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

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

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[I] indicates that the member concerned has a relevant registered interest. The full register of interests can be found at <http://www.parliament.uk/mps-lords-and-offices/standards-and-interests/register-of-lords-interests/>

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<b>Lord Hermer</b>	Attorney-General
<b>Lord Hunt of Kings Heath</b>	Minister of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
<b>Baroness Jones of Whitchurch</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Business and Trade and Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, and Whip
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<b>Lord Leong</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Livermore</b>	Financial Secretary, HM Treasury
<b>Baroness Merron</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<b>Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice, Whip
<b>Baroness Sherlock</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<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, Whip
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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 7 January 2025

## Intimate Image Abuse and Sexually Explicit Deepfakes

[HLWS352]

**Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede:** My honourable friend, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice (Alex Davies-Jones MP), has today made the following statement:

Advances in technology have meant that intimate images can now easily be taken or shared without consent. The technology to create realistic deepfake sexually explicit images of any person, without their consent, is also readily available. These behaviours cause untold harm to victims' lives, particularly the women and girls who are so often targeted. We must ensure our criminal law is adequately equipped to protect victims and punish those responsible.

Today I can confirm that we will, in the Crime and Policing Bill which will be introduced later this year, introduce new offences for the taking of intimate images without consent and the installation of equipment with intent to enable the taking of intimate images without consent. These are crucial steps in delivering on our ambition to halve violence against women and girls within a decade. We must ensure our criminal law enables us to tackle perpetrators; better protect victims and survivors; and deliver effective justice.

To that end, we will repeal two existing voyeurism offences that relate to the recording of a person doing a private act, and recording an image beneath a person's clothing (the so-called 'upskirting' offence) in sections 67(3) and 67A(2) of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 respectively and replace them with three new offences that will cover a broader range of behaviour, improving the protection for victims.

Firstly, the legislation will create a "base" offence of taking or recording an intimate photograph or film without consent or reasonable belief in consent. Secondly, there will be an offence of taking or recording an intimate photograph or film without consent and with intent to cause alarm, distress or humiliation; and thirdly, an offence of taking or recording an intimate photograph or film without consent or reasonable belief in it, and for the purpose of the sexual gratification of oneself or another. Offenders who commit the latter offence may be subject to notification requirements, commonly known as being on the "sex offender's register". These new offences for taking an intimate photograph or film without consent cover a broader range of behaviours than current offences, providing greater protection for victims. For example, is it not currently an offence for an abusive person to take an intimate photo of their partner, without their consent, to shock and upset them or humiliate them by taking the photo of them in that intimate state. Under our new legislation, this will be criminal.

We will also introduce new offences that criminalise someone if they install or adapt, prepare or maintain equipment, and do so with the intent of enabling themselves or another to commit one of the three offences of taking or recording an intimate photograph or film without consent. Victims of any of these new offences may qualify, where applicable, for anonymity and special measures. We will also amend the Sentencing Code to ensure Courts have the power to order, upon conviction, that the offender be deprived of any images in respect of which they were convicted of a taking or recording offence, as well as anything on which the images were stored (such as a computer or hard drive). The Courts already have this power in relation to offenders convicted of sharing intimate images without consent.

These offences are designed to complement, and in some respects mirror, the offences of sharing or threatening to share, intimate images in the Sexual Offences Act 2003, as inserted by the Online Safety Act 2023. Taken together, these measures give law enforcement a holistic package of offences to effectively tackle this abhorrent behaviour. They will offer victims whose images have been taken or shared without consent the clear and comprehensive protection they deserve.

It is already a criminal offence to share, or threaten to share, a sexually explicit deepfake without consent, but not an offence to make one. The Government made a clear manifesto commitment to ban the creation of sexually explicit deepfake images, a central aspect of our commitment to halve the prevalence of violence against women and girls (VAWG) within the decade. We are bringing forward legislation to honour that commitment in the Crime and Policing Bill which will be introduced later this year, making this behaviour criminal so that perpetrators can be brought to justice.

