, including those who submitted EOIs under Pathway 3. We are working hard to progress cases and to deliver on our commitment to offer up to 1,500 resettlement places in the first phase of Pathway 3.

Work is underway to assure information relating to all the individuals relocated under the ARAP and ACRS on case working systems. Once this work concludes, statistics on both schemes - including the number of people resettled under each scheme - will be included in the published Immigration Statistics.

More information on arrivals is available:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data/afghan-resettlement-programme-operational-data>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4720>

Information about the Afghan Relocations Assistance Policy, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy/afghan-relocations-and-assistance-policy-information-and-guidance>

Information about the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/afghan-citizens-resettlement-scheme>

Information about Pathways 2 and 3, referred to above, can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-06-13/debates/2206135000016/AfghanCitizensResettlementSchemeLaunchPathways2And3>

UK Parliament, House of Lords Written Answers: Other Immigration and Asylum

Migrants: Compensation

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4567] To ask His Majesty's Government what is the backlog of applications for full compensation following mistakes by the Home Office regarding migration or residence status.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Windrush Compensation Scheme was launched in April 2019 to compensate members of the Windrush generation and their families for the losses and impacts they have suffered as a result of being unable to demonstrate their lawful immigration status in the United Kingdom.

The current number of claims that are awaiting a decision at all stages of the initial consideration process, referred to as 'Work in Progress' (WIP), for the Windrush Compensation Scheme is published in the Transparency Data release. The latest data was published on 13th January 2023 and can be found at: [Windrush Compensation Scheme data: November 2022](#). The relevant page is *WCS 05 - Total WIP and Age*.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4567>

Immigration: Windrush Generation

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4564] To ask His Majesty's Government how many individuals have received payments from the Emergency Hardship Fund since it was set up following the Windrush scandal.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: In December 2018, the Home Office established an Urgent and Exceptional Payments (UEP) process under the Windrush Compensation Scheme. The policy has a very clear purpose to provide support to members of the Windrush cohort who have an urgent and exceptional need, where this cannot wait for the full compensation scheme decision.

The Home Office are committed to providing support as quickly as possible where it is needed. The number of individuals issued with an Urgent and Exceptional Payment is not currently published, the Home Office are working to publish that information shortly. The total value of Urgent and Exceptional Payments approved is published and as at the end of November 2022, the total amount paid out was £239,836.46.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4564>

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

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4566] To ask His Majesty's Government how many of the 30 recommendations made by the Windrush Lessons Learned Commission have so far been implemented.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: In her report last year, Wendy Williams concluded that 21 of her recommendations have been met or partially met. She acknowledged that the scale of the challenge she set the department was significant and that change on this scale takes time.

Since then, we have made further progress in delivering against Wendy Williams' recommendations, including:

- In October 2022, the Home Office established the Office for the Independent Examiner of Complaints, and Moiram Ali was appointed as the Independent Examiner, subsequent to a public appointment recruitment process.
- The Home Office has held over 200 engagement and outreach events

across the country and the Windrush Help Teams have attended over 120 one-to-one surgeries to help people apply for documentation.

- As of the end of October 2022, the Home Office had paid out or offered £59.58m in compensation to Windrush victims. In June 2022, the 'Serving Diverse Communities – Acting on Our Values' learning package was launched across the Home Office, this started with Recommendations 24 has been designed and is in the process of final review prior to implementation.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4566>

The Lessons Learned 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

The Lessons Learned Review Progress Update referred to above can be read at

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065012/14.12_HO_Windrush_Lessons_Learned_Review_Accessible_6_.pdf

Windrush Lessons Learned Review

The Lord Bishop of Southwark [HL4746] To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the statement by the Secretary of State for the Home Department on 23 June 2020 (HC Deb col. 1193), what progress they have made towards implementing recommendations 9 and 10 of the Windrush Lessons Learned Review (HC 93) to create a Migrants Commissioner and to give more powers to the Independent Chief Inspector for Borders and Immigration.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: In March 2020 the then Home Secretary published Wendy Williams's Windrush Lessons Learned Review, which set out 30 recommendations for the department.

