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**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES**  
**(HANSARD)**

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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<b>Baroness Smith of Cluny</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland
<b>Baroness Smith of Malvern</b>	Minister of State, Department for Education
<b>Baroness Taylor of Stevenage</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
<b>Lord Timpson</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Justice
<b>Baroness Twycross</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture Media and Sport, Spokesperson, Cabinet Office, Whip
<b>Lord Vallance of Balham</b>	Minister of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
<b>Baroness Wheeler</b>	Deputy Chief Whip

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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 26 November 2024

## “Get Britain Working” White Paper

[HLWS249]

**Baroness Sherlock:** My Right Honourable Friend, the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (The Rt Hon Liz Kendall MP) has made the following Written Statement:

Today, the Government has published the Get Britain Working White Paper – bringing forward the biggest reforms to employment support in a generation and turning a department of welfare into a genuine department for work. This takes the first steps towards delivering our bold ambition of an 80% employment rate, through a decade of national renewal.

The UK is the only country in the G7 whose employment rate hasn't returned to pre-pandemic levels. We have a near record 2.8 million people out of work due to long-term sickness or disability. Almost a million young people are not in education, employment or training. Millions are stuck in low paid, insecure work.

To turn the page on this, nothing short of a fundamentally different approach is needed. Our White Paper brings in three major reforms to:

*1) Create a new jobs and careers service, overhauling Jobcentres from a one size fits all service that overwhelmingly focuses on administering benefits into a genuine public employment service providing personalised help and support.* We will bring Jobcentres together with the National Careers Service in England, beginning with a pathfinder early next year. We'll work closely with mayors and local leaders to ensure the new service is rooted in local communities and properly joined up with local health and skills support. We'll work closely with employers so it better meets their needs. We will also test, trial and develop a radically improved digital offer, using the latest technologies and AI to provide up to date information on jobs, skills and other support, and to free up work coach time. This is backed with £55m of initial funding.

*2) Establish a new Youth Guarantee in England to ensure every young person is earning or learning.* We will bring together all the different support for 18- to 21-year-olds under the leadership of Mayors and local areas to ensure all young people have access to education, training, and employment opportunities once they reach 18, and that no-one misses out. Backed with £45m of funding, we have announced eight trailblazers for our youth guarantee (in Liverpool City Region, the West Midlands, Tees Valley, East Midlands, Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, West of England, and 2 areas within Greater London). We have also announced a new national partnership to provide exciting new opportunities for young people in sports, arts and culture. We will invest in young people and give them the choices and chances they

deserve, but in return they will have a responsibility to take up the training or work that's on offer.

*3) Address the growing and unsustainable problem of people being out of work due to poor health.* We are already taking action to drive down waiting lists, including with targeted support at the 20 NHS Trusts with the highest economic inactivity. We're joining up employment and health support, for example by expanding Individual Placement Support and piloting new WorkWell services. However, we need to go much further and faster to tackle this issue.

To meet the scale of the challenge, we will devolve new funding, powers and responsibilities to tackle economic inactivity to Mayors and local areas because local leaders know their communities best. We will support all areas in England to produce local Get Britain Working Plans – joining up work, health and skills support. Today we have announced 8 trailblazers, backed by £125m of funding (in West Yorkshire, North East, South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Wales, York and North Yorkshire, and 2 Greater London areas). To kick start this work, we're funding a new supported employment programme called Connect to Work – backed by £115 million of initial funding for next year.

Alongside this action, we have announced an independent “Keep Britain Working” review. This will look at the role of UK employers and government in tackling health-related economic inactivity and creating and maintaining healthy workplaces. This will be led by the former Chair of John Lewis, Sir Charlie Mayfield and report in the Autumn.

And we will bring forward in the Spring a Green Paper setting out proposals on reforming the health and disability benefits system. This will ensure disabled people and those with health conditions have the same rights and opportunities as everybody else including the right to work, that they are treated with dignity and respect, and so that the system responds to the complex and fluctuating nature of the health conditions that so many people live with today. We will work closely with disabled people and representative organisations as we develop our proposals.

Many of the policy areas described in this White Paper are devolved in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. Where this is the case, the focus of this paper is on the actions the UK Government will take in England. The UK Government will work closely with the Devolved Governments to maximise positive outcomes and learning across the UK whilst respecting devolution settlements. Within Great Britain we will work with the Scottish and Welsh Government to ensure all aspects of our new approach to delivering employment support partner effectively with devolved provision, including but not limited to skills, health and careers as well as Scottish and Welsh Government-funded employment support.

To deliver change, we need action across government, which is why this White Paper has been developed with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State

for Education and with input from the Department for Health and Social Care and many other departments.

Our Get Britain Working White Paper brings forward the real reforms needed to help more people into better jobs, to give young people the chance of a better life, and to make sure our employment and social security system understands that a healthy nation and a healthy economy are two sides of the same coin. This is how we get Britain working again and how we get Britain growing again.

## Immigration Rules Changes

[HLWS247]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** My hon Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Citizenship (Seema Malhotra) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

My rt hon Friend the Home Secretary is today laying before the House a Statement of Changes in Immigration Rules.

### *Introduction of a Visa requirement on Colombia*

We are today introducing a visa requirement on all visitors from Colombia. Nationals of Colombia will also be required to obtain a Direct Airside Transit Visa if they intend to transit via the UK having booked travel to another country. The visa requirement comes into force at 15:00 GMT today.

Consequential to this, the planned change to allow nationals of Colombia to apply for an Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) from 27 November 2024, for travel to the UK from 8 January 2025, will no longer be introduced.

There will be a four-week, visa-free transition period for those who already hold confirmed bookings to the UK obtained on or before 15:00 GMT 26 November 2024 where arrival in the UK is no later than 15:00 GMT 24 December 2024.

Arrangements are in place so that Colombian nationals can apply for visas. We are publicising the changes so travellers are aware and can plan accordingly.

We are taking this action due to an increase in the number of Colombian nationals travelling to the UK for purposes other than those permitted under visitor rules since the visa requirement was lifted in November 2022. This has included a significant and sustained increase in asylum claims, and high rates of refusals at the border due to people travelling without the intention of visiting for a permitted purpose. This increase in asylum claims and refusals has added significantly to operational pressures at the border, resulting in frontline resource being diverted from other operational priorities.

The decision to introduce a visa requirement has been taken solely for migration and border security reasons. Our relationship with Colombia remains a strong and friendly one. Any decision to change a visa status is not taken lightly and we keep the border and immigration system under regular review to ensure it continues to work in the UK national interest.