## Steel Strategy: Next Steps

[HLWS351]

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch:** My Hon Friend the Minister of State for the Department of Business and Trade (Sarah Jones MP) has today made the following statement:

Today the Secretary of State for Business and Trade and I will convene the first meeting of the renewed Steel Council. This forum brings together leaders from across the sector to provide strategic guidance and external expertise in the development and implementation of our Steel Strategy.

Steel has for too long been a neglected industry in this country. Staggeringly, steel production has declined by more than 50% in the last 10 years. Internationally, unfair actions by some overseas nations have undermined free trade, meaning our steel companies aren't able to compete on a level playing field.

I believe steel should and could become a positive story. We are not naïve to the scale of the challenge, or the situation we inherited. We know these are tough circumstances and it will take time to make things better.

This Government will not let the UK lose our steel industry.

In Victorian times, we were the country which invented the modern way of steel-production. Now is the time to find our next approach which enables steel growth and innovation. We are the Government determined to make the hardheaded decisions to make that happen. This is why we have committed to publishing a Steel Strategy in Spring 2025.

Such a Strategy will need to set a strong vision for the future, combat those factors which undermine competitiveness, and highlight the opportunities and future demand for green steel made in the UK.

As part of this steel Strategy, this Government will look seriously at options to improve steel capabilities across the supply chain, including in primary steelmaking. As such, I am also announcing today that the Materials Processing Institute, a not-for-profit research and innovation centre based in Teesside, will lead an independent review into the viability of technologies for primary steel production, including Direct Reduced Iron. MPI will produce a recommendation to Government on the viability of iron-making and primary steel production technologies in the UK with a view to the current and potential future market.

Our new Steel Council will help us develop the Strategy together. It will put the expertise of its members at the heart of our policy making process. It will provide a vital link between the Government, industry, workers, and our innovative thinkers.

Following the publication of the primary steel review and the Steel Strategy, we will continue to convene the Council throughout this Parliament so we can make sure we drive implementation of the Strategy and we make great use of the up to £2.5bn of funding that we have committed to help rebuild the sector.

The Council will be chaired by the Secretary of State for Business and Trade and co-chaired by Jon Bolton, who has extensive experience of working in the sector both at home and abroad. Its membership includes representative from steel producers, the supply chain, research and development, Trade Unions and the Devolved Governments.

We have published the full membership on Gov.uk at the following link (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-plan-to-secure-the-long-term-future-of-steelmaking-and-safeguard-steel-communities>). We will be uploading the Terms of Reference for the Steel Council and the Primary Production Review to this page in due course.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 7 January 2025

## Balance of Trade

Asked by **Lord Empey**

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to promote import substitution to assist with the balance of payment deficit. [[HL3650](#)]

**Lord Livermore:** The UK has an open and trade intensive economy.

The government is delivering its growth mission by prioritising stability, investment and reform to drive prosperity across the UK.

## Buildings: VAT

Asked by **Lord Empey**

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the negative impact of charging VAT for renovations of buildings on brownfield sites compared with greenfield sites where building of homes is zero rated for VAT. [[HL3651](#)]

**Lord Livermore:** To stimulate the construction of new homes, the Government maintains a zero rate of VAT on new-build residential buildings. Additionally, residential renovations are subject to a reduced rate of VAT of five per cent if they meet certain conditions. These include conversions of buildings from one residential use to another, conversions from commercial to residential use, and the renovation of properties that have been empty for two or more years.

VAT is the UK's second largest tax, forecast to raise £171 billion in 2024/25. Tax breaks reduce the revenue available for vital public services and must represent value for money for the taxpayer. Exceptions to the standard rate have always been limited and balanced against affordability considerations.

Introducing further construction-related VAT reliefs would come at a significant cost to the Exchequer. The Chancellor makes decisions on tax policy at fiscal events in the context of the overall public finances. In July 2024, the Government published an audit of public spending, which set out £22 billion of in-year pressures. These pressures were not limited to 2024/25, with the vast majority recurring in future years.