A range of options have been considered for delivering these recommendations, which have been discussed with external stakeholders. The Home Office is taking steps to be more transparent to ensure that the department is as open as possible to all types of scrutiny, both internal and external.

We committed to working with the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) to deliver an internal review of our complaint's procedures, and we delivered by establishing the Office for the Independent Examiner of Complaints on the 17 October 2022. Furthermore, the Home Office has established the Community and Stakeholder Engagement Hub which has supported colleagues across the Department to deliver on improvements to engagement. This includes improvements in terms of accessibility and involving stakeholders in innovative ways. The aim to keep improving our engagement practices is being embedded into the Department's transformation programme.

We will keep the Home Affairs Select Committee updated on the progress of all the Wendy Williams recommendations.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-12/hl4746>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-06-23/debates/3B28F83E-EAFA-49E1-BEE0-B4AAB31318D1/WindrushCompensationScheme>

The Lessons Learned 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

Migrants: Children

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4565] To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of children born and living in the UK who have no official

residence status; and what plans they have to address those cases.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: We do not hold data on the number of children born in the UK who do not have regularised status.

There are provisions within the Immigration Rules which allow children who have been born in the UK and are subject to immigration control to make an application and regularise their status. On 22 June 2022 the Private Life Rules were changed to make it easier for children and young adults in this position to gain settled status. When the parent or guardian is making an application to regularise their child's status, they can apply for a fee waiver where they are unable to afford the application fee, are destitute or at risk of imminent destitution, or their income is not sufficient to meet the needs of their child.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4565>

The Rules referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-private-life>

Asylum: Hotels

Lord Marlesford (Conservative) [HL4623] To ask His Majesty's Government how many hotels in England are under contract to provide accommodation for immigrants whose right to enter and remain in the UK are being assessed; and what is the total number of people who are currently accommodated in this way.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: On the 30 September 2022 there were 252 hotels used to accommodate 34,900 asylum seekers in receipt of asylum support in England.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-10/hl4623>

Asylum: Housing

Lord Marlesford (Conservative) [HL4724] To ask His Majesty's Government what consultation they undertake with (1) district councils, and (2) parish councils, in whose area it is proposed to house immigrants awaiting assessment on their right to enter and remain in the UK.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: The record number of people that have crossed the Channel in small boats in recent years has placed the Home Office's asylum support infrastructure and accommodation services under immense pressure. Under the Immigration & Asylum Act 1999, the Home Office has a statutory obligation to provide asylum seekers, who would otherwise be destitute, with accommodation and support whilst their claim is under consideration. Eligible asylum seekers are ordinarily placed in housing accommodation; however, the unprecedented number of small boat arrivals has forced the Home Office to consider alternative accommodation options to ensure that we meet our statutory obligations, which has resulted in the temporary use of hotels.

The use of hotels is a short term solution and we are working hard with Local Authorities and our accommodation providers to find more appropriate accommodation.

We have taken immediate steps to improve levels of engagement with key stakeholders including district and parish councils, around hotel accommodation sites to ensure colleagues are kept updated and better informed and to ensure we understand and act on any concerns appropriately and swiftly. These minimum standards will be reviewed regularly and, where possible, we will take steps to improve these standards.

We work closely with local authorities on full asylum dispersal to create a fairer distribution across the UK.

We do not routinely engage with members of the public regarding utilising hotels.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-10/hl4624>

Migrants: Detainees

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4568] To ask His Majesty's Government how many persons are currently held in immigration detention.

Lord Murray of Blidworth: The Home Office publishes numbers of detainees in the Immigration Statistics quarterly release on gov.uk. The most recent published total of people in detention was for the end of September 2022, when there were 2,077 detainees held.

For more information about how this data should be interpreted, please see the 'About the statistics' section of the release.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4568>

Deportation

Lord Hylton (Crossbench) [HL4563] To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the deportation of (1) convicted offenders, or (2) overstayers, to countries with no, or limited, health and welfare systems, is likely to result in destitution for those individuals.

Reply from Lord Murray of Blidworth: All individuals subject to removal from the UK are provided with the opportunity to raise claims, including medical claims, which are fully considered and determined before they are returned to their country of nationality or another country.