### *Changes relating to the Ukraine Schemes*

Almost three years on from the start of the conflict, we continue to stand firm with the people of Ukraine and show that those who need our help are still warmly welcomed in the UK. We have extended that welcome to nearly 250,000 people who have come to the UK (or had their existing permission in the UK extended) under the Ukraine schemes. To provide future certainty, in February, the UK Government announced that Ukrainians with permission under one of the Ukraine Schemes would be able to extend their permission for a further 18 months through the creation of a new Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) Scheme. Applications are due to open in early 2025 and the Immigration Rules we lay today, will provide people with further certainty about their future by outlining the requirements of the new scheme.

The bespoke scheme will provide the same rights and entitlements to access work, benefits, healthcare, and education that Ukrainians have enjoyed under the existing schemes. The scheme will also be fee-free, with applications being accepted within the last 28-days of their current permission expiring – in line with most other visas routes – to ensure Ukrainians have sufficient time to apply to the scheme.

### *Ukraine Permission Extension (UPE) scheme opening*

The overarching principle of UPE is to provide continued sanctuary in the UK for those who still need it whilst the war in Ukraine continues. Under the principles of the Ukraine Schemes, UPE will continue our generous offer to Ukrainians, and their eligible family members, already here by ensuring it is open to those who have previously been granted permission in the UK under the Ukraine schemes (or with Leave Outside the Rules on the same basis), who meet the criteria to apply.

Applicants will also be required to have been resident in the UK (and Islands) and/or Ukraine since holding permission under the Ukraine Schemes.

Individuals should apply before their current permission expires. This is important, because like in all other visa routes, those who allow their permission to lapse will lose their rights to receive benefits, work, healthcare and rent. Work is underway to mitigate any risks associated with this and my department will continue to work closely with other departments, in particular with my Rt Hon friend the Secretary of State for Works and Pensions, to ensure people make an application in time.

Under UPE, children will need adequate care and accommodation arrangements in place in order to meet our safeguarding obligations. Where a child is not in the UK with their parent, we will seek parental consent to confirm their current living situation. In some cases, referral to the Local Authority where the child is living will be necessary.

We are also aware that different members of some family units under the Ukraine Schemes will currently have differing periods of permission, as they may have applied to come to the UK at different times due to their personal circumstances. Due to this, where a Ukrainian

child is resident in the UK with their parent and both hold permission under the Ukraine Schemes, the child's period of permission granted to them under UPE will be aligned with that of their parent. We believe there is merit in aligning with the parent in the best interests of the child.

#### *Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES) closure*

In May this year, we closed the Ukraine Extension Scheme (UES) to all individuals, except to UK-born children with a parent who has, or has had, Ukraine scheme permission who have still been able to apply under UES to regularise their permission in the UK. Upon the opening of the UPE scheme in early 2025, we will close the UES route completely and UK-born children will instead apply through UPE, though they will not need to have had prior permission. This will streamline the visa routes by channelling all in-country applications through UPE, removing any confusion that might otherwise be created by having two 'extension' schemes open at the same time. There is no change to the eligibility requirements for UK-born children in this regard.

#### *Ending use of open-ended permission to travel (PTT) letters*

Additionally, we are ending the use of permission to travel (PTT) letters on the Ukraine schemes. PTT letters were issued as part of an exceptional biometric deferral application process, implemented in response to the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, to allow those fleeing war to quickly reach sanctuary in the UK. However, this process closed to new applicants on 7 December 2023 and all Ukraine scheme applicants are now required to attend a Visa Application Centre (VAC) to provide their biometrics before travelling.

We have provided advanced notice to applicants who have been issued with a PTT letter but not yet travelled to the UK, to ensure that any individual who wishes to use it has the opportunity to do so before restrictions take effect. Any applicants who have not travelled to the UK when the restrictions take effect will be informed that their PTT letters can no longer be used. The Homes for Ukraine scheme will remain open and uncapped for those who wish to reapply for sanctuary in the UK. This change is therefore not a reduction of support for Ukraine and the UK government remains steadfast in its support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian people.

#### *Changes to Long Residence route*

We have always been clear that the Ukraine schemes provide temporary sanctuary in the UK only while the war in Ukraine remains ongoing, and that they are not a route to settlement in the UK. This is in line with the express wishes of the Ukrainian government, who will need their nationals to return to help rebuild the country when it is safe to do so.

To reflect this, we are making a minor change to the eligibility requirements for the Long Residence route to make clear that permission to stay in the UK under the Ukraine Schemes, including the new UPE, cannot be used to qualify for permission to stay or settlement under the

Long Residence route. This change brings the Rules in step with the already established policy position.

These changes to the Immigration Rules are being laid on 26 November 2024. For the changes that introduce a Visa requirement on Colombia, due to safeguarding the operation of the UK's immigration system, those changes will come into effect at 15:00 GMT on 26 November 2024.

The changes regarding the Long Residence route will come into effect on 18 December 2024; the changes to open the Ukraine Permission Extension Scheme and close the Ukraine Extension Scheme will come into effect on 4 February 2025 and; the changes to end the use of open-ended permission to travel letters will come into effect on 13 February 2025.

## Older People's Housing Taskforce

[HLWS245]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** My Honourable Friend the Minister of State for Housing and Planning (Matthew Pennycook MP) has today made the following statement:

The Government has today published the report of the Older People's Housing Taskforce. Copies will also be deposited in the House Library.

Concluding in May 2024, the Older People's Housing Taskforce undertook an assessment of public and private specialised and supported older people's housing, with a particular focus on the private market for those on middle incomes, and explored options for the provision of greater choice, quality and security of housing for older people. There is rightly significant national interest in the Taskforce's findings.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Chair of the Taskforce, Professor Julianne Meyer, and all its members for producing such a comprehensive, detailed and well-researched report. I would also like to express my gratitude to the many stakeholders who contributed to the work of the Taskforce.

The Government recognises the importance of increased supply and improving the housing options for older people in later life, and we will give careful consideration to the many recommendations set out in the report.

Providing a range of safe, suitable housing for older people in later life helps them live independently, safely and well, for longer. It can enhance the wellbeing of our senior citizens and reduce demand on adult social care services and the National Health Service. The Government has committed to building 1.5 million new homes over the next five years, including those to meet the needs of older people, and we will consider this issue further as we develop our long-term housing strategy.

We are determined to create a more diverse housing market; one that delivers homes quickly and responds to the needs of a range of communities. Through the recent consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework, we tested proposals to

promote the delivery of mixed-use sites, including housing designed for specific groups such as older people. We have also indicated our intention to consider further planning policy changes in the future as we move to produce a more streamlined and accessible suite of policies and we will ensure that considerations around older people's housing inform our approach.

