

Vol. 781
No. 3



Wednesday
8 February 2017

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

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[1] 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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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
Baroness Evans of Bowes Park	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Anelay of St Johns	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport, Whip
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government, Wales Office
Lord Bridges of Headley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Buscombe	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Dunlop	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office and Northern Ireland Office
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Baroness Mobarik	Whip
Lord Nash	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Commercial Secretary to the Treasury
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health
Lord Price	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Prior of Brampton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Baroness Shields	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office and Department for Culture Media and Sport
Lord Taylor of Holbeach	Chief Whip
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Whip
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Minister of State, Home Office
Lord Young of Cookham	Whip
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Whip

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 8 February 2017

Foreign National Offenders and British National Offenders: Repatriation

[HLWS468]

Lord Keen of Elie: My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Elizabeth Truss) has made the following Written Statement.

"A minute has been laid before Parliament regarding the Ministry of Justice's escorting of Foreign National Offenders and British National Offenders and specifically in relation to incurring a contingent liability.

My department is responsible for the transfer of Foreign National Offenders (FNOs) to their home countries and the repatriation of British National Offenders (BNOs) held overseas. This role was carried forward by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) from the Home Office at the time the MoJ was established.

The escorting of FNOs continues to play an important part in reducing the number of Foreign Nationals who are held within our Justice system.

Previously, the Home Office had provided Heathrow Airport Holdings Limited (formerly BAA) with confirmation of HM Government's agreement to indemnify them against any claims in respect of damage or injury caused to third parties in the event that the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) were found to be negligent in the discharge of their duties. The National Offender Management Service was an executive agency of the Home Office and was transferred to the Ministry of Justice at the same time as the Ministry was established.

The Ministry of Justice will continue to provide this assurance and I am updating the House on this new agreement. NOMS has prepared written assurance for Heathrow Airport Holdings Limited and other third parties (e.g. airlines) which may be affected by our operations. This assurance covers the following amounts:

- Up to 50 million pounds for damage or injury per incident to third parties caused airside in the event of negligence of NOMS;
- Up to 250 million pounds to damage or injury to third parties per incident in the event of negligence by NOMS whilst on board an aeroplane.
- Up to 10 million pounds for personal accident and/or sickness for NOMS staff whilst on escorting duties.

The addition of a Contingent Liability to the accounts of a government department or agency is a standard approach that ensures full disclosure of all assets and liabilities and is in line with the rules laid out in the Financial Reporting Manual.

The Treasury has approved the proposal in principle. If, during the period of fourteen parliamentary sitting days

beginning on the date on which the minute is laid before parliament, a member signifies an objection by giving notice of a Parliamentary Question or by otherwise raising the matter in parliament, final approval to proceed with incurring the liability will be withheld pending an examination of the objection, and the existing indemnities will continue."

General Affairs Council: February 2017

[HLWS471]

Lord Bridges of Headley: My right honourable friend the Minister of State for Exiting the European Union (David Jones) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The General Affairs Council (GAC) on 7 February will be held in Brussels under the Maltese Presidency. The agenda will cover 1) follow up to the December European Council; 2) preparation for the March European Council; and 3) Commission Communication on Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future.

Follow up to the December European Council

The Presidency is likely to present an update on the implementation of the December 2016 European Council Conclusions on migration, security (internal and external), economic and social development (youth), Cyprus and external relations (covering the EU/Ukraine Association Agreement and Syria).

Preparation for the March European Council

There will be a discussion on the agenda of the March European Council. The agenda includes: security; jobs and growth; external relations; and migration.

Commission Communication on Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future

The Commission will present a Communication on Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future and there will be an exchange of views. The Communication sets out the EU's commitment to deliver the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which was agreed at the 2015 UN General Assembly.

Immigration

[HLWS469]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: My hon Friend the Minister of State for Immigration (Robert Goodwill) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement:

The Government takes the welfare of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children extremely seriously, and the UK has a proud history of providing protection for those in need, including some of the most vulnerable children affected by the migration crisis. The Government's strategy is to support international efforts to find a comprehensive and sustainable solution to the refugee crisis; we must deal with its root causes, as well as respond to the consequences. That is why the UK has been at the forefront of the response to the events in Syria and the region, pledging over £2.3 billion in aid - our

largest ever humanitarian response to a single crisis. We are also one of the few EU countries to meet our commitment to spending 0.7 per cent of Gross National Income on overseas aid.

We have a comprehensive approach to tackling these issues both at home and overseas. By the end of this Parliament, we will have resettled 20,000 Syrian nationals through our Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and a further 3,000 of the most vulnerable children and their families from the Middle East and North Africa region under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. We also received over 33,000 asylum claims in the UK last year.

The number of unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children arriving in the UK has risen over the last few years, including in response to this Government's commitment to the transfer of hundreds of children from Calais and to address the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable children. The UK has contributed significantly to hosting, supporting and protecting the most vulnerable children affected by the migration crisis. In the year ending September 2016, the UK granted asylum or another form of leave to over 8,000 children. This includes those who claimed asylum in the UK, those who were brought to the UK through our resettlement schemes, those transferred from within Europe, and those granted a refugee family reunion visa.