Claims are carefully assessed on their individual merits and against a background of published country information notes and policy, which are available on Gov.UK. The Home Office provides financial assistance through the Facilitated Return and Assisted Voluntary Return schemes to support individuals to return to their home country.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-09/hl4563>

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Diane Abbott (Labour) [790] **Disappearance of migrant children from asylum hotels** – That this House notes concerning reports of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children disappearing from hotels; expresses concern for the welfare of these children; notes that several reports suggest that these children are being targeted and trafficked; further notes that in one example, 136 children went missing from one hotel in 18 months and that 79 of these children remain unaccounted for; and calls for the Home Office to immediately review safeguarding arrangements for asylum-seeking children in hotels.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60513>

Press Release

Home Secretary signals ongoing commitment to Windrush generation

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-signals-ongoing-commitment-to-windrush-generation>

New Publications

House of Commons Library Briefing: Safe and legal routes to the UK for people seeking protection

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9630/CBP-9630.pdf>

House of Commons Library Briefing: UK immigration routes for Afghan nationals
<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9307/CBP-9307.pdf>

House of Commons Library Briefing: Debate on an e-petition relating to immigration fees for healthcare workers
<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2023-0011/CDP-2023-0011.pdf>

House of Lords Library Briefing: UK-Rwanda asylum agreement: Why is it a memorandum of understanding and not a treaty?
<https://lordslibrary.parliament.uk/uk-rwanda-asylum-agreement-why-is-it-a-memorandum-of-understanding-and-not-a-treaty/>

The changing picture of long-term international migration, England and Wales: Census 2021
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/internationalmigration/articles/thechangingpictureoflongterminternationalmigrationenglandandwales/census2021/pdf>

Preconception health among migrant women in England
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1130097/Preconception_health_among_migrant_women_in_England_2018_to_2019.ods

Windrush Compensation Scheme data: December 2022
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1130687/WCS_Data_-_December_2022.ods

Weekly number of migrants detected in small boats - 16 January to 22 January 2023
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/migrants-detected-crossing-the-english-channel-in-small-boats-weekly-data/weekly-number-of-migrants-detected-in-small-boats-16-january-to-22-january-2023>

News: Rwanda Refugee Policy

Children could be deported to Rwanda with families over smuggling fears
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/01/25/children-could-deported-rwanda-families-smuggling-fears/>

Nearly half of asylum seekers facing removal from UK to Rwanda are married
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/25/nearly-half-asylum-seekers-facing-removal-rwanda-married>

Asylum-seeking families with children could face removal from UK to Rwanda
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/25/asylum-seeking-families-children-face-removal-uk-rwanda>

News: Channel Migrants

Migrant crisis: 65,000 'will cross Channel in small boats this year'
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/migrant-crisis-65-000-will-cross-channel-in-small-boats-this-year-6mtdgknnng>

Committee visits Calais to see Channel crossings sites

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/83/home-affairs-committee/news/175647/committee-visits-calais-to-see-channel-crossings-sites/>

News: Ukraine

'My car has given me a feeling of security and freedom' says Ukrainian woman as UK law leaves many fleeing war faced with giving up their vehicle

<https://www.scotsman.com/news/world/my-car-has-given-me-a-feeling-of-security-and-freedom-says-ukrainian-woman-as-uk-law-leaves-many-fleeing-war-faced-with-giving-up-their-vehicle-3996719>

News: Other Immigration and Asylum

Windrush report: Suella Braverman scraps three recommendations

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-64414451>

Windrush inquiry head disappointed as Braverman drops 'crucial' measures

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/26/windrush-inquiry-head-wendy-williams-disappointed-suella-braverman-drops-crucial-measures>

Suella Braverman faces backlash after rejecting Windrush reforms

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2023/01/27/suella-braverman-faces-backlash-rejecting-windrush-reforms/>

Where is the justice, Suella Braverman, for me and the others whose lives were ruined by the Windrush scandal?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jan/27/justice-suella-braverman-windrush-scandal-broken-pledges>