We are also working with the Planning Advisory Service to meet the recommendation of the Taskforce for guidance to provide more clarity on how planning use classes apply to specialist Older People's Housing.

As the report also makes clear, older people's housing has not been immune to the challenges faced by other residential leaseholders across the country. The Government remain fully committed to providing homeowners with greater rights, powers and protections over their homes by quickly implementing the provisions of the Leasehold and Freehold Reform Act 2024.

We will also take further steps over the parliament to bring the feudal leasehold system to an end, including reinvigorating commonhold by modernising the legal framework as well as restricting the sale of new leasehold flats. We will consult on the best way to achieve this, and consider the needs of all parts of the housing market as we do this, including older people's housing.

The Government is committed to helping older people to live comfortably and independently at home for as long as possible. My Hon Friend, the Care Minister, Stephen Kinnock MP, and I thank the Taskforce for their important contribution to this agenda.

## Radioisotopes Shortage

[HLWS246]

**Baroness Merron:** My Hon friend the Minister of State for Health (Secondary Care) (Karin Smyth MP) has made the following Written Statement:

I am today updating the House that the temporary reduction in the production of radioisotopes has been resolved and that the supply of affected radioisotopes has returned to normal.

Throughout the shortage, my Department worked with industry, the NHS, in particular the radiopharmacy community, and the Devolved Governments to make best use of available stock ensuring critical patients were prioritised. Suppliers and NHS Trusts and hospitals displayed great flexibility throughout this incident. Thanks to this collaborative approach from all parts of the system, we were able to manage the unique challenges presented by radioisotope shortages and help ensure fair and equitable access for UK patients.

This will have been a challenging time for patients and their loved ones as well as healthcare professionals. Services are returning to normal, and the NHS are working to book in patients who have had scans delayed, whilst continuing to ensure patients with the most critical needs are prioritised.

My Department will continue to monitor supplies of the affected radioisotope.

## Regulation of NHS Managers: Consultation

[HLWS248]

**Baroness Merron:** My Rt Hon Friend the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care (Wes Streeting MP) has made the following statement:

Ensuring strong and accountable NHS leadership will be critical to fixing a broken NHS and delivering our Health Mission. We know the important role that high quality leadership plays in fostering a positive, compassionate, and transparent culture within the NHS while ensuring that local organisations are anchors of growth and opportunity in the areas that they serve.

Currently, NHS managers and leaders are not a regulated profession. Today, I am announcing that the Department of Health and Social Care is launching a 12-week consultation on options for the regulation of NHS managers, as part of a programme of work to meet the government's manifesto commitment to introduce professional standards for, and regulation of, NHS managers.

This issue, and the related question of the duty of candour, has been variously highlighted by the Kark review (2019), the Infected Blood Inquiry (2024) and the ongoing Thirlwall Inquiry into events at the Countess of Chester hospital.

It is essential that managers are also supported with the skills they need to deliver transformation and increase productivity in the NHS, which is why today's consultation forms part of a wider programme of leadership and management development work to equip the NHS with the leaders needed to deliver our 10 Year Plan. This includes establishing a College of Executive and Clinical Leadership to champion and enhance the support available to NHS leaders, and asking Sir Gordon Messenger, through the 10 Year Plan process, to look at how we can accelerate efforts to develop more systematic talent management in the NHS.

This consultation seeks views from all partners, including health and care organisations, regulators, professional bodies, health and care managers and senior leaders, the public, patients, and other health and care staff on the most effective way to strengthen oversight and accountability of NHS managers.

We are seeking views on:

- the type of regulation that may be most appropriate for managers
- which managers should be in scope for any future regulatory system
- what kind of body should exercise such a regulatory function
- what types of standards managers should be required to demonstrate as part of a future system of regulation

- the sequencing of the introduction of a regulatory regime for NHS managers, alongside work that is already being undertaken by NHS England to support their development
- a new professional duty of candour to cover NHS managers, and making managers accountable for responding to concerns about patient safety.

We are today also publishing a separate report on the findings of the department's call for evidence (launched in April 2024) on the existing statutory duty of candour on providers, which is a key step to fulfilling a

recommendation from the Infected Blood Inquiry. We will use the findings of our consultation on manager regulation, and the call for evidence, to help inform the final response to the department's review of the statutory duty of candour.

Views from partners will be critical in informing further policy decisions during the next phase of this work to support and improve NHS leadership. We will publish our findings and set out next steps following the closure of the consultation.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 26 November 2024

## Antimicrobials: Drug Resistance

Asked by *Lord Reid of Cardowan*

To ask His Majesty's Government what initiatives are being implemented in schools and universities to educate both healthcare professionals and the general public about the dangers of antimicrobial resistance. [HL2680]

**Baroness Merron:** The UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) works with partners to provide the evidence base and technical expertise to support best practice in infection prevention and control in health and care and settings, such as schools and prisons.

For schools, the UKHSA's e-Bug programme contributes to efforts to reduce infection, and strengthen stewardship, by providing free educational resources. Further information is available on the e-Bug website, in an online only format.

For health students, the UKHSA has updated the Antimicrobial prescribing and stewardship competency framework. The UKHSA also works with the British Society for Antimicrobial Chemotherapy's Keep Antibiotics Working resource group and the National Antimicrobial Pharmacists Education Group, to make educational material available for medical, dentistry, nursing, and pharmacy students. Further information is available on the Royal College of General Practitioners' website, in an online only format.

The UKHSA coordinates the national planning group which drives the direction of the World Antimicrobial Awareness Week (WAAW), and has updated resources on the GOV.UK website, which include a toolkit to support local WAAW and European Antibiotic Awareness Day campaigns. For professional audiences, the UKHSA produces the TARGET Antibiotics Toolkit, hosted on Royal College of General Practitioners' website. Further information is available on the toolkit at the Royal College of General Practitioners' website, in an online only format.

## Artificial Intelligence

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to help the UK become a hub for artificial intelligence development. [HL2481]

**Lord Vallance of Balham:** Artificial Intelligence (AI) is at the heart of the Government's plan to boost economic growth, transform public services, and boost living standards. The AI Opportunities Action Plan will set out how we achieve these goals, by securing the necessary infrastructure, talent and data access, and

setting out steps to support AI adoption across the economy.

In the King's Speech we committed to introducing new, binding requirements on the handful of companies developing the most advanced AI models which will support growth and innovation by ending uncertainty for AI developers, strengthening public trust and boosting business confidence in AI adoption.