In 2016, we transferred over 900 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to the UK from Europe. This included more than 750 from France as part of the UK's support for the Calais camp clearance. Over 200 of those children met the published criteria for section 67 of the Immigration Act. The remainder were transferred under an accelerated process based on the family reunion criteria of the Dublin Regulation. This was a one-off process, based on the principles of the Dublin framework but operated outside of it, and was implemented in response to the unique circumstances of the Calais camp clearance. All children not transferred to the UK are in the care of the French authorities.

The UK can be proud of its record of helping refugee children and I can today announce, in accordance with section 67 of the Immigration Act, that the Government will transfer the specified number of 350 children pursuant to that section, who reasonably meet the intention and spirit behind the provision. This number includes over 200 children already transferred under section 67 from France. It does not include children transferred to UK where they have close family here. We will announce in due course the basis on which further children will be transferred from Europe to the UK under section 67 of the Immigration Act to the specified number.

As required by the legislation, we have consulted with local authorities on their capacity to care for and support unaccompanied asylum-seeking children before arriving at this number. Local authorities told us they have capacity for around 400 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children until the end of this financial year. We estimate

that at least 50 of the family reunion cases transferred from France as part of the Calais clearance will require a local authority placement in cases where the family reunion does not work out. We are grateful for the way in which local authorities have stepped up to provide places for those arriving and we will continue to work closely to address capacity needs.

The Government will continue to meet our obligations under the Dublin Regulation and accept responsibility for processing asylum claims where the UK is determined to be the responsible Member State, ensuring that it is in their best interests to come here. We are working closely with European partners to ensure the timely and efficient operation of the Dublin Regulation.

Of the over 4,400 individuals resettled through the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement scheme so far, around half are children and last year we welcomed the first families to the UK under the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme. We are fully committed to an effective response in the affected regions and to resettling the most vulnerable directly from those regions. Within Europe, the UK has also established a £10 million Refugee Children's Fund to support the needs of vulnerable refugee and migrant children arriving in Europe. The fund includes targeted support to meet the specific needs of unaccompanied and separated children.

Here in the UK, we have launched the National Transfer Scheme to ensure a fairer distribution of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children across England and ease pressure on the children's services of those local authorities with large numbers of unaccompanied children. To implement the National Transfer Scheme the Home Office has established a dedicated team to process the transfer of children quickly whilst at the same time acting in accordance with the child's best interests. The Home Office also published detailed guidance for local authorities setting out the processes involved in transferring unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from one local authority to another, including the need to ensure that the scheme is driven by the welfare of the child.

As announced on 1 November, the Government will also deliver a safeguarding strategy for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. This will ensure the Government puts in place a comprehensive safeguarding strategy for unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children living in or being transferred or resettled to the UK.

To further support the transfer arrangements and underline our commitment to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, the Government significantly increased the funding it provides to local authorities who look after unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. Local authorities now receive £41,610 per annum for each unaccompanied asylum-seeking child aged under 16 and £33,215 per annum for unaccompanied asylum-seeking child aged 16 and 17. This represents a 20% and 28% increase in funding respectively. In addition, the Government went further and also increased the funding it

provides to local authorities for those young people who turn 18 and go on to attract leaving care support by 33%. These significant increases in Government funding will have a very positive impact on local authorities' ability to care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

The Government has also announced the £140 million Controlling Migration Fund in England, which is intended to cover a broad range of costs associated with migration. It cannot duplicate or top up unaccompanied asylum-seeking children rates, but it may support short-term costs not included in the mainstream unaccompanied asylum-seeking children grant and costs related to family reunion cases. This could include costs such as the safeguarding assessments, recruitment campaigns for social workers or support workers, specialist counselling or training on the specific needs of unaccompanied children. Additional funding has also been offered to Strategic Migration Partnerships across the UK to help them bolster local structures and ensure they are equipped to deal with the diverse needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

The Government has taken significant steps to improve an already comprehensive approach to supporting asylum-seeking and refugee children. This latest announcement provides further evidence of the Government's commitment to playing its part in the global migration crisis. In addition to the tens of thousands of children in conflict regions and in Europe that are benefiting from UK aid and development assistance, we are providing protection to thousands of children in the UK each year.

The UK should be proud of its overall contribution.

Prisons and Probation

[HLWS470]

Lord Keen of Elie: My right honourable friend the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice (Elizabeth Truss) has made the following Written Statement.

"A new executive agency of the Ministry of Justice, called Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, will replace the National Offender Management Service from 1 April 2017. The Service will be responsible for the roll out of the Government's programme to improve the way we reform offenders to protect the public and tackle the unacceptable levels of reoffending. Michael Spurr will become the Chief Executive of the new HM Prison and Probation Service from 1 April 2017.

HM Prison and Probation Service will have full responsibility for all operations across prison and probation. The Ministry of Justice will take charge of commissioning services, future policy development and be accountable for setting standards and scrutinising prison and probation performance.