## Business: Investment

Asked by **Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to revive business confidence across the United Kingdom after the budget. [[HL3683](#)]

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch:** Growth is the number one mission of the government. We have taken action including: progressing planning reforms; boosting capital investment by over £100 billion over the next five years; creating the National Wealth Fund; publishing the Corporate Tax Roadmap; announcing the Business Growth Service; and setting out pension reform proposals to unlock new investment.

Our modern Industrial Strategy will be unreservedly pro-business, and our Green Paper set out our vision for a credible, 10-year plan to deliver the certainty and stability businesses need to invest across the UK. We are engaging widely, and have appointed a diverse group of the UK's top business leaders, policy experts and trade union leaders to the Industrial Strategy Advisory Council to drive this forward.

## Carbon Emissions

Asked by **Lord Foster of Bath**

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the amount of UK carbon dioxide equivalent emissions in 2030 from (1) terrestrial emissions, (2) terrestrial emissions plus international aviation and shipping emissions, and (3) the emissions in both of those categories plus import emissions. [[HL3653](#)]

**Lord Hunt of Kings Heath:** The figures below show the Government's latest published projections for the UK's territorial emissions in 2030 in million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (MtCO<sub>2</sub>e), first excluding and then including emissions from International Aviation and Shipping (IAS). These estimates do not take account of future policies or those currently under development, which the Government expects will lead to lower emissions than those reported below.

2030

Terrestrial emissions excluding IAS 327

Terrestrial emissions including IAS 371

The Government publishes estimates of embedded emissions from imported goods in 'UK and England's carbon footprint to 2021'. However, projections of these emissions are not available.

## Carers: Young People

Asked by **Lord Watson of Invergowrie**

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve access to higher education and employment opportunities for young carers. [[HL3704](#)]

**Baroness Smith of Malvern:** Opportunity should be available to all but too many people across our country do not get the chance to succeed. The department will act to address the persistent gaps for different groups, including young carers, and break down the barriers to opportunity.

The department is committed to ensuring that all young people have equitable access to work experience opportunities, including young carers. The Youth Guarantee will ensure that every young person aged 18 to 21 who needs it is supported in accessing further learning or receives help to get a job or an apprenticeship.

The department's ambition is to offer a guarantee of two weeks' worth of high-quality work experience to all young people over the course of their secondary education, irrespective of their background. This will open doors to a wider range of employers and businesses, giving young people greater insight into the labour market, while developing relevant skills for work. It will also help young people make informed decisions about their next steps and support their future employment prospects.

The department's delivery partner, The Careers and Enterprise Company, is piloting the delivery of the work experience guarantee. This includes testing a ringfenced disadvantage premium to assist schools with the costs of work experience, such as transportation, and the development of a virtual work experience platform to improve the accessibility of opportunities. Piloting work began in October 2024, with end of pilot reporting in August 2025.

Higher education (HE) plays an important role in ensuring that individuals gain the skills they need to succeed in life and the department will support the aspiration of every person who meets the requirements and wants to pursue this, regardless of their background.

All HE providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS) that intend to charge higher level tuition fees are required to have an access and participation plan approved by the OfS. These plans articulate how providers will improve equality of opportunity for underrepresented groups. In creating their plans, providers should consider the Equality of Opportunity Risk Register, which details 12 key sector risks across the student lifecycle and the student groups most likely to experience these, including young carers.

Whilst many HE providers have demonstrated positive examples of supporting young carers, including targeted outreach and on course bursaries and mentoring, the department is keen to see the sector go further. By summer, the department will set out its plan for HE reform, and we expect providers to play an even stronger role in improving access and outcomes for all disadvantaged students, including young carers.

### **Clothing: Islam**

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for banning the wearing of a burka in public. [HL3695]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** No such assessment has been made.