## Bicycles: Lighting

Asked by *Lord Empey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of cyclists who cycle on roads in the dark without lights on their bicycles. [HL2453]

**Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill:** No assessment has been made of the number of cyclists who cycle on roads in the dark without lights on their bicycles. Rule 60 of The Highway Code states that cycles must be fitted with a red rear reflector and have white front and red rear lights lit at night. Cycling without proper lights at night is an offence, and enforcement of this is entirely a matter for the police.

## Biodiversity: International Cooperation

Asked by *Lord Redesdale*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the likelihood of the United Kingdom's nature restoration targets, plans and strategies achieving the mission of the 2022 Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework to halt and reverse nature loss by 2030. [HL2675]

Asked by *Lord Redesdale*

To ask His Majesty's Government what repercussions, if any, they would face for failing to comply with their obligations under the 2022 Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework. [HL2676]

**Baroness Hayman of Ullock:** The UK fully supported the adoption of the Kunming–Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and has already submitted to the Convention on Biological Diversity National Targets that are fully aligned with the Framework. The National Targets commit the UK to achieving each of the 23 global targets at home. We will publish the full UK National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) in due course.

Biodiversity policy in the UK is devolved, and the four nations of the UK and relevant Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies are working collaboratively to identify a range of strategies and policies at UK and national level to halt and reverse the loss of biodiversity. These will be updated as new and revised policies are introduced.



While the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is not legally binding, as a party to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UK is fully committed to playing our part in achieving the global goals and targets set out in the framework.

*Asked by Lord Redesdale*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the purpose and benefits of legally-binding targets in meeting their biodiversity restoration obligations and objectives. [HL2677]

**Baroness Hayman of Ullock:** This Government is committed to delivering the species abundance, species extinction, and habitat creation and restoration targets in England set under the Environment Act.

The biodiversity targets Impact Assessment assessed the benefits and costs associated with the achievement of the Environment Act biodiversity targets, compared to setting no targets.

Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate and this loss matters. The market does not fully account for the value of biodiversity to society and will, as a result, fail to adequately protect biodiversity without government intervention. Setting legally binding biodiversity targets has created a legal obligation to deliver policy outcomes which will drive action and behaviour change.

The total present value for the suite of biodiversity targets (habitat, species abundance, and species extinction) was estimated to be £28,576 million, with a net present social value (benefits less costs) of £20,862 million. These benefit estimates are likely to be conservative. A cautious approach was taken to avoid any double counting of the cultural benefits, and several benefits were not explicitly captured in the benefits assessment due to insufficient evidence and data limitations. This included flood regulation, water supply, sustainable food production and pollination.

## Census: Welsh Language

*Asked by Lord Wigley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what conversations they have had with the Welsh Government about seeking to include statistics on the number of people resident in England who can speak, read or write in the Welsh language in the 2031 census. [HL2487]

**Baroness Twycross:** The information requested falls under the remit of the UK Statistics Authority.

Please see the letter attached from the National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority.

The Rt Hon. the Lord Wigley  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW  
18 November 2024

Dear Lord Wigley,

As National Statistician and Chief Executive of the UK Statistics Authority, I am responding to your Parliamentary Question asking what conversations have been had with the Welsh Government about seeking to include statistics on the number of people resident in England who can speak, read or write in the Welsh language in the 2031 census (HL2487).

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is developing its population and migration statistics by further expanding the range of data sources and methods it uses. A key focus of the Future Population and Migration Statistics (FPMS) Programme is continuing to expand the use of administrative data to produce population and migration statistics, working across the public sector to maximise the statistical value of its data assets. The FPMS will create a sustainable statistics system that will be flexible and dynamic in how it responds to the emerging issues of the day. The UK Statistics Authority (the Authority) plans to publish a recommendation to government in the coming months.

Decisions about the 2031 census have not yet been made. As such, topics for inclusion in a 2031 census have not formed part of the ONS' discussions with the Welsh Government or other stakeholders. The FPMS programme has an ongoing programme of user needs engagement and carried out a consultation in 2023[1], which acknowledged the importance of collecting data on this topic. The consultation document categorised Welsh language skills as a topic for which further research is required into delivering statistics primarily based on administrative data. Welsh language is regarded as a priority characteristic within the FPMS programme with exploratory work on this topic ongoing. However, it is likely that data on Welsh language skills will predominantly come from sources relating to people resident in Wales.

In April 2023, the ONS and Welsh Government published a joint work plan on the coherence of Welsh language statistics produced from different sources[2]. The first project, to understand differences between Census 2021 and household survey estimates, has been completed. Other work outlined in the plan is ongoing, with the next priority looking at comparing Census 2021 with the Welsh School Census and other administrative sources. Welsh Government and ONS teams meet monthly to discuss progress and are arranging a secondment from Welsh Government to the ONS to support work on the planned projects. The ONS is also exploring the feasibility of producing Welsh language estimates through using existing administrative sources, with the involvement of Welsh Government.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Sir Ian Diamond

[1]

<https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

[2] <https://www.gov.wales/office-national-statistics-ans-and-welsh-government-joint-work-plan-coherence-welsh-language-statistics>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

UKSA Letter [PQHL2487 V2 (1).pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:  
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-11-12/HL2487>

## Charities: Public Sector

*Asked by Lord Glendonbrook*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to meet representatives of the charitable sector to discuss public service reform and how the sector can assist in the delivery of more efficient and cost-effective services. [HL2456]

**Baroness Twycross:** The recent announcement of the Covenant marks a new era of partnership between Government and civil society that will drive forward plans to foster closer collaboration in tackling some of society's most pressing issues.

DCMS is leading a period of engagement that started earlier in the autumn and runs until mid-December, ensuring broad representation across the full breadth of civil society. The robust engagement period will culminate in the publication of a final co-created Covenant to be published next year.

By listening to sector views, The Covenant seeks to establish a new relationship based on a set of principles that will enable a model of collaboration.

The Cabinet Office confirms that they are engaging with a range of sectors to discuss public sector reform, including the charitable sector, and look forward to future opportunities to hear views from a wide range of stakeholders.

*Asked by Lord Glendonbrook*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to introducing legislation to give charities a statutory role in delivering public services. [HL2458]

**Baroness Twycross:** There are no plans to introduce legislation surrounding the statutory role of the voluntary sector in public service delivery.

## Civil Servants: Recruitment

*Asked by Lord Kempell*

To ask His Majesty's Government what are the estimated costs of reversing the policy of the previous government to freeze Civil Service hiring and reduce staff numbers to pre-COVID-19 levels. [HL2468]

**Lord Livermore:** In a public statement on 2 October 2023, the previous Chancellor announced a cap on civil service numbers. This statement includes data on the

estimated financial impacts of this policy for the remainder of the SR21 Spending Review period, ending in March 2025. It can be accessed at GOV.UK.