The creation of HM Prison and Probation Service will build a world-leading, specialist agency, dedicated to professionalising the prison and probation workforce, backed by an additional £100m a year and 2,500 additional prison officers. The Service will be a place that staff are proud to work, attracting the brightest and best talent to deliver modernised offender reform, strengthened security, counter-terrorism and intelligence capability.

In recognition of the vital work carried out by prison and probation staff, new schemes to improve promotion opportunities have been launched, including; enhanced professional qualifications for probation officers, a new leadership programme, an apprenticeship scheme to launch in April and higher pay and recognition for specialist skilled officers dealing with complex issues such as counter-terrorism, suicide and self-harm support and assessment.

This forms part of our far-reaching organisational reforms to the system, which will make services more accountable to Ministers for delivery and performance. This will be further supported by measures within the Prison and Courts Bill, which will create a new framework and clear system of accountability for prisons.

Probation services will also offer improved training and learning opportunities for offenders to ensure they do not return to a life of crime, working hand in glove with prisons to ensure a more integrated approach. We will set out more details later this Spring.

A key priority of HM Prison and Probation Service will be to focus on the particular needs of offenders. To meet the needs of women offenders across the whole system, for the first time there will be a Board Director responsible for women across custody and community. Sonia Crozier, Director of Probation, will take on this responsibility (reporting directly to the CEO) from 1 April 2017. We set out also in December 2016 the Government's plans for the youth justice system, putting education and training at the heart of youth custody. We are working closely with the Youth Justice Board to review existing governance arrangements and will set out changes in due course."

Votes A Annual Estimate 2017-18

[HLWS467]

Earl Howe: The Secretary of State for Defence (Sir Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Ministry of Defence Votes A Estimate 2017-18, has been laid before the House today as HC968. This outlines the maximum numbers of personnel to be maintained for each Service in the Armed Forces during Financial Year 2017-18.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 8 February 2017

Academies

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many academies have been transferred from one trust to another, in which years, and what were their names; and what is (1) the total cost, and (2) the individual cost, of those transfers so far. [HL5198]

Lord Nash: As part of our strategy to increase further the number of pupils being taught in good or outstanding schools since January 2012, we have re-brokered the attached list of 318 academies to new trusts. Re-brokerage can happen for a number of reasons such as a result of intervention action by the Regional School Commissioner, a single academy trust seeking to join or set up a multi academy trust, or a sponsor deciding to hand back an academy because it no longer has the capacity to run it. We are committed to publishing the costs of individual re-brokerages cases on gov.uk in due course.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

list of 318 academies to new trusts [HL5198 attachment.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-02-02/HL5198>

Adult Education

Asked by **Baroness Rebuck**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress is being made in using behavioural insights to identify how to motivate adults to improve their reading skills and to encourage learners to keep studying once enrolled on a course. [HL5175]

Lord Nash: This Government understands the importance of strong literacy skills and makes English provision a priority for support within the adult skills system. We know that it can be difficult for adults to return to learning and to persist with their studies with the competing demands of work and daily life. That is why we are working alongside the Behavioural Insights Centre for Adult Skills and Knowledge to trial a range of interventions to identify how to motivate adults to engage in learning and to keep studying once enrolled on a course.

Trial results point to a number of positive findings. For example:

- Colleges sending encouraging text messages to English and maths FE learners, see a reduction in mid-term drop-out rates and a 12% increase in students passing all their exams.

- Colleges allocating time for students to set goals and consider their personal values saw a 20% improvement in learner attendance for learners studying for Functional Skills English and maths qualifications.

- Trials with large employers, including the Co-operative (retail), the Army, Whitbread and the Manchester Chambers of Commerce, to improve the workforce literacy and numeracy skills are running over the current financial year and will report in summer/autumn 2017.

The Government is now working with the Behavioural Insights Centre for Adult Skills and Knowledge to disseminate best practice from these behavioural insights trials amongst providers of basic skills courses.

Andargachew Tsege

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in ensuring that Andargachew Tsege is given a fair trial and access to a legal defence team in Ethiopia; and whether they have plans to call for his release so that he can rejoin his family in England. [HL5062]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Ethiopian Government are in no doubt over our concern for Mr Tsege and the priority we place upon his wellbeing, as well as access to legal advice. It is important that Mr Tsege has access to legal advice in order to discuss his options under Ethiopian law. In November 2016 our Ambassador was able to provide Mr Tsege with a list of lawyers to discuss his legal options. We continue to press the Ethiopians to abide by their commitment to allow Mr Tsege to contact his legal representation without obstruction.

We do not believe that calling for Mr Tsege's release would be successful. It could risk his welfare and progress in his case, including our access to him.

Chemicals: Regulation

Asked by **Baroness Parminter**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, what steps they intend to take in regard to Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 concerning the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals. [HL5172]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The regulation of Chemicals is essential to manage the risk of harmful chemicals entering the environment or adversely affecting human health. Regulation (EC) No 1907/2006 covering the Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and restriction of Chemicals (REACH) is the regulation for EU chemicals management and will continue to apply while the UK remains a member of the EU.

As part of the exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the EU and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of chemicals regulation

in the interests of both the UK and the EU. The Great Repeal Bill will also convert current EU law into domestic law wherever practical, giving consumers and businesses as much certainty as possible. This includes laws relating to chemicals. The UK is strongly committed to the effective and safe management of chemicals. That will not change when we leave the EU.