### **Combined Authorities**

*Asked by Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they are taking steps to extend the consultation period for expressions of interest from top-tier and lower tier local government in England for forming the new combined authorities outlined in the English Devolution White Paper, published on 16 December. [HL3639]

*Asked by Lord Blunkett*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to allowing enough time for the consultation for the proposed new combined authorities outlined in the English Devolution White Paper, published on 16 December, to be worked through. [HL3640]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** The Government will work with places to deliver a Devolution Priority Programme (DPP) to roll out devolution to an ambitious timeline, aiming to deliver new strategic authorities and elected Mayors by May 2026.

This Programme will provide a fast-track to mayoral devolution for areas ready to come together under sensible geographies which meet the criteria set out in the White Paper.

To meet these ambitious timelines, we have asked areas to express an interest by the 10th of January, so we can begin delivery at pace. For areas not on the DPP, we will continue to discuss how to extend and deepen devolution in their area to a slower timeframe.

### **Consumer Goods: Safety**

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the cost impact on small businesses of appointing authorised representatives in the EU or Northern Ireland to comply with the Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988), particularly for those businesses that do not currently have a presence in those markets. [HL3654]

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support small manufacturers in Great Britain in complying with documentation requirements under Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988), and whether they plan to issue guidance on preparing risk assessments. [HL3655]

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with online marketplaces about their obligations under the Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988), in particular with regard to how these platforms will support small businesses in



meeting the requirements for responsible economic operators. [[HL3656](#)]

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to introduce any financial support measures to help small businesses meet the compliance costs associated with the Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988), particularly regarding the maintenance of technical documentation for 10 years. [[HL3657](#)]

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on small businesses of the requirement under the Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988) to have a responsible economic operator established in Northern Ireland or the EU, and whether they have considered negotiating alternative arrangements for micro-businesses. [[HL3658](#)]

*Asked by Lord Freyberg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that small businesses are aware of their obligations under the transitional arrangements in Regulation on General Product Safety (2023/988), and whether they plan to provide specific guidance for businesses that currently only trade with Northern Ireland. [[HL3659](#)]

**Baroness Jones of Whitchurch:** The updated GPSR largely formalises the reality of how many businesses are already operating and the measures are therefore likely to have limited impact in practice. We understand that for some businesses, the regulation will require changes, and we take any concerns extremely seriously.

The Government is providing support. We have issued guidance, will keep this under review and continue to engage businesses directly to ensure we are supporting them to trade freely within the UK and with the EU. We have regular discussions with online marketplaces and businesses that sell products online on a range of issues to hear their concerns.

### **Divorce: Islam**

*Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for prohibiting the religious solemnisation of unregistered marriages to ensure that Muslim wives have the protection of divorce law. [[HL3694](#)]

**Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede:** The Marriage Act 1949 has long made provision for couples, including Muslim couples, to marry in their place of worship in a way that gives them legal rights and protections. While some couples intentionally choose to have a religious-only marriage, it is concerning that some individuals may not

realise that their non-legally binding marriage lacks the legal protections that come with a legal marriage.

That is why the Government committed in its 2024 manifesto to 'strengthen the rights and protections available to women in cohabiting couples', including those in religious-only marriages. We will set out the next steps on delivering this manifesto commitment in due course.

### **Foreign Influence Registration Scheme: China**

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have conducted an impact assessment of adding China on to the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. [[HL3632](#)]

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have made an estimate of the reduction in foreign direct investment from China from adding it to the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. [[HL3633](#)]

*Asked by Viscount Waverley*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have of the impact on economic growth of adding China to the enhanced tier of the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. [[HL3634](#)]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** The Government is working at pace to implement the Foreign Influence Registration Scheme. We have recruited a case management team and are developing the IT arrangements. We expect the scheme to commence in Summer 2025.

It would not be appropriate to comment on the scope of any specifications under the enhanced tier at this stage. Work is underway to identify which foreign powers will be placed on the enhanced tier and an impact assessment will be published alongside any regulations which specify countries on the enhanced tier of the scheme.

The proposed foreign entities to be included on the enhanced tier will be subject to formal debate and agreement by both Houses of Parliament in due course.