The headcount cap announced by the previous administration was lifted in July in line with taking immediate action to stop all non-essential government consultancy spend in 2024-25 and to halve government spending on consultancy in future years. At Autumn Budget, the government committed to developing a strategic plan for a more efficient and effective civil service through phase two of the multi-year spending review.

## Climate Change

*Asked by Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the purpose and benefits of legally-binding climate change targets in meeting their climate change obligations and objectives; and what consideration they have given to providing (1) certainty to business and the public sector, (2) predictability to households and firms, and (3) investment incentives for low carbon and green technologies, in making their assessment. [HL2661]

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath:** The Climate Change Act made the UK the first country to introduce a legally binding, long-term emissions reduction target. This sets our commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2050 in law.

We are committed to our targets, and by setting carbon budgets 12 years ahead, we have given both business and the public certainty on carbon budgets. This has also provided a clear framework for the private sector to invest and innovate.

There is strong public support for climate action from Government. We will continue to work with all stakeholders including businesses, local authorities, civil society and investors to meet our net zero targets.

*Asked by Lord Foster of Bath*

To ask His Majesty's Government what repercussions, if any, they would face for failing to comply with their obligations under the Paris Agreement. [HL2662]

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath:** The Paris Agreement holds governments to account for their obligations through transparency and review mechanisms, which can result in reputational damage and international pressure for non-compliance. These mechanisms include the NDC Synthesis Report, which identifies progress made globally against Parties' Nationally Determined Contributions; the Enhanced Transparency Framework, which requires Parties to report transparently on action taken and progress made; and the Global Stocktake, which requires Parties to periodically take stock of the implementation of their mitigation commitments. Additionally, Parties must provide information necessary to track progress in

implementing and achieving their NDCs and participate in the facilitative multilateral consideration of progress, which involves a technical expert review. The Paris Agreement also has a mechanism to facilitate the implementation of and promote compliance with the Agreement. This is supported by an expert Committee which is non-adversarial and non-punitive.

### Community Ownership Fund

*Asked by Lord Kemsell*

To ask His Majesty's Government what are their plans for the future of the Community Ownership Fund. [HL2467]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** I refer the noble Lord to the answer given to Question UIN 11941 on 8 November

The Answer includes the following attached material:

PQ 11941 [11941.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-11-12/HL2467>

### Community Ownership Fund: Scotland

*Asked by Lord Cameron of Lochiel*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much outstanding funding is due for each Community Ownership Fund project in Scotland; and whether this funding will still be delivered to each project following the 2024 Autumn Budget. [HL2449]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** £16.7 million has been awarded to 46 projects in Scotland through the Community Ownership Fund. £10.4 million has been drawn down by projects to date.

A number of these projects have completed including The Heart of Newhaven in Edinburgh and the Y Centre in Perth. We will continue to provide funding to successful projects that have been announced.

### Conversion Therapy: Republic of Ireland

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Collins of Highbury on 29 October (HL1459), whether the government of the Republic of Ireland was one of the range of international counterparts or jurisdictions with which they recently discussed conversion practice policies. [HL2460]

**Lord Collins of Highbury:** As outlined in my previous answer of 29 October (HL 1459), officials have and will continue to engage with international and devolved governments as part of their work relating to conversion practices. Clearly, any country's decision on whether and how to legislate in this area depends on their legal framework and context.

We are currently working toward publication of the draft Bill later this session and will engage Parliamentarians across both Houses and key stakeholders on our proposals in further detail.

### Cultural Development Fund

*Asked by Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay*

To ask His Majesty's Government on what date Ministers were presented with the views of the panel judging bids made to Round 4 of the Cultural Development Fund; and when they plan to announce their decision about the successful bids. [HL2416]

**Baroness Twycross:** The Cultural Development Fund Round 4 will unlock local growth and productivity, increase access to creativity and culture, and regenerate communities. An open application process was launched earlier this year. Following review and assessment of applications - including by an expert advisory panel - advice was provided to ministers for consideration after summer recess. The final ministerial decision on awardees will be made public shortly.

### Development Aid: Religious Freedom

*Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration Ministers and the Supervisory Board of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office have given to ensuring that the impacts on freedom of religion and belief are taken into account when decisions on Official Development Assistance allocations are made; whether this is being considered as part of the review of the FCDO's equality impact assessments; and how they assess the FCDO's overall equalities performance. [HL2377]

**Lord Collins of Highbury:** The FCDO's development spending is used to achieve better development outcomes, with a strong focus on poverty reduction and accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals. UK support is targeted to where it is most needed and effective including, where appropriate, to minority religious or belief communities. Our Equalities Impact Unit raises capability across the FCDO on Equality Impact Assessments and the Public Sector Equality Duty so that decisions on ODA allocations and programmes give due regard to the potential impacts on protected characteristics. Through our annual Management Assurance Process, we assess performance across the FCDO on integrating equality considerations into our work.

### East-West Council

*Asked by Lord Empey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the remit of the East-West Council; what budget it has been allocated; how many times it has met; and who was invited to and attended these meetings. [HL2612]

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent:** The Government is committed to make progress on the commitments made in the Safeguarding the Union command paper. This includes taking steps to convene the second meeting of the East-West Council shortly, which had its inaugural meeting in March 2024.

The East-West Council will focus on trade promotion, connectivity, culture and skills, bringing together key representatives from government, business, education, trade, transport, and culture sectors - encouraging collaboration between ministers and industry experts - and membership will remain flexible.

### Employers' Contributions

*Asked by Lord Glendonbrook*

To ask His Majesty's Government, with reference to paragraph 2.40 of the Autumn Budget 2024, published on 30 October, what discussions they held with charities on the potential impact of increased National Insurance contributions on their sector. [HL2454]

*Asked by Lord Glendonbrook*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether an impact assessment report was done in advance of the increase in National Insurance contributions for the charity sector announced in the Autumn Statement on 30 October. [HL2455]

**Lord Livermore:** The Government recognises the important role charities play in our society, and has been working closely with the sector to develop a framework for a new Covenant between government and civil society.

To repair the public finances and help raise the revenue required to increase funding for public services, the government has taken the difficult decision to increase employer National Insurance.

The Government recognises the need to protect the smallest businesses and charities, which is why we have more than doubled the Employment Allowance to £10,500, meaning more than half of employers with NICs liabilities either gain or see no change next year. Charities will still be able to claim employer NICs reliefs including those for under 21s and under 25 apprentices, where eligible.