Common Fisheries Policy

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to leave the Common Fisheries Policy when the UK leaves the EU; and if so, how they will ensure that fish stocks remain sustainable. [HL5195]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The UK Government is committed to withdrawing from the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP) and putting in place a new fisheries regime.

The Government will continue to champion sustainable fisheries, including restoring stocks to Maximum Sustainable yield and ending discards, and is committed to cooperating with other countries over the management of shared stocks. We want to use this opportunity to deliver a sustainable fishing industry and marine environment.

Customs

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the speech by the Prime Minister on 17 January setting out the Government's objectives for exiting the EU, whether they have sought advice on the legality of the proposed new customs agreement; and if so, what was that advice. [HL5008]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The Prime Minister has set out our intention to negotiate a new customs agreement with the EU. We have an open mind about the form of that agreement, but it is in both the UK and EU's interest to see tariff-free trade continue and for that cross-border trade to be as frictionless as possible. We will ensure that any future arrangements are fully compliant with our international commitments and obligations.

Dog Fighting

Asked by Lord Hoyle

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to curb dog fighting. [HL5000]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Government has provided the police with a range of powers to tackle dog fighting effectively. Offences cover organising, advertising and taking monies relating to animal fights as well as the possession of equipment used to train dogs for dog fighting. In addition, the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 makes it an offence to possess certain types of dog that

have been identified as bred for fighting or that are similar to types bred for fighting. The police work with the Special Operations Unit of the RSPCA to target illegal dog fighting rings by gathering intelligence and prosecuting those that are involved in dog fighting.

Employment: Disability

Asked by Baroness Randerson

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to develop a review process for Disability Confident to ensure businesses are meeting their commitments. [HL5047]

Lord Henley: To become a Disability Confident Employer, an employer will need to test their business against a set of statements, and commit to take certain actions. As Disability Confident Employers move through towards becoming a 'Disability Confident Leader', they will need to put their assessment up for external challenge. These external validations could be done by a professional assessment body, a disabled user led organisation, a disabled staff forum, an existing DC Leader, or a combination of these. They will also need to take on a role working with other employers to encourage and support them to follow their own Disability Confident journeys.

When employers sign up as Disability Confident they are asked to make specific meaningful offers for disabled people such as jobs, apprenticeships, internships, and work experience. Jobcentre Plus staff will be working with the Disability Confident employers in their localities to develop these offers into opportunities for local disabled people.

EU Aid

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of UK official development assistance is spent through the EU. [HL5137]

Lord Bates: In 2015, approximately 11% of UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) was made up of core assessed contributions to the EU.

European Banking Authority

Asked by Lord Balfie

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the UK's exit from the EU, whether the UK will leave the European Banking Authority; and if so, when the Banking Authority will relocate away from the UK. [HL5017]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The future structure of UK and European Union regulatory frameworks for the financial sector are a matter for the withdrawal negotiations and future policy development.

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the UK is compliant with the obligations contained in the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. [HL5057]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK takes its obligations under the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages seriously. In their last Report on the UK (2014), the Committee of Experts on the Charter welcomed the co-operation and comprehensive response received from the UK. They expressed their view, however, that the UK was not yet fully compliant with all of our obligations and made some recommendations. The Government is currently preparing the UK's next periodical State Report under the Charter, which will set out how we are working to meet our obligations. We aim to submit the report to the Council of Europe later this year.

European Medicines Agency

Asked by Lord Balfe

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the UK's exit from the EU, whether the UK will leave the European Medicines Agency; and if so, when the Agency will be relocated away from the UK. [HL5014]

Lord Bridges of Headley: As part of the exit negotiations the Government will discuss with the EU and Member States how best to continue cooperation in the field of medicines regulation in the best interests of both the UK and the EU.

No decisions have been taken on the future location of the European Medicines Agency. Until we have left the EU, the UK remains a member of the EU with all the rights and obligations that membership entails. The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency continues to play its full role in all procedures of the EU medicines and devices network as well as other networks.

Families: Disadvantaged

Asked by Lord Beecham

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 31 January (HL4983), what is meant by the statement that the costs to DCLG "were met through existing departmental resource". [HL5123]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: The cost to DCLG in identifying the errors in the original report and ensuring that National Institute of Economic and Social Research (NIESR) rectified them related only to DCLG staff time. This was therefore borne by the Department's existing staffing budget.

Flood Control: Somerset

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 23 January (HL4517), when the scheme to widen and improve the River Sowy and King Sedgemoor Drain will be completed, and what is the estimated increase in volumes of flood water that can be removed as a result of that scheme. [HL5157]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: The Environment Agency is planning to issue tender documents for the main component of the works to widen and improve the River Sowy and King Sedgemoor Drain in spring 2017 and expects the scheme to be functional by the end of 2020.

The scheme aims to increase the capacity of the River Sowy and King Sedgemoor Drain system by an estimated 7 cubic metres per second (m^3/s). This will increase the estimated existing capacity of the system by 41%, from $17 m^3/s$ to $24 m^3/s$.