### **Gender Dysphoria: Hormone Treatments**

*Asked by Lord Cashman*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they will publish the evidence behind their decision to ban puberty blocker medication from all providers; and what meetings the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has had with the parents of trans children or teenagers, their representatives or organisations representing their concerns. [[HL3426](#)]

**Baroness Merron:** On 11 December 2024, the Government published its response to the consultation on whether to introduce indefinite restrictions to prevent new patients aged under 18 years old from being supplied with puberty blockers for the purposes of gender incongruence and/or gender dysphoria, under the care of private or non-United Kingdom prescribers. This response included recommendations from a report by an expert clinical committee, the Commission on Human Medicines. This decision has been further informed by the evidence gathered by Baroness Cass as part of her independent review of gender identity services for children and young people, *The Cass Review*, which is publicly available.

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care has held constructive, open, and honest roundtable discussions, including with children and young people, and their parents, with lived experience of gender dysphoria and incongruence. The Government remains committed to listening to the LGBT+ community.

### Harassment: Bangladesh

*Asked by Baroness Bennett of Manor Castle*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the levels of transnational repression and other politically linked harassment taking place in the UK towards British residents and visitors with links to Bangladesh; and what steps they have taken in response. [HL3579]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** The first duty of the government is to keep the country safe.

This Government is committed to responding to foreign interference, including those actions which amount to transnational repression. Home Office officials work closely with operational partners, the FCDO and other government departments to review the threat picture and determine how best to respond.

We continually assess potential threats in the UK, and take protection of individuals' rights, freedoms, and safety in the UK very seriously including individuals with links to Bangladesh. Any attempt by any foreign power to intimidate, harass or harm individuals in the UK will not be tolerated and will be thoroughly investigated.

We will continue to implement measures in the National Security Act 2023, which make the UK a harder target for those states which seek to conduct hostile acts.

Anyone who thinks they might be a victim should report incidents or suspicious activity to the Police.

### Homelessness

*Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many people they estimate are homeless each night in each region of the United Kingdom, and whether that number is increasing or decreasing. [HL3682]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** As of 30 June 2024, 123,100 households were in temporary accommodation, which is an increase of 16.3% from 30 June 2023. This is the highest on record.

The annual snapshot statistics remain our official and most robust measure of rough sleeping on a single night. The number of people estimated to be sleeping rough on a single night in autumn 2023 was 3,898 – a 27% increase on autumn 2022 and a rise for the second year in a row.

Local Authorities are required to publish homelessness data each quarter. The most recent figures for Q2 2024 are available below using tab TA1:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-april-to-june-2024/statutory-homelessness-in-england-april-to-june-2024>

The most recent rough sleeping snapshot in England was published in February 2024 and covers Autumn 2023. This can be accessed by using the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2023/rough-sleeping-snapshot-in-england-autumn-2023>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Rough Sleeping snapshot [HL3682 -Rough sleeping snapshot in England\_ autumn 2023 - GOV.UK.pdf]

Statutory homelessness in England [HL3682 - Statutory homelessness in England\_ April to June 2024 - GOV.UK.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-12-19/HL3682>

### Housing: Construction

*Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure brownfield land as well as empty, derelict houses and commercial buildings are used first to solve the housing crisis and protect the green belt. [HL3679]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** Planning is a devolved matter and the information provided relates to England only.

The National Planning Policy Framework makes clear that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements, including bringing back into residential use empty homes and the development of under-utilised land and buildings to meet the need for homes and other uses.

Changes we made to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024 broadened the definition of brownfield land, set a strengthened expectation that applications on brownfield land will be approved, and made clear that plans should promote an uplift in density in urban areas.

On 22 September 2024, we published a 'brownfield passport' policy paper inviting views on how we might



further prioritise and fast-track building on previously used urban land.