In terms of an impact assessment, HMRC recently published on 13 November a Tax Information and Impact Note that covers the employer NICs changes.

More broadly, on engagement with the sector, the Government takes into account all representations made ahead of the Budget, and meets with stakeholders on a regular basis.

Within the tax system, we provide support to charities through a range of reliefs and exemptions, including reliefs for charitable giving, with more than £6 billion in charitable reliefs provided to charities, CASCs and their donors in 2023 to 2024.

### Extracurricular Activities: Sheffield

*Asked by The Lord Bishop of Sheffield*

To ask His Majesty's Government what percentage of 11–18-year-olds in Sheffield currently have access to regular out of school activities, adventures away from home and opportunities to volunteer, in accordance with the goal set out in the National Youth Guarantee. [HL2434]

**Baroness Twycross:** This Government fully recognises the importance of youth services to help young people live safe and healthy lives, and we are committed to giving all young people the chance to reach their full potential. That is why this Government has launched the co-production of an ambitious new National Youth Strategy, which will be co-produced together with young people at the centre.

The DCMS Youth Participation Pilot Survey found that in the previous year, for young people aged 10-19 in Yorkshire and the Humber, 67% reported they had taken part in out of school activities (compared to 66% nationally), 39% reported they had been on an overnight stay (compared to 40% nationally), and 45% reported they had volunteered (compared to 44% nationally).

We do not hold the broken-down data requested for Sheffield.

### Financial Action Task Force

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask His Majesty's Government to what extent they consider countries' presence on the Financial Action Task Force's grey and black lists in assessing their suitability for (1) existing trade agreements or (2) trade agreement negotiations. [HL2482]

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch:** The UK plays an active role within the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and will continue to work with partners globally to tackle money laundering and the financing of terrorism. We will continue to seek provisions in our trade agreements that address the trade-distorting effects of corruption.

The Government is also committed to publishing a Trade Strategy in Spring 2025 that will be growth-based and future focused and will set out the government's approach to future trade policy including our overarching approach to trade levers such as trade agreements.

### Floating Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment Scheme

*Asked by Lord Kinnock*

To ask His Majesty's Government what progress they have made with implementing the Floating Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment Scheme to enable the development of port infrastructure for the successful

bids from Port Talbot and the Port of Cromarty Firth. [HL2668]

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath:** We are currently finalising grant terms and conditions with Port of Cromarty Firth, following the subsidy control process. We intend to submit a subsidy control assessment for ABP Port Talbot's proposal soon.

*Asked by Lord Kinnock*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) report into the proposed subsidy to the Cromarty Firth Port Authority under the Floating Offshore Wind Manufacturing Investment Scheme (FLOWMIS), published on 12 November, and when they expect to receive a report from the CMA in respect of the proposed FLOWMIS subsidy to Port Talbot. [HL2669]

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath:** We are considering the recommendations set out in the Competition and Markets Authority report on the Port of Cromarty Firth FLOWMIS grant proposal. We intend to submit a subsidy control assessment for ABP Port Talbot's proposal soon.

### Flood Control: Finance

*Asked by Baroness Eaton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what proportion of the Environment Agency's maintenance budget for flood defences has been spent on assets in (1) flood zone 1, (2) flood zone 2, (3) flood zone 3, and (4) flood zone 3b during the current financial year. [HL2392]

**Baroness Hayman of Ullock:** Whilst the Environment Agency (EA) has flood risk assets in many locations, many of these are in the river channels or are the line of defence between water and dry land. For this reason, flood zones do not provide the best measure of what flood risk areas the EA's assets protect.

The EA instead looks at assets based on their 'consequence system' which rates the impact of assets on people, property and land.

Below are the planned maintenance costs for April 2024 to March 2025 split over these flood risk consequences:

<i>Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Maintenance Allocation for 2024-25</i>	<i>Resource Grant-in-Aid (£m)</i>
Within High Consequence Systems	177
Within Medium Consequence Systems	21
Within Low Consequence Systems	9
Expenditure not limited to a specific location. (multiple locations or non-asset specific)	7
Total	214

These totals are based on work planned for 2024-25 and are subject to change. These Totals also include wider asset management costs that are integral to delivering and supporting works in these consequences areas.

### Gender Recognition

*Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Collins of Highbury on 7 November (HL2061), what is the timetable for the Office for Equality and Opportunity's review of the countries currently listed in the Gender Recognition (Approved Countries and Territories and Saving Provision) Order 2023. [HL2464]

*Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Collins of Highbury on 7 November (HL2061), whether they will take steps to assess the appropriateness of Germany remaining an approved country, given Germany's adoption of a policy of self-identification. [HL2465]

*Asked by Baroness Jenkin of Kennington*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Collins of Highbury on 7 November (HL2061), what guidance they are giving to public bodies on whether Gender Recognition Panels should grant a UK Gender Recognition Certificate to a German applicant in the absence of a medical report. [HL2466]

**Lord Collins of Highbury:** As I stated in the answer to HL2061, at the time of the commencement of The Gender Recognition (Approved Countries and Territories and Saving Provision) Order 2023, the international systems that were on the list were comparable to the UK's standard route to legal gender recognition.

We continue to work with our counterparts in the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to ensure that any changes internationally are monitored and noted for future updates. The list was last updated in April 2024, and the previous update was 2011. We are committed to more regularly updating the list of approved countries and territories when applying for gender recognition in the UK.

Regarding the Gender Recognition Panel, they have appropriate guidance and training in order to carry out the gender recognition process in alignment with the current law.

### Health Services: Migrants

*Asked by Lord Mackinlay of Richborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the Immigration Health Surcharge covers the full cost to the NHS of treatment for those required to pay it. [HL2471]

**Baroness Merron:** The Immigration Health Surcharge is set at an amount equivalent to the estimated average cost of providing healthcare to migrants. The estimate is based on the average cost of healthcare per head of the general population, adjusted to reflect that migrants use the National Health Service less than the average person. The current level of the Immigrant Health Surcharge is £1,035 per person per year, which reflects our latest assessment of the average cost.

### Hospitality Industry: Northern Ireland

*Asked by Lord Caine*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent on 13 November (HL2299), whether they will now answer the question put; namely, what assessment they made of the impact on jobs and profitability in the Northern Ireland hospitality sector of the announcements in the Budget of (1) the increase in the rate of employer national insurance contributions, and (2) the rise in the national minimum wage. [HL2547]

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent:** Northern Ireland has a thriving hospitality sector and this Government is committed to working with the NI Executive to support sustainable economic growth. The settlement for Northern Ireland in the Budget is the biggest real terms settlement since devolution.