Food: Imports

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether any new trade arrangements with the US, involving the import of food products from the US to the UK, could compromise existing food safety and traceability standards. [HL5064]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: There are currently no proposals for the UK to grant access for US agri-food products outside of the EU's current approvals regime and hence no specific assessment has been undertaken. Until the UK leaves the EU we will continue to meet all relevant EU food safety legislation. Once we have left the EU, maintaining the UK's high standards of food safety will remain a priority.

GCSE

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking, together with the regulator Ofqual, to ensure that there is no confusion over the new numerical grading system for GCSEs in England. [HL4895]

Lord Nash: The Department has been working closely with Ofqual and the awarding organisations to communicate the changes to GCSEs including the new 9-1 grading scale to key audiences. Ofqual have a communications campaign on 9-1 grading and regularly attend conferences and events across the country explaining the reforms. In 2015, Ofqual produced a set of postcards detailing the reforms and in 2016, these were supplemented by additional information. We jointly produced a slide pack that was sent to all schools in England in July 2016.

We and Ofqual are also working with partners such as the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), University and College Admission Service (UCAS), Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) and Association of Colleges (AoC) to make sure other stakeholders, such as colleges, universities and employers, have a clear understanding of the new grading scale and what this means for them. Ofqual is measuring the effectiveness of these communications, which will increase significantly, as we get closer to the first awards of GCSEs with the new grades in August.

Gender Recognition

Asked by Baroness Burt of Solihull

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the new transgender strategy as agreed to in the government response to recommendation 1 of the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee 2016 Report Transgender Equality HC390. [HL5097]

Asked by Baroness Burt of Solihull

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish the balance sheet of the previous transgender action plan as committed to in the government response to the Women and Equalities Committee 2016 Report HC390. [HL5098]

Lord Nash: In our response to the Committee in July 2016, the Government committed to a range of actions designed to improve the lives and experiences of transgender people.

This included a commitment to publish an update of the LGB&T Action Plan and the Transgender Action Plan and to publish a new plan on transgender equality.

We will provide an update on the Government's progress in 2017.

Industrial Products: Imports

Asked by Lord Pearson of Rannoch

To ask Her Majesty's Government in 2015 what was the value in sterling of (1) UK imports from outside the EU of industrial goods, and (2) UK customs duties charged and collected by HM Revenue and Customs on those imports. [HL5035]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: The total statistical value in sterling for industrial goods outside of the EU was £337,197,217,084.94. The total of Customs duties collected was £2,321,736,536.64 and the VAT duties collected on those goods was £20,844,769,400.38 in 2015.

Inhuman Treatment

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 26 January (HL WS444), whether they will take steps

to ensure that such assistance does not ignore or condone the use of torture or inhuman treatment on detainees and prisoners, in particular in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States. [HL5081]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: My statement announced publication of guidance on Overseas Security and Justice Assistance precisely because this Government is determined never to provide assistance in a way which ignores, condones or enables torture. The guidance requires those managing any Government security or justice assistance to identify risks that their work may, even inadvertently, cause or encourage torture. Where any such risks are found to exist, they must first be mitigated and then referred up to senior officials and, where the risk is judged to be high, to Ministers for approval. We emphatically reject torture as both illegal and repugnant. The prevention of torture has long been a government priority.

Iraq: Islamic State

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 6 January (HL4319), what plans they have made to gather and preserve evidence of crimes committed by Daesh in Iraq. [HL5121]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While investigative and prosecutorial work to bring Daesh to justice is already underway across the world, we are working with international partners to identify ways to advance this work, including through action at the UN. In Iraq, the UK translated the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict into Kurdish and Arabic and has followed up with projects supporting Iraqi organisations to document and present evidence of gender based violence to international standards. Our aim is to work with the consent of the Iraqi Government and develop local capacity to take this forward.

Israel: Palestinians

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel regarding reports of the death of a 17 year-old who was denied a permit to exit Gaza to receive lifesaving medical treatment. [HL5091]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this specific issue, we have consistently urged the Israeli Government to ease movement and access restrictions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs), most recently on 5 December. We are also supporting the UN Access Coordination Unit to work with the Israeli Government, Palestinian Authority and aid agencies to help facilitate humanitarian access in the OPTs.

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel following reports that Israel's High Court of Justice has decided to allow the Civil Administration in the occupied West Bank to demolish eight Palestinian villages in the South Hebron Hills affecting around 1,500 Palestinians. [[HL5094](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, our Embassy in Tel Aviv has previously raised our concerns on demolitions and has repeatedly urged the Israeli authorities to provide a legal route for Palestinians to obtain building permits.

The UK's position on demolitions in the Occupied Palestinian Territories is clear: demolitions cause unnecessary suffering to ordinary Palestinians; are harmful to the peace process; and are, in all but the most exceptional of cases, contrary to international humanitarian law. The Fourth Geneva Convention is clear that the destruction of any real or personal property in Occupied Territory is not justified unless it is rendered absolutely necessary by military operations.