Brighton council seeks urgent talks over missing migrant children

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-sussex-64378482>

Brighton Council writes to immigration minister over missing children

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-sussex-64426953>

About 200 asylum-seeking children have gone missing, says minister

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-64389249>

UK minister admits 200 asylum-seeking children have gone missing

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/23/uk-minister-admits-200-asylum-seeking-children-missing-home-office>

Charities urge PM to stop using hotels to house migrant children

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-64407850>

One in four children vanish from asylum seekers' hotel

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/criminal-gangs-take-children-from-asylum-seekers-hotel-7cpz7qt8k>

Home Office accused of ‘dereliction of duty’ over missing child asylum seekers
<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/jan/24/home-office-accused-of-dereliction-of-duty-over-missing-asylum-seeking-children>

Young asylum seekers going missing: unsafe spaces
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2023/jan/23/the-guardian-view-on-young-asylum-seekers-going-missing-unsafe-spaces>

Tory MP accused of ‘new low’ in comment over missing asylum children
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/tory-mp-pmq-jonathan-gullis-asylum-b2269698.html>

Child migrants racially abused and threatened with violence at Home Office hotel
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/28/child-migrants-racially-abused-home-office-hotel-brighton-criminals>

What is behind the row over asylum hotels?
<https://www.independent.co.uk/independentpremium/politics-explained/asylum-hotels-home-office-suella-braverman-refugees-b2268435.html>

Tackling the crisis in the asylum system
<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/blog/tackling-the-crisis-in-the-asylum-system>

Asylum family left freezing in overnight wait for housing
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-glasgow-west-64391026>

Glasgow asylum family homeless after 'Home Office failures'
<https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/23273949.glasgow-asylum-family-homeless-home-office-failures/>

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Equality

Scottish Parliament Written Answers

NHS Scotland: Inclusivity

Craig Hoy (Conservative) [S6W-13535] To ask the Scottish Government what it has done to build on the work outlined in its *Tackling race inequality in employment: statement* in order to ensure that NHS Scotland has equitable and inclusive recruitment, retention, representation and promotion practices.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: ‘A Fairer Scotland for All: An Anti-Racist Employment Strategy was published on 9 December 2022 and sets out the actions the Scottish Government will take and how it will work with employers to help make Scotland’s workplaces more diverse, fair and inclusive.

The strategy will support NHS and other employers to:

- improve their collection of workforce data, including reporting their pay gap, and take action on the findings
- take an anti-racist approach to remove barriers in their recruitment, retention and progression practices to improve representation of workers
- drive cultural, attitudinal and organisational change through building an understanding of the impact of institutional racism and the processes and

practices in an organisation that lead to the unfair treatment of people on the basis of race.'

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-13535>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/tackling-race-inequality-in-employment-statement/>

The Strategy referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-anti-racist-employment-strategy/>

NHS Scotland: Minority Ethnic Staff

Craig Hoy (Conservative) [S6W-13507] To ask the Scottish Government what work it has undertaken with the NHS National Ethnic Minority Forum (EMF) to develop outcomes to support staff from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: The NHS National Ethnic Minority Forum (EMF) was established in April 2021 and aims amplify the voices of ethnic minority staff across the health service and tackle issues of systemic racism. EMF members also use their expertise to shape policy and practice in areas such as the Leading to Change Programme. We continue to work closely with the EMF on their priorities for 2023-24:

- the development of a 'How to Talk about Race' in the workplace guide
- considering support for staff reporting incidents of racial abuse/harassment
- supporting the development of anti-racism training resources for staff (an action that Scottish Government are taking forward).

Finally, I had the pleasure of attending an in-person meeting of the EMF on the 5 th October 2022. I made it clear that I will continue to actively support the chair and members in delivering their aims objectives.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-13507>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Oral Answers

Workplace Inequality: Gender and Race

Carol Monaghan (SNP) [903305] What steps the Government are taking to tackle (a) gender and (b) racial inequality in the workplace.

Stuart c McDonald (SNP) [903317] What steps the Government are taking to tackle (a) gender and (b) racial inequality in the workplace.