To repair the £22bn black hole inherited by the Government and help raise the revenue required to increase funding for public services, the Government has taken the difficult decision to increase employer National Insurance. We recognise the need to protect the smallest employers which is why we have more than doubled the Employment Allowance to £10,500, meaning more than half of businesses with NICs liabilities either gain or see no change next year.

The Government has also been clear that we need to take difficult decisions to deliver long-term stability and growth. Stabilising the public finances is the only way to create long-term stability in which businesses can thrive.

The Government is adopting recommendations of the Low Pay Commission to increase the National Living Wage by 6.7% to £12.21 an hour, and increasing the National Minimum Wage for 18-20 year-olds by 16.3%. There are estimated to be almost 100,000 minimum wage workers in Northern Ireland in 2023.

The Government ask the independent and expert Low Pay Commission to monitor the effects of the National Living Wage.

### Local Government: Pension Funds

*Asked by Baroness Smith of Llanfaes*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether established pooling arrangements for Welsh local government pension schemes via the Wales Public Sector Pension Partnership will be affected by any

efforts to encourage or mandate the pooling of English local government pension funds. [HL2477]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** The Government is currently consulting on proposals relating to asset pooling in the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) England and Wales. The consultation text can be found at Gov.uk: [Local Government Pension Scheme \(England and Wales\): Fit for the future - GOV.UK](#).

The proposals in the consultation apply to both England and Wales. They would require the Wales Pension Partnership to make changes to their pooling model in order to meet the minimum standards for pooling, and for all LGPS assets to be under pool management. The consultation recognises that the Wales Pension Partnership operates within a devolved nation and that it may make sense for the Welsh LGPS administering authorities to continue to operate a separate asset pool.

### Motorcycles: Safety

*Asked by Baroness Pidgeon*

To ask His Majesty's Government, what plans they have to review the Compulsory Basic Training programme for motorcycles to improve road safety, given that in 2021, motorcycles comprised less than one per cent of traffic but accounted for 20 per cent of people killed or seriously injured on UK roads. [HL2476]

**Lord Hendy of Richmond Hill:** The Government takes road safety very seriously and reducing those killed and injured on our roads is a key priority. The Department for Transport (DfT) and the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) are currently considering policy options in this area.

### Non-crime Hate Incidents

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Hanson of Flint on 26 September (HL1034), why they do not centrally hold and collate details about the number of non-crime hate incidents. [HL2462]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** Any demands the Home Office makes for local police forces to collect data for central use much balance policy needs with the burden on forces.

### Offenders: Foreign Nationals

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans regularly to publish details of the number of foreign national offenders removed from the UK who have served a custodial sentence of at least 12 months; and if not, why not. [HL2461]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the

code of practice for statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, the resources required to compile the statistics, as well as quality and availability of data.

These reviews allow us to balance the production of our regular statistics whilst developing new statistics for future release.

## Prime Minister and Government Ministers: Correspondence

Asked by *Lord Cashman*

To ask the Leader of the House what is the maximum period within which members of the House of Lords can expect to receive answers to correspondence sent to the Prime Minister's Office. [HL2451]

Asked by *Lord Cashman*

To ask the Leader of the House what is the maximum period within which members of the House of Lords can expect to receive answers to correspondence sent to the office of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care. [HL2452]

**Baroness Smith of Basildon:** The guidance states that members of the House of Lords should expect answers to correspondence from Government Ministers and the Prime Minister within 20 working days. Where correspondence has to be transferred to another department for answer or advice it may take longer.

## Prisoners: Wales

Asked by *Lord Wigley*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many prisoners are currently held in prisons on indeterminate sentences whose home addresses are recorded as being in Wales. [HL2488]

**Lord Timpson:** As of 30 September 2024, excluding those recalled to prison following release, there were 342 prisoners serving indeterminate sentences who had a recorded home address in Wales.

As at 30 September 2024, there were a total 8,501 prisoners serving indeterminate sentences in custody in England and Wales, excluding those recalled to prison following release.

The figures have been drawn from administrative IT systems which, as with any large-scale recording system, are subject to possible errors with data entry and processing.

## Regional Planning and Development: Scotland

Asked by *Lord Cameron of Lochiel*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much outstanding funding is due for each Levelling Up Fund project in Scotland; and whether this funding will still

be delivered to each project following the 2024 Autumn Budget. [HL2447]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** £471 million has been awarded to 24 projects in Scotland through the Levelling Up Fund and to date £132 million has been released. At Autumn Budget 2024 we were pleased to confirm that funding for rounds 1 – 3 projects of the Levelling Up Fund have been confirmed.

The Autumn Budget 2024 confirmed that the government is minded to withdraw the funding for culture projects announced at Spring Budget 2024, which includes allocations to Dunfermline, Perth and the Victoria and Albert Museum Dundee levelling up culture projects. The consultation process with potential recipients is underway.

## Remand in Custody: Women

Asked by *Lord Bradley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what percentage of women remanded into custody in each of the past two years subsequently (1) were not sentenced, (2) received a community sentence, and (3) received a sentence of less than six months. [HL2691]

**Lord Timpson:** The Ministry of Justice publishes data on the remand status of defendants and subsequent outcomes at criminal courts in England and Wales in the Remands data tool, that can be downloaded from the Criminal Justice Statistics landing page here: [Criminal Justice Statistics Quarterly: December 2023](#)

The proportion of females remanded in custody and subsequently (1) not sentenced, (2) receiving community sentence, and (3) receiving a custodial sentence of less than six months at criminal courts is provided below.

*Proportion of outcomes for women remanded in custody at criminal courts, 2022 to 2023, England and Wales [note 1]*

Outcome	2022	2023
Not sentence [note 5]	14%	16%
Community sentence	13%	13%
Custodial sentence of less than six months	18%	20%

Source: Court Proceedings Database.

Notes:

[1] Every effort is made to ensure that the figures presented are accurate and complete. However, it is important to note that these data have been extracted from large administrative data systems generated by the courts. As a consequence, care should be taken to ensure data collection processes and their inevitable limitations are taken into account when those data are used.

[2] These figures are presented on a principal offence basis - i.e. reporting information relating to the most serious offence that a defendant was dealt with for. When a defendant has been found guilty of two or more offences it is the offence for which the heaviest penalty is imposed.

Where the same disposal is imposed for two or more offences, the offence selected is the offence for which the statutory maximum penalty is the most severe.

[3] These figures are presented on a principal disposal basis - i.e. reporting the most severe outcome issued for the offence.