Israeli Settlements

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel in regard to that government's announcement that a further 600 Jewish settler homes will be built in East Jerusalem. [[HL5093](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: While we have not raised this issue with the Israeli authorities, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Hon. Friend the Member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood) issued a statement on 24 January regarding the announcement of plans to build 566 new settlement homes in East Jerusalem. The Minister also raised the issue of settlements with the Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister when they spoke on 10 January 2017.

Lebanon: Palestinians

*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Lebanon regarding reports of alleged violence against UNRWA staff and the civilian population of Ein El Hilweh Palestine Refugee camp on 15 January. [[HL5090](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The violence and instability in Lebanon's 12 Palestine refugee camps remain areas of concern for the UK. The violence that took place in Ein El Hilweh on 15 January was an appalling demonstration of the severe difficulties that affect daily life in the camp for both the civilian

population and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) staff members. The UK values UNRWA's commitment to the welfare and development of Palestinian refugees, and the impact of violence on the safety of UNRWA staff members and their ability to deliver UNRWA services continues to alarm us. Although it is not the UK's position to routinely raise specific camp security incidents with the Government of Lebanon, Palestinian refugee issues are monitored closely and raised in our regular discussions with the Lebanese Government.

Mudawi Ibrahim Adam

*Asked by **Baroness Cox***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Sudan regarding the ongoing detention without charge of Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, a human rights activist. [[HL5055](#)]

*Asked by **Baroness Cox***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to ask the government of Sudan to allow the family of Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam to visit him while he is in detention. [[HL5056](#)]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We remain deeply concerned by the ongoing detention of Dr Mudawi Ibrahim Adam, and allegations that he has been tortured. Both our Ambassador in Khartoum and the UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan most recently raised our concerns about this case directly with senior Sudanese Government figures, including Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour on 24 January, during the visit of the UK Special Representative to Khartoum between 21-28 January. Officials from our Embassy in Khartoum also pressed the Sudanese Government to allow access for Dr Mudawi's family, and we are aware that they visited him in prison on 27 January.

Neonicotinoids

*Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham***

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to remove the current restrictions on the use of neonicotinoids when the UK leaves the EU; and if so, what is their assessment of the impact this will have on the populations of bees and other pollinators. [[HL5196](#)]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: While the UK remains a member of the EU, we will continue to meet our obligations under EU law. This includes restrictions on the use of neonicotinoids. As part of the preparation for EU exit, we are considering future arrangements for pesticides. Our highest priority will continue to be the protection of people and the environment.

The Government remains of the view that decisions on the use of neonicotinoids and other pesticides should be based on a careful scientific assessment of the risks.

Pesticides that carry unacceptable risks to bees, other pollinators and the environment should not be authorised.

NHS: Sustainable Development

Asked by Baroness Redfern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria will be used to judge whether NHS sustainability and transformation plans have been the result of meaningful local community engagement and reflect local context, needs and financial situations. [HL5003]

Asked by Baroness Redfern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria will be used to judge whether NHS sustainability and transformation plans succeed in ensuring third sector involvement in the delivery of those plans. [HL5004]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: In NHS England's 30 June and 21 October 2016 STP submission guidance, NHS England set out clear expectations that STPs would include the following elements as part of their plans:

- A plan to engage more formally with NHS boards and those of their partners after the July conversations between STP leads and representatives from national bodies;
- Evidence of how footprints have engaged organisations and other key stakeholders so far, and with whom they are still to engaged; and
- Evidence or plans to involve staff, clinicians and care professionals, patients and Health and Wellbeing Boards etc.

Copies of the 30 June and 21 October guidance documents are attached.

NHS England has made clear that STP partners should work with the knowledge, skills and experience of people in their communities. To support this, it jointly produced a practical guide for those developing plans in each of the 44 footprint areas and the statutory organisations that form part of them.

A copy of this guidance *Engaging local people: A guide for local areas developing Sustainability and Transformation Plans* is attached.

Those STP areas that are more advanced in their plans have begun formal consultation in line with business as usual requirements for service changes. Even where this is not taking place, dialogue with local people is essential throughout. Local community and voluntary sector engagement will be a central factor in national bodies' consideration of individual local proposals and the support they give to local areas to deliver them.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

21 October Guidance [STPs - STP October 2016 guidance letter.pdf]

30 June Guidance [stp-submission-guidance-june.pdf]

Engaging local people [engag-local-people-stps.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-01-25/HL5003>

Asked by Baroness Redfern

To ask Her Majesty's Government against what criteria will NHS sustainability and transformation plans be judged in relation to cancer and end of life commitments. [HL5005]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: One of the main focuses of every Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) is the delivery of the National Health Service national strategy for cancer. In line with this, all STPs are expected to set out plans to make progress in the following key areas:

- Preventing cancer by addressing cancer risk factors – especially smoking; all areas should take steps to reduce national rate by the end of the decade;
- Diagnosing more cancers early, increasing the proportion of cancers diagnosed at stage 1 and 2. STPs need to improve their cancer pathways as well as substantially increasing diagnostic capacity (especially imaging and endoscopy). These actions will result in fewer cancers diagnosed as an emergency, and an increase in one and five-year survival rates. By 2020, everyone with a suspected cancer should receive a definitive diagnosis or otherwise within 28 days; and
- Improving cancer treatment and care. By 2020, all patients should have access to high quality modern therapeutic services, such as personalised treatment informed by molecular diagnostics. They will be cared for during and after their treatment, benefiting from increased support to live well after treatment. Patients will have a better experience of their cancer care, with less variation across the country.