### Journalism: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the ruling by the Investigatory Powers Tribunal on 17 December into the actions of the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Metropolitan Police regarding the investigation of journalists in Northern Ireland. [HL3700]

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent:** The Government has noted the detailed Investigatory Powers Tribunal judgment in this case. The Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has already accepted the Tribunal's judgment that due consideration was not given to whether there was an overriding public interest in interfering with journalistic sources before authorising surveillance. And although officers complied with UK law and procedure at the time, a 2013 authorisation for communications data was a breach of the PSNI's human rights obligations. The Tribunal dismissed the complaint that the police had unlawfully obtained information and communications data by non-statutory means.

The Chief Constable has stated that he will take time to consider and reflect on the judgment and along with the findings of the McCullough Review, to consider what further steps the PSNI can take. The McCullough Review is an independent review of PSNI use of surveillance against sensitive professions. The Northern Ireland Policing Board has asked for the McCullough Report to be provided by 31 March 2025.

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the ruling by the Investigatory Powers Tribunal on 17 December, what assessment they have made of the current levels of surveillance by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Metropolitan Police into journalists, politicians and others in Northern Ireland. [HL3701]

**Baroness Anderson of Stoke-on-Trent:** There are a number of robust legal protections afforded to sensitive professions. These include Articles 8 and 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights, the Investigatory Powers Act 2016 and the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989.

There have been significant changes made since the actions investigated by the Tribunal occurred, including the implementation of the Investigatory Powers Act (2016) in 2018. Oversight of the use of investigatory powers is provided by the Investigatory Powers Commissioner's Office who ensure that their use is necessary and proportionate, and in accordance with the law.

The Northern Ireland Policing Board has asked the Chief Constable for the McCullough Report, an independent review of PSNI use of surveillance against sensitive professions, to be provided by 31 March 2025.

### Medical Records: Children

Asked by *Baroness Morgan of Huyton*

To ask His Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to implementing the recommendation of the Children's Commissioner to integrate children's health and education data with a unique ID. [HL3453]

**Baroness Merron:** The Department of Health and Social Care is working with the Department for Education on plans to implement a single unique identifier for children, and to improve data sharing across services to support children and families, as set out in the recent policy document Keeping children safe, helping families thrive. A copy of this document is attached.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Keeping children safe, helping families thrive [For HL3453.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2024-12-12/HL3453>

### Mosques: Monitoring

Asked by *Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for monitoring mosques and madrassas. [HL3693]

**Lord Hanson of Flint:** The Security Service and Counter-Terrorism Policing, which are operationally independent of government, determine their own investigative priorities. These will be informed by the risk posed by individuals or groups, and their activities. This is not based on the religious affiliation that certain premises have.

### Nurses

Asked by *Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many registered nurses were employed by the NHS in each year from 2013 to 2023. [HL3469]

**Baroness Merron:** The following table shows the number of full time equivalent (FTE) registered nurses, including health visitors, employed across National Health Service trusts and other core organisations in England, each year from September 2013 to September 2023:

Date	FTE nurses and health visitors
Sep-13	274,627
Sep-14	278,981
Sep-15	281,474

Date	FTE nurses and health visitors
Sep-16	284,288
Sep-17	283,853
Sep-18	285,674
Sep-19	291,533
Sep-20	304,490
Sep-21	313,836
Sep-22	322,701
Sep-23	341,015

Source: Hospital and Community Health Service Workforce Statistics, NHS England.

### Nurses and Nursing Associates: Termination of Employment

Asked by *Lord Willis of Knaresborough*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many registered nurses and registered nursing associates left the Nursing and Midwifery Council register in each of the years from 2018 to 2023. [HL3470]

**Baroness Merron:** The Department does not hold this information centrally. As the independent regulator of nurses and midwives in the United Kingdom, and nursing associates in England, the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) is responsible for nurse registration. The NMC publishes annual reports on its website detailing registration data, including the number of leavers, covering the period 2018 to 2023.