[4] Defendants are reported against the most serious remand status recorded at a court hearing during their case (excluding the status recorded post-sentencing hearing, as this reflects the outcome of the sentence rather than a remand decision). A defendant's remand status may change several times throughout their court journey, however only the most serious status during that period is reported and this does not reflect the number of remand decisions made.

[5] 'Not sentenced' includes the following outcomes: Case discontinued or discharged at Magistrates' court; charge withdrawn or dismissed at Magistrates' court; case discontinued at Crown Court; other disposal without conviction; and acquitted at Crown Court.

### **Tuberculosis: Vaccination**

*Asked by Lord Mackinlay of Richborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the rise in cases of tuberculosis, whether they plan to implement nationwide tuberculosis vaccinations, instead of the current policy of vaccinating only high-risk regional areas only. [HL2472]

**Baroness Merron:** The Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG) immunisation to protect against tuberculosis (TB) is not routinely given as part of the National Health Service vaccination schedule. The BCG vaccine is only recommended for infants at greater risk of exposure to more serious childhood forms of the disease, and those people who are at greater risk through their work.

The BCG programme is based on the advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). In 2005 the JCVI advised that the BCG vaccine offer move from a universal school-based programme to a risk-based programme. This advice reflected the changing patterns in the epidemiology of the disease.

TB incidence in children in the United Kingdom was higher in 2005 than in 2022, when data on the incidence in children was last published. The JCVI's advice and current Government policy does not therefore support an expansion of the current BCG programme. The JCVI keeps its advice on all vaccination programmes under review and considers new evidence as it becomes available.

### **UK Community Renewal Fund: Scotland**

*Asked by Lord Cameron of Lochiel*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much outstanding funding is due for each Community Renewal Fund project in Scotland; and whether this

funding will still be delivered to each project following the 2024 Autumn Budget. [HL2448]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** Delivery activity under the UK Community Renewal Fund ended on 31 December 2022; and all funding has been paid to projects in Scotland.

### **UK Infrastructure Bank: Annual Reports**

*Asked by Baroness Noakes*

To ask His Majesty's Government when the 2023–24 accounts for the UK Infrastructure Bank will be published and laid before Parliament. [HL2504]

**Lord Livermore:** In accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual: 2022-23, the Annual Reports and Accounts for 2023-24 for the UK Infrastructure Bank, now the National Wealth Fund, was laid before parliament by HM Treasury on 25 November and published on 26 November.

### **UK Shared Prosperity Fund: Scotland**

*Asked by Lord Cameron of Lochiel*

To ask His Majesty's Government how much outstanding funding is due for each Shared Prosperity Fund project in Scotland; and whether this funding will still be delivered to each project following the 2024 Autumn Budget. [HL2450]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) operates under a delegated delivery model, meaning lead local authorities are responsible for managing the funding for their area and the allocation of funds to projects.

Lead local authorities in Scotland have been paid £188.6m of the £212m available to them for delivery up to March 2025. The outstanding £16.8m remains available to be paid to lead local authorities at the end of the financial year, based on actual spend. UKSPF funding allocations for 2022-25 are unaffected by the 2024 Autumn Budget announcement.

### **Undocumented Migrants**

*Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce illegal immigration. [HL2479]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** Since entering office, we have already launched the Border Security Command (BSC), led by Martin Hewitt CBE QPM, to strengthen our approach to prevent illegal migration. The Home Secretary recently announced investment of an additional £75 million for the BSC. This brings investment up until the end of the next financial year up to £150 million. This will help to build capability, taking the fight to criminals in Europe and beyond and directly targeting the criminal gangs behind small boat crossings.



The BSC will provide strategic direction across the relevant agencies and partners, drawing together the work across the border security system. It will also work with international partners to disrupt the activity of criminal smuggling gangs and ensure those profiting from people-smuggling are brought to justice.

As set out in the King's speech, this government will introduce new legislative measures to restore order to our border.

The proposed new legislation will include provisions to give the border security system stronger powers to disrupt, investigate and prosecute facilitators of organised immigration crime.

### Urban Areas: Scotland

*Asked by Lord Cameron of Lochiel*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether each town in Scotland promised funding via the Long-Term Plan for Towns will still receive that funding following the 2024 Autumn Budget. [HL2446]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** As set out at Autumn Budget, the Long-Term Plan for Towns will be retained and reformed, as part of a new regeneration programme.

The 75 places across the UK, including 10 in Scotland, that were previously selected to receive funding under the Long-Term Plan for Towns will receive up to £20 million of funding and support over the next decade.

### VAT Relief

*Asked by Lord Mackinlay of Richborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the tax lost through the continuing zero rating of VAT on books. [HL2473]

*Asked by Lord Mackinlay of Richborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the tax lost through the continuing zero rating of VAT on children's clothes. [HL2474]

*Asked by Lord Mackinlay of Richborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the tax lost through the continuing exemption from VAT for funerals. [HL2475]

**Lord Livermore:** The estimates of the Exchequer costs of the requested VAT reliefs in 2023-24 are as follows.

The estimate of the cost of zero-rating printed matter and e-publications, which includes books, was £1,700m.

The objective of this relief is to support literacy and reading by reducing the cost of books, newspapers, magazines etc. in printed and electronic form.

The estimate of the cost of zero-rating children's clothing and protective footwear and helmets was £2,100m. The objective of this relief is to support families by reducing the cost of children's clothing.

The estimated cost of the exemption for burial and cremation was £720m. This relief provides exemption from VAT for burial and exemption services.

These estimates, together with those for previous years, may be found in the Tax Relief Statistics published by HM Revenue and Customs on GOV.UK. The latest estimates were published in December 2023 with values for financial year 2023-24 being forecasts. Updated estimates will be published on 5 December 2024.

### Visas: National Security

*Asked by Lord Jackson of Peterborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to publish periodic data on individuals who have had UK visas revoked on the grounds of (1) national security, and (2) being non-conducive to the public good; and if not, why. [HL2463]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** Official statistics published by the Home Office are kept under review in line with the code of practice for statistics, taking into account a number of factors including user needs, the resources required to compile the statistics, as well as quality and availability of data. These reviews allow us to balance the production of our regular statistics whilst developing new statistics for future release.

The particular information requested is not currently held centrally in a reliable and repeatable form.

### Women and Equalities: Transgender People

*Asked by Baroness Stedman-Scott*

To ask His Majesty's Government which, if any, departments have a National Diversity Ambassador on Trans issues and whether the Office for Equality and Opportunity holds records relating to such roles. [HL2523]

**Lord Collins of Highbury:** Decisions regarding internal departmental roles are for departments to make. The Office for Equality and Opportunity does not hold records relating to such roles.

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