Reply from the Minister for Women and Equalities (Kemi Badenoch): As part of our strategy to tackle violence against women and girls, we have committed to strengthen the protections against sexual harassment in the workplace. ... Furthermore, in our landmark inclusive Britain strategy we committed to publishing guidance on ethnicity pay reporting for employers. That will be published soon and will support employers to identify and tackle unfair pay gaps in their workforces. ...

Stuart C McDonald: The Scottish Government are encouraging employers to report on ethnicity pay gaps—a policy supported by the Women and Equalities Committee—but the Scottish Government do not have the powers to enforce that policy. Is the Minister willing to have a conversation about the transfer of those powers, so that we can all learn lessons from the results?

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: We have no plans to devolve equal opportunities policy. Quite a lot of work is being done on ethnicity pay reporting. It should not be made mandatory. It is different from gender pay gap reporting, because it covers more than two separate categories. ... we will publish guidance for those

companies that want to carry out ethnicity pay reporting in due course. ...

Rehman Chishti (Conservative): On racial inequality and discrimination, a previous Home Office report looked at hate crime in terms of Islamophobia and antisemitism. The statistics and figures were absolutely appalling, with a high number of incidents. The Government removed the independent adviser on Islamophobia, Qari Asim. He apparently did not have any terms of reference for two years. Given the Government's commitment to tackle Islamophobia and intolerance, what is their strategy?

Reply from Kemi Badenoch: The Government have a strategy to tackle anti-Muslim hatred. I recommend that my hon. Friend raises this issue with the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, who is responsible for that portfolio as part of the communities strategy. ...

To read the full question and answer session see

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-25/debates/00990F30-6025-4DEC-968B-CBE3B9D1CBD6/WorkplaceInequalityGenderAndRace>

Inclusive Britain, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-action-plan-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities/inclusive-britain-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>

The Home Office report referred to above can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022>

The strategy 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

and

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/748175/Hate_crime_refresh_2018_FINAL_WEB.PDF

Press Release

Equality watchdog highlights barriers faced by those challenging social care decisions in Scotland

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-work/news/equality-watchdog-highlights-barriers-faced-those-challenging-social-care-decisions>

New Publications

Challenging decisions about adult social care in Scotland

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-social-care-challenging-social-care-decisions-scotland.docx>

Challenging social care decisions: Survey of local authorities in Scotland

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-challenging-social-care-decisions-local-authority-survey-scotland.docx>

News

Donation for digital devices in Fife to support multi-cultural communities

<https://www.scotland.police.uk/what-s-happening/news/2023/january/donation-for-digital-devices-in-fife-to-support-multi-cultural-communities/>

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Racism, Religious Hatred, and Discrimination

Scottish Parliament Debate

Holocaust Memorial Day 2023

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=14115&i=127886#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Oral Answer

Holocaust Memorial Day

Fergus Ewing (SNP): Tomorrow, 27 January, is Holocaust memorial day, which marks the anniversary of the liberation, 78 years ago, of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest Nazi death camp. Does the First Minister support the great work that is done by the Holocaust Educational Trust, our schools and others in teaching successive generations of our children about the atrocities that saw millions of people murdered and slaughtered, including 6 million Jews and many other minorities? Does she agree that that educational work is essential, so that we never forget the lesson that atrocities and oppression must be fought, wheresoever they occur?

Reply from the First Minister (Nicola Sturgeon): I associate myself wholeheartedly with Fergus Ewing's comments on Holocaust memorial day. Indeed, throughout the year, I am very proud that the Scottish Government strongly supports the excellent work of the Holocaust Educational Trust to enable young people across Scotland to continue to learn from the atrocities of the Holocaust as we challenge the oppressions of the present.

I know that some members will have had the privilege this week of hearing directly from the Holocaust Educational Trust's young ambassadors about the impact of Holocaust education on their lives. That is a privilege that I have had in previous years. Indeed, I had the opportunity a few years ago to visit Auschwitz with the trust. That was one of the most profoundly moving experiences of my life.