The following table shows the number people leaving the NMC register by registration type and financial year:

Year	Midwife	Nurse	Nurse and midwife	Nursing associate	Total
2018/19	1,587	27,202	351		29,140
2019/20	1,439	23,757	286	8	25,490
2020/21	1,333	22,344	215	43	23,935
2021/22	1,474	25,222	305	134	27,135
2022/23	1,490	24,774	245	250	26,759
2023/24	1,432	25,203	251	282	27,168

Source: Nursing and Midwifery Council Annual Data Report.

### Packaging: Recycling

Asked by *Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they intend to take to mitigate against the impact of material switching as a result of the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging and Packaging Waste) Regulations 2024. [HL3165]

**Baroness Hayman of Ullock:** Once the Scheme Administrator has been established it will look at what measures may be needed to mitigate against material switching, where switching may produce perverse environmental outcomes. As pEPR places the cost of disposing of packaging back on those who place packaging on the market, the system contains intrinsic incentives against producers switching to materials which are more expensive to reprocess in the waste stream.

### Patients: Safety

Asked by *Lord Kamall*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the state of patient safety monitoring this winter. [HL3675]

**Baroness Merron:** The Department works closely with NHS England to monitor a variety of metrics relevant to patient safety, including four-hour accident and emergency performance, Category 2 ambulance response times, bed occupancy, and rates of seasonal infectious disease. NHS England publishes monthly statistics that can be found on the NHS.UK website.

Additionally, during the winter period, NHS England publishes additional weekly situational reports. This data can also be found on the NHS.UK website. My Rt Hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care also recently met with hospital trusts and social care organisations to reiterate the importance of maintaining patient safety over winter.

### Political Parties: Finance

Asked by *Lord Rennard*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the merits of banning unincorporated associations from donating to political parties in order to increase the level of transparency concerning their funding. [HL3698]

Asked by *Lord Rennard*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to use their powers under section 109 of the Political Parties and Elections Act 2009 to require donors to political parties to certify the original sources of donated funds, and whether they consider that this may help to address concerns about potential foreign funding influencing elections in the UK. [HL3699]

**Baroness Taylor of Stevenage:** Effective regulation of political finance is crucial for maintaining public trust in our electoral systems and combatting the threat of foreign interference in our democracy. The Government is committed to strengthening our democracy and upholding the integrity of elections. As stated in our manifesto, we intend to strengthen the rules around donations to political parties to protect our democracy. My department is developing proposals to give effect to these commitments and will provide details to Parliament in due course.

**Public Bodies: Translation Services**

*Asked by Lord Gilbert of Panteg*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment, if any, they have made of the effect of public bodies' translation into foreign languages on integration and community cohesion. [HL3663]

**Lord Khan of Burnley:** Government recognises that the ability to speak English is key to helping people integrate into life in the UK, as well as supporting people to access education, employment and other opportunities. Public bodies are responsible for determining their own requirements for language services and ensuring these deliver good value for money for the taxpayer and a good service.

**Public Sector: Translation Services**

*Asked by Lord Gilbert of Panteg*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to (1) the Written Statement by the former Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government on 12 March 2013 (HC 5WS-6WS), and (2) the Written Answer by Baroness Twycross on 17 December (HL3302), whether they have made an assessment of the cost of translation to the public purse. [HL3661]

**Baroness Twycross:** The Cabinet Office does not hold information on the total cost of translation across Government. Individual departments are responsible for determining their own translation requirements.

**UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the Chancellor of Exchequer has made representations to the European Union to remove trade barriers between Great Britain and Northern Ireland during her recent visit to Brussels. [HL3684]

**Lord Livermore:** On 9 December the Chancellor visited Brussels to attend Eurogroup, a meeting of Eurozone finance ministers, discussing the mutual economic benefit of the Government's EU Reset. The full speech can be found on gov.uk.

The Government is committed to the Windsor Framework and to protecting the UK internal market. The UK Internal Market Scheme already enables businesses to move goods from Great Britain to Northern Ireland without being subject to customs duties. Additional changes will be introduced in the coming months which will further simplify the movement of goods for businesses.

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