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Monday
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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements 1

Written Answers..... 6

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Ministers and others who make Statements or answer Questions are referred to only by name, not their ministerial or other title. The current list of ministerial and other responsibilities is as follows.

<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 Agnew of Oulton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
Lord Ashton of Hyde	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
Lord Bates	Minister of State, Department for International Development
Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office
Baroness Buscombe	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
Lord Callanan	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen	Whip
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Duncan of Springbank	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Scotland Office
Baroness Fairhead	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
Lord Gardiner of Kimble	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Goldie	Whip
Lord Henley	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Lord Keen of Elie	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
Lord O'Shaughnessy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Baroness Stedman-Scott	Whip
Baroness Sugg	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport, Whip
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

Monday, 19 March 2018

ECOFIN

[HLWS540]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

A meeting of The Economic and Financial Affairs Council (ECOFIN) was held in Brussels on 13 March 2018. The UK was represented by Mark Bowman (Director General, International Finance, HM Treasury). Council discussed the following:

Early Morning Session

The Eurogroup President briefed Ministers on the outcomes of the 12 March meeting of the Eurogroup, and the Commission provided an update on the current economic situation in the EU. Council also discussed progress on the Banking Package, aimed at reducing risk in the banking industry, agreeing to defer agreement on a general approach until a later date.

Mandatory Disclosure Rules

The Council reached political agreement on the Council Directive regarding the mandatory automatic exchange of information in the field of taxation in relation to reportable cross-border arrangements.

Current Financial Services Legislative Proposals

The Bulgarian Presidency provided an update on current legislative proposals in the field of financial services. The Commission presented a package of proposals relating to the EU's Capital Markets Union.

European Semester 2018

The Council exchanged views on the implementation of country-specific recommendations with a focus on productivity growth. Ireland and the Netherlands provided presentations on their experience of reforms to improve productivity growth. The Council also adopted the conclusions on the European Court of Auditors Special Report on the Macroeconomic Imbalance Procedure (MIP).

G20 Meeting

The Council approved the EU Terms of reference for the G20 meeting on 19-20 March in Buenos Aires.

Status of the Implementation of Financial Services Legislation

The Commission informed the Council on the status of the implementation of financial services legislation.

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

[HLWS534]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Hon Friend Minister of State for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (George Eustice) has today made the following statement:

Agriculture and Fisheries Council will take place on 19 March in Brussels.

As the provisional agenda stands, the primary focus for fisheries will be an exchange of views regarding a Regulation on a multi-annual plan for demersal species in the Western Mediterranean Sea.

The primary focus for agriculture will be the adoption of Council Conclusions on 'The Future of Food and Farming'.

There are currently two items scheduled under 'Any other business':

- working conditions and safety on board fishing vessels – ratification and transposition of international instruments

- joint declaration of 10 Member States (Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain) on future development of freshwater aquaculture in the EU after 2020.

Parliament voted to trigger article 50 and leave the European Union. Until we leave the EU, all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. The outcome of our negotiations with the EU on a future partnership will determine what arrangements apply in future.

Croatia

[HLWS541]

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

We will today inform the European Commission and the Croatian Government of our decision not to extend further the transitional restrictions on Croatian citizens' access to the UK labour market when they expire on 30 June 2018. This is in line with the provisions of the Accession Treaty for Croatia, under which temporary restrictions have been in force since Croatia joined the European Union on 1 July 2013. There are only three remaining member states (Austria, Slovenia and the Netherlands) who also currently impose transitional restrictions on Croatians, and will need to consider the case for extending these before July.

Since 2013 when Croatia joined the EU, their citizens, unless exempt, require authorisation from the Home Office before they can take up a post in the UK. After 12 months' employment, Croatians are free to work in the UK without restriction.

It was always the case that these restrictions were temporary and it would only be legal to extend them further if there was an economic case that to do otherwise would cause or threaten serious labour market disturbance. We have examined the evidence carefully and no such case can be made.

The UK labour market is very strong with near record levels of unemployment and employment. There is a low volume of flows from Croatia to the UK, and a low

number of resident Croatians in the UK. Long-term international migration flows suggest an estimated total as low as 4,000 long-term immigrants from Malta, Cyprus and Croatia arrived in the UK in the year to June (ONS, 2017). Estimates of the total number of Croatians resident in the UK in 2016 are below 10,000 (ONS, 2016). The cultural/social network ‘pull’ factor is limited, particularly given the much larger Croatian diaspora size in other EU Member States (e.g. Germany).

This is in contrast to our consideration of extending controls for the EU2 (Romania and Bulgaria) when our economy was still fragile after the recession. Figures at the same point of those transitional controls showed there were around 57,000 Romanians and 35,000 Bulgarians living in the UK.

Our conclusion is that there is insufficient evidence to satisfy the test of ‘serious labour market disturbance’ that is required to extend the restrictions.

The decision not to extend the restrictions will mean that Croatian citizens will be able to seek and obtain employment in the UK on the same basis as currently enjoyed by all other EU citizens.

We will not discriminate between nationals of the EU member states in our implementation of the Citizens’ Rights deal. Croatian citizens will be able to apply for settled status on the same terms as all other EU citizens.