I think that we all agree that education has a key role to play in building a society that actively challenges discrimination, hate, intolerance and prejudice in all its forms and advances equality. We should do that all year round. However, Holocaust memorial day gives us the opportunity every year to rededicate ourselves to that very important responsibility.

<https://archive2021.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/report.aspx?r=14115&i=127869#ScotParlOR>

Scottish Parliament Written Answer

NHS: Anti-Racist Objectives

Craig Hoy (Conservative) [S6W-13538] To ask the Scottish Government what progress

it has made on its work with partners to establish a series of meaningful anti-racist objectives and performance measures for NHS board chairs.

Reply from Humza Yousaf: The Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) was commissioned to identify examples of anti-racist performance objectives with proposed performance measures that could be used by public bodies across Scotland.

To date, seven NHS Board Chairs have been set anti-racist objectives and performance measures in accordance with CRER's commission. Following feedback, these objectives and performance measures are being reviewed, to ensure they fully align with the scrutiny and assurance roles of Board Chairs.

<https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-13538>

UK Parliament Debates

Holocaust Memorial Day

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2023-01-26/debates/70BC5F54-2219-4355-8BF6-93B81D821A3B/HolocaustMemorialDay>

International Holocaust Memorial Day

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2023-01-19/debates/D6F710F4-4FB5-401F-BD6A-DAED7F063486/InternationalHolocaustMemorialDay>

UK Parliament, House of Commons Written Answers

Social Media: Artificial Intelligence

Chi Onwurah (Labour) [125342] To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, if her Department will take steps to help prevent the coding of social media algorithms which create and increase racially prejudiced stereotypes.

Reply from Paul Scully: Under the Online Safety Bill, all platforms will need to undertake risk assessments for illegal content and content that is harmful to children. This will ensure they understand the risks associated with their services, including in relation to their algorithms. They will then need to put in place proportionate systems and processes to mitigate these risks.

Platforms will need to put in place systems and processes to prevent their users from encountering priority illegal content. This includes offences relating to racial hatred. Platforms that are likely to be accessed by children will also need to fulfil these duties in relation to harmful content and activity, including online abuse and harassment.

Where content does not meet the criminal threshold, Category 1 platforms will be required to provide all adult users with tools which provide them with greater control over the content that they see, if it is likely that users will encounter it on their service. These tools will specifically apply to content that is abusive, or incites hate, on the basis of race and religion. Should users decide to utilise these tools, they will either reduce the likelihood that they encounter such content, or will alert them to the nature of it.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-17/125342>

Judiciary: Racial Discrimination

Yasmin Qureshi (Labour) [126581] To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, with reference to recommendations of the report by the University of Manchester entitled Racial

Bias and the Bench, published in November 2022, if he will make it his policy to publish (a) the Judicial Executive Board report into judicial bullying and racism and (b) all reports and research commissioned by his Department into the judiciary.

Reply from Mike Freer: Under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the Lord Chief Justice (LCJ), as Head of the Judiciary of England and Wales has responsibility for the maintenance of appropriate arrangements for the welfare, training and guidance of the judiciary of England and Wales. The LCJ carries out these responsibilities through the Judicial Executive Board (JEB) and the Judges' Council. To protect the independence of the judiciary, it is a matter for the judiciary to determine which judiciary commissioned reports are published.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2023-01-18/126581>

The report referred to above can be read at

<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=64125>

Press Release

First Minister's Holocaust Memorial Day Message

<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFM/status/1618904220085747714>

New Publications

An updated study into the characteristics of police recorded hate crime in Scotland

<https://tinyurl.com/nhjk8dhv>

Hate Crime - 2020-21 – tables

<https://tinyurl.com/29audbjb>

Fearless Podcast: Hate Crime – I am Me

<https://youtu.be/ua1B5H2wjjg>

News

NHS racism shame: One in three Black and minority ethnic staff face discrimination or bullying

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/health/racism-nhs-bullying-report-b2268284.html>

antisemitism prominent in UK now - Holocaust survivor

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-64410584>

Antisemitism rising because of a lack of Holocaust education, survivor says

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/nazi-england-antisemitism-kindertransport-jewish-b2270198.html>