NHS England established an independent Cancer Taskforce chaired by Harpal Kumar, Chief Executive of Cancer Research UK, to support the development of this strategy. This included representatives from across the cancer community and engaged with hundreds of people, including clinicians, patients, charity representatives and policy-makers, over a six month period.

The National End of Life Care Programme Board is seeking to understand the end of life care (EoLC) content within the current plans; they are also considering how priorities within STPs can be achieved by delivering good EoLC and what support is available to enable this. The Programme Board has membership from across both the statutory and voluntary sector, including representation of national charities through the Ambitions Partnership for Palliative and End of Life Care.

Overseas Trade

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the speech by the Prime Minister on 17 January setting out the Government's objectives for exiting the EU,

whether they have commissioned a comparative assessment of the economic and trade impacts of (1) leaving the EU single market and trading under WTO rules, and (2) negotiating new trade deals; if so, whether this assessment includes negotiating timelines and sectoral impacts; and whether any such assessment will be published, and if so, when. [HL5009]

Lord Bridges of Headley: The Department for Exiting the European Union, working with officials across government, continues to undertake a wide range of data analysis covering the entirety of the UK economy and our trading relationships with the EU. We are looking at over 50 sectors as well as cross-cutting regulatory issues to inform the UK's position for the upcoming negotiations with our EU partners. Furthermore, the government has already started discussions on future trade ties with countries like Australia, New Zealand and India. These discussions will be informed by careful economic analysis. The Department's Officials and Ministers are working closely with other departments, including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Department for International Trade and others to deliver the best outcomes for the UK.

We have however been clear that we are not going to publish anything that might risk harming our negotiating position, and the House of Commons has voted on a motion that endorses that approach.

Asked by Baroness Janke

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on UK companies' ability to prepare international trade paperwork if the UK exits the EU before alternative international trade agreements have been established. [HL5010]

Lord Bridges of Headley: It is in both the UK and EU's interest to see tariff-free trade and for that cross-border trade to be as frictionless as possible. We will seek a new customs agreement with the EU that supports these objectives.

We have said we anticipate a phased process of implementation, in which both Britain and the EU institutions and Member States prepare for the new arrangements that exist between us.

Prison Sentences

Asked by Lord Hoyle

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to bring prison sentences in England and Wales in line with those imposed in Northern Ireland. [HL5001]

Lord Keen of Elie: Sentences imposed both in England and Wales and in Northern Ireland are a matter for the independent judiciary. Policy on sentencing in Northern Ireland is devolved to the Northern Ireland Executive. We do not have any plans to bring prison sentences in England and Wales in line with those in Northern Ireland.

Probation

Asked by Lord Patel

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the comprehensive review of the probation system to improve outcomes for offenders and communities will be published; and whether the review will include the development of a performance management system to monitor the effectiveness of Community Rehabilitation Companies, including centrally gathering relevant data such as offenders' mental health, physical health, and substance misuse problems. [HL4991]

Lord Keen of Elie: We will set out our plans for the probation system once our review is concluded in April. The review is considering all aspects of the probation system. As with our plans for prisons, we want a simpler, clearer system with specific outcome measures such as getting offenders into apprenticeships and work. Our contract management teams closely monitor and robustly manage providers to make sure they fulfil their contractual commitments to ensure service delivery, reduce reoffending, protect the public and provide value for money to the taxpayer.

RFA Tidespring

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the original planned date for acceptance into service of Royal Fleet Auxiliary Tidespring; and what is now the planned date for acceptance into service. [HL5144]

Earl Howe: At contract award in 2012, Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Tidespring was expected to enter service in October 2016.

In order to address emergent technical issues, the programme schedule was revised in 2016, and RFA Tidespring was accepted off-contract in January 2017. On current plans, we expect RFA Tidespring to start UK customisation and capability assessment trials in the spring, before entering service with the RFA by the end of 2017.

We expect all four Maritime Afloat Reach and Sustainability (MARS) tankers to have entered service with the RFA by the end of 2018, as planned.

Russia: Military Aircraft

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Russian military aircraft are passing through British airspace; if so, whether they are always required to submit flight plans in advance; and if not so required, why not. [HL5147]

Earl Howe: There have been no unauthorised incursions by Russian military aircraft into sovereign airspace around the UK, which projects 12 miles off the

shore or to a mutually agreed mid-point between adjacent nations, as in the Straits of Dover.

Russian state registered aircraft, which may include military aircraft, can transit through UK sovereign airspace but must apply for diplomatic clearance in advance on a case by case basis and adhere to an approved flight plan with civil air traffic control authorities.

Sudan: Politics and Government

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations the UK Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan made to the Sudanese Foreign Minister regarding the environment for civil society activists in Sudan at their meeting on 24 January. [HL5068]

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations the UK Special Envoy to Sudan and South Sudan made to the Sudanese Foreign Minister regarding the case for an inclusive national dialogue process at their meeting on 24 January. [HL5069]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK Special Representative for Sudan and South Sudan and the Sudanese Foreign Minister Ibrahim Ghandour discussed the political process outlined in the African Union Roadmap agreement, including the need for inclusivity in Sudan's national dialogue, which was designed to be open to all political parties, civil society and rebel groups. The UK Special Representative also raised our concerns about the detention of human rights defenders, civil society activists and members of the political opposition directly with the Foreign Minister.

Sudan: Trade Promotion

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 23 January (HL Deb, col 425) concerning recent developments in Sudan, whether they are providing any support to (1) the British commercial mission that will visit Khartoum in April, and (2) a seminar focusing on the promotion of British business to be held in Khartoum in February. [HL5070]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Our Embassy in Khartoum will facilitate these events by providing business links and advice to the Middle East Association's commercial mission. The Government is not providing any financial support. More widely, we will continue to provide support to UK companies to understand the opportunities and challenges of operating in Sudan.

Syria: Diplomatic Service

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to restoring the UK's diplomatic representation in Damascus at a level below ambassadorial. [HL5164]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have no plans to re-establish a diplomatic presence in Damascus in the current circumstances.

Turkey: Political Prisoners

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many elected members of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey are now detained or imprisoned; and what discussions they have had with the government of Turkey about the sentences imposed on the leaders of the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP). [HL5083]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Twelve MPs from the Peoples' Democratic Party (Halk Demokratik Partisi) are currently in detention in Turkey. They include the two co-leaders, who are on trial but have not yet been sentenced. Ministers have raised the issue of human rights and the rule of law in meetings with their Turkish counter-parts.

West Bank: Water

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will formally welcome the re-establishment of a joint Israel Palestine Water Committee for the West Bank; and what assessment they have made of this as a model for co-operation in the absence of any other peace process. [HL5085]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We welcome the signing of an agreement to revive the Joint Israel Palestine Water Committee for the West Bank. If fully implemented, this agreement would be an important step toward preserving the two-state solution. We encourage further cooperation between Israel and the Palestinian Authority. This is critical to the viability of a future Palestinian state.

Written Questions: Government Responses

Asked by Lord Jopling

To ask the Leader of the House, further to her Written Answer on 23 January (HL4521), whether the shortage of resources within the Ministry of Justice will be resolved in time for the outstanding Question for Written Answer tabled on 16 November (HL3278) to be answered before the end of February. [HL5030]

Baroness Evans of Bowes Park: As detailed in my previous answer (HL4521), I have recently written to Lord Keen of Elie QC and the Secretary of State for Justice to make clear the House's expectations with regards to Questions for Written Answer. I am informed that the Ministry of Justice has taken steps to rectify the issue, including making further process improvements, for example reducing the internal deadlines to allow more time for clearance. Lord Keen of Elie QC has also had discussions with senior officials within the Department about its recent performance. The Ministry of Justice has now cleared all overdue Questions for Written Answer, including HL3278, which was answered on 30 January 2017.

My office will continue to work with all departments to ensure prompt and satisfactory answers to Questions for Written Answer.

Young People: Unemployment

Asked by Lord Browne of Belmont

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many young people aged between 16 and 19 years of age were not in education, employment or training in each quarter of 2016. [HL5022]

Lord Nash: The Department for Education publish [Quarterly statistics on young people not in education, employment or training \(NEET\)](#) from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The data covers England and is based on academic age. Many 19 year olds will be academic age 18 so academic ages 16-18 are included in the answer below.

Statistics for Quarter 4 2016 will be published on 23rd February 2017. Trends should be assessed by comparing the current time period with the same time period in the previous year to account for seasonal effects. Figures are therefore provided for the latest 2 years below.

It should also be noted that sample sizes in the Labour Force Survey are small for individual age cohorts, so

sampling variation is large and caution should be taken in interpreting changes over the short term, particularly when numbers are small such as 16 and 17 year olds NEET.

	16	17	18	Total 16-18	16-18 NEET rate
2014 Q4	15,000	34,000	84,000	133,000	7.0%
2015 Q1	10,000	37,000	88,000	134,000	7.1%
2015 Q2	14,000	48,000	80,000	142,000	7.5%
2015 Q3	28,000	81,000	82,000	191,000	10.2%
2015 Q4	12,000	28,000	81,000	122,000	6.6%
2016 Q1	20,000	35,000	65,000	121,000	6.5%
2016 Q2	25,000	52,000	74,000	151,000	8.0%
2016 Q3	30,000	64,000	71,000	164,000	8.7%

The NEET rate for the 16-18 age group overall was 8.7% at the end of Q3 2016, 1.5 percentage points lower than Q3 2015 and the lowest Q3 NEET rate since consistent records began in 2000.

The ONS also release [quarterly NEET estimates](#) but their figures cover the UK, are based on calendar age and are seasonally adjusted.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Quarterly NEET Estimates [HL5022 Attachment.xls]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2017-01-26/HL5022>

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