Don't stay silent over racial discrimination, warns Holocaust survivor who lost five family members

<https://www.independent.co.uk/tv/news/holocaust-memorial-day-discrimination-antisemitism-b2270563.html>

'Church part of the problem' in discrimination against Gypsy and Roma community
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/gypsy-england-london-union-chapel-highbury-b2270612.html>

UN: Parts of internet becoming 'toxic waste dumps' for hate
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/antonio-guterres-ap-memory-gilad-erdan-roma-b2270898.html>

'UK is institutionally racist', United Nations warns as ministers urged to act
<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/racism-uk-united-nations-africa-b2270640.html>

UK failing to address systemic racism against black people, warn UN experts
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/27/uk-government-failing-to-address-systemic-racism-against-black-people-un-working-group-of-experts-on-people-of-african-descent>

'The law is breaking children': black people in UK tell UN of daily injustices
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/jan/27/black-people-in-uk-tell-un-of-daily-injustices>

Holocaust Memorial Day: Testimonies of survivors must live on
<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/holocaust-memorial-day-testimonies-of-survivors-must-live-on-67cswrs5z>

"It's more than just hair"
<https://www.ohchr.org/en/stories/2023/01/its-more-just-hair>

'Racism makes it harder for me to find a place to rent'
<https://www.bbc.com/news/newsbeat-64305656>

Progress made since Cricket Scotland racism report
<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-scotland-64377235>

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Other Scottish Parliament and Government

Press Releases

Coronavirus (COVID-19): safer workplaces and public settings
<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-general-guidance-for-safer-workplaces/pages/signage-scheme/>

First Minister's Lunar New Year Message (video)
<https://twitter.com/ScotGovFM/status/1617250755596918786>

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Other UK Parliament and Government

UK Parliament Early Day Motion

Kirsten Oswald (SNP) [786] Farewell service for the Newton Mearns Synagogue – That this House notes that there is to be a farewell service for the Newton Mearns Synagogue in the Synagogue at Larchfield Court, Newton Mearns, East Renfrewshire on 22 January 2023; understands that this is a notable event, which will be marked by the attendance of Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis for this special service at the Synagogue; thanks all those whose hard work and dedication has been instrumental to the work of this Synagogue over the years; appreciates the very important place which this Synagogue has held at the heart of the local community and notes that there will be fondly held memories as farewells are said; understands that whilst the farewell service will represent the closing of one chapter, it heralds a new beginning too, with the merger of the Newton Mearns Synagogue and Giffnock Synagogue forming the new Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue; and wishes congregations of the Newton Mearns Synagogue and the newly formed Giffnock Newton Mearns Synagogue well for the future, playing a key role at the heart of the East Renfrewshire community.

<https://edm.parliament.uk/early-day-motion/60507>

Press Release

Committee urges Government not to proceed with the Bill of Rights Bill

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/93/human-rights-joint-committee/news/175586/committee-urges-government-not-to-proceed-with-the-bill-of-rights-bill/>

New Publication

House of Commons Library Briefing: The Secretary of State's veto and the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9705/CBP-9705.pdf>

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Cost of Living

Scottish Government Website

Help during the cost of living crisis

Most households are concerned about the cost of living, with worries about issues such as rent and mortgages, food and utility bills, energy costs, and debt.

In response, the Scottish Government has launched a new website that provides information to help people access support with

- Energy and Bills
- Benefits and Income
- Children and Families
- Debt and Money
- Health and Wellbeing

Your local council might be able to help if you need urgent help with money, food or fuel – contact the council for information.

<https://costofliving.campaign.gov.scot/>

Publications

UK Poverty 2023

https://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/default/files/jrf/uk_poverty_2023_-_the_essential_guide_to_understanding_poverty_in_the_uk_0_0.pdf

Talking about poverty: Lessons learnt

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/file/59562/download?token=4GY0xAdr&filetype=full-report>

News

“Heart-breaking and wrong” that a million children under 4 growing up in poverty - JRF

<https://www.jrf.org.uk/press/“heart-breaking-and-wrong”-million-children-under-4-growing-poverty-jrf>

‘The cost of living crisis left me living on bread and water’

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/christmas/2023/01/28/cost-living-crisis-left-living-bread-water/>

UK students skipping meals because of cost of living crisis

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2023/jan/26/uk-students-skipping-meals-because-of-cost-of-living-crisis>

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Other News

Spend a day volunteering to mark coronation, urges palace

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/jan/21/spend-a-day-volunteering-to-mark-coronation-urges-palace>

Bear Grylls leads charities backing the Big Help Out

<https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/bear-grylls-leads-charities-backing-the-big-help-out-g29t63zxi>

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Bills in Progress ** new or updated this week

Scottish Parliament

Charities (Regulation and Administration) (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/charities-regulation-and-administration-scotland-bill>

**** Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill**

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/gender-recognition-reform-scotland-bill>

House of Commons Library Briefing: The Secretary of State's veto and the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9705/CBP-9705.pdf>

UK Parliament

Asylum Seekers (Accommodation Eviction Procedures) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3257>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3263>

Asylum Seekers (Permission to Work) (No.2) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3304>

**** Bill of Rights Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3227>

Joint Committee on Human Rights: Legislative Scrutiny: Bill of Rights Bill

<https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/33649/documents/183913/default/>

Housing Standards (Refugees and Asylum Seekers) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3264>

Human Trafficking (Child Protection) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3248>

Human Trafficking (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3249>

Illegal Immigration (Offences) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3282>

**** Online Safety Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

House of Lords Library Briefing

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/LLN-2023-0005/LLN-2023-0005.pdf>

Refugees (Family Reunion) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3164>

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Consultations

** new or updated this week

**** closes this week!**

Charities Bill (closing date 3 February 2023)

Short survey

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/sjssc/7b1ddd3e/>

Detailed consultation

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/sjssc/a3212a34/>

Inquiry into Public Administration – Effective Scottish Government decision-making
(closing date 7 February 2023)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/finance/inquiry-into-public-administration/>

**** Disabled peoples' experience of the labour market** (closing date 16 February 2023)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/efw/disabled-employment-inquiry/>

Equality and Human Rights Commission Statutory Review (closing date 1 March 2023)

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/our-statutory-review>

Access to information rights in Scotland (closing date 14 March 2023)

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/access-information-rights-scotland-consultation/>

Electoral reform (closing date 15 March 2023)

<https://consult.gov.scot/constitution-and-cabinet/electoral-reform/>

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Job Opportunities

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

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Funding Opportunities

** new or updated this week

**** Cost-of-Living Support Scotland**

Application deadline not stated

National Lottery funding from £10,001 to £75,000 for projects to help support individuals, families and communities currently experiencing hardship as a result of the cost-of-living increases. The programme aims to fund activity that reduces the impact of, or prevents financial insecurity so that people have more resilience and are more able to identify ways to deal with the impact of increased cost of living in their lives, are able to shape activity in their community to address the increased cost-of-living, and have more access to support and services that will help them to deal with the increased cost of living. For information and to apply see

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/cost-of-living-support-fund>

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Events, Conferences, and Training

** new or updated this week

Introduction to Racial Literacy

6 February 2023 (Edinburgh (10.00–1.00))

23 February 2023 (online, 10.00–1.00)

9 March 2023 (online, 10.00–1.00)

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre, and Action on Prejudice training session to help youth workers explore and understand the impact of dominant identities, how people react to things they don't know, barriers to participation for young people, and what actions they can take to become more inclusive. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/mrxecjvy>

Closed doors: How to safety plan with South Asian women experiencing domestic abuse

28 February 2023 (online, 9.30–1.00)

Safe Lives, and Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre course to provide an overview of South Asian women's experiences of domestic abuse in Scotland. the impact of citizenship and immigration control on experiences of domestic abuse, including the effect of No Recourse to Public Funds, and safety planning, signposting, and referral pathways for South Asian Women. For information see <https://tinyurl.com/3cwpzvwH>

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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>

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/disclosure-types>

Volunteer Scotland Disclosure Services

<https://www.volunteerscotland.net/for-organisations/disclosure-services/>

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

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