We have been clear that we will take back control of immigration and our borders when we leave the EU, and we will put in place an immigration system which works in the best interests of the whole of the UK.

Environment Council

[HLWS536]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble: My Hon Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Environment (Thérèse Coffey MP) has today made the following statement:

I attended the EU Environment Council in Brussels on 5 March. Hannah Blythyn AM, Welsh Minister for Environment also attended.

I wish to update the House on the matters discussed.

Communications on delivering on the Circular Economy Action Plan – exchange of views:

a) European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy;

b) Monitoring Framework for the Circular Economy;

c) Implementation of the Circular Economy package: options to address the interface between chemical, product and waste legislation.

Ministers exchanged views on the Presidency’s questions regarding the Plastics Strategy and the interface between chemicals, product and waste legislation. The UK referenced the Industrial Strategy, Clean Growth Strategy and the 25 Year Environment Plan, highlighting UK actions including eliminating all avoidable plastic waste by the end of 2042 in England; a deposit return

scheme for drinks containers in Scotland and a reduction of around 80% of single-use carrier bags in Wales since a charge was introduced. Several member states called for the reopening of the Packing and Packaging Waste Directive, others highlighted the role of eco-design for plastics and the role of taxation on plastics.

On the EU’s proposed monitoring framework, the UK welcomed the recommendations but called for greater emphasis on the development of indicators earlier in the waste hierarchy to help design out waste. Some member states regretted the lack of concrete measures to address chemicals in the plastics strategy and wanted further references to a non-toxic environment. Others wanted to improve the traceability of chemicals in plastics.

The Presidency stated it plans to adopt Council Conclusions on the European Strategy for Plastics, and on the interface between chemical, product and waste legislation at the June Environment Council in Luxembourg.

Greening The European Semester – exchange of views

The Commission noted that there has been increased focus on greening the European Semester, with the Environmental Implementation Review (EIR) providing better information in this regard. Ministers also responded to Presidency questions on compliance and sustainable finance. Several member states thought there was a role for the new Multi-Annual Financial Framework in supporting a transition to a sustainable, low carbon economy. The Commission noted the need for actions to be integrated strategically.

AOB items

The following items were also discussed under Any Other Business.

1. *21st European Forum on Eco-innovation for Air Quality (Sofia, 5-6 February 2018)*

The Commission noted that urgent action needed to be taken at national and EU level to tackle air quality. They stated that a coordinated approach together with strong regulation and enforcement were required to succeed.

2. Global Pact for the Environment

The Council took note of the AOB on the Global Pact for the Environment from the French, supported by Luxembourg. Many delegations supported its aims, and the Commission stated it would propose a draft negotiating mandate for the areas within its competence.

3. Amsterdam declarations – Combating imported deforestation

Delegations took note of the joint AOB from France, Denmark, Netherlands, Germany and the UK on eliminating deforestation from supply chains. The UK intervened to support the Declaration and to encourage other member States to join this initiative.

4. Implementation of the Regulation on invasive alien species

The Danish delegation, supported by the Lithuanian and Greek delegations provided information on the

implementation of the EU Regulation on Invasive Alien Species

6. Review of the Regulation on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH)

The Commission provided information on the Review on Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals (REACH).

7. Current legislative proposal (Public deliberation in accordance with Article 16(8) of the Treaty on European Union) Regulation on CO2 standards for cars and vans

The Commission introduced its proposal for a regulation on emissions standards in cars and vans, with the intention of reaching a General Approach at the October Environment Council. The Presidency confirmed it will table a policy debate for the June Environment Council.

8. Developments regarding shipping and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

The Commission provided an update on progress ahead of the April IMO meeting in London

9. 24th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 24, Katowice, 3-14 December 2018)

Poland introduced an AOB on the 24th Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP24). They noted the importance of adopting the implementing rules underpinning the Paris Agreement and acknowledged the Talanoa Dialogue as a fundamental step towards achieving the Paris temperature goals. Many delegations, including the UK, agreed on these two priorities with several member states calling for the publication of a Commission communication on the EU's long-term strategy in early 2019.

10. Commercial trade in raw ivory within the EU

The UK introduced a joint AOB with France calling for a ban on the intra-EU trade in raw ivory. This received support from Germany and Luxembourg. The Commission noted it will release a progress report on the EU Action Plan against wildlife trafficking in July, detailing its next steps.

Parliament voted to trigger article 50 and leave the European Union. Until we leave the EU, all the rights and obligations of EU membership remain in force. The outcome of our negotiations with the EU on a future partnership will determine what arrangements apply in future.

European Union Finances

[HLWS537]

Lord Bates: My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Elizabeth Truss) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I have today laid before Parliament *the European Union Finances 2017: statement on the 2017 EU Budget and measures to counter fraud and financial mismanagement*

(Cm 9576). This is a routine annual publication. It is the thirty seventh in the series.

The statement gives details of revenue and expenditure in the 2017 European Union Budget, recent developments in EU financial management and measures to counter fraud against the EU Budget. It also includes a chapter and annex updating on the use of EU funds in the UK over the period.

Foreign Affairs Council

[HLWS535]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: My Right Honourable Friend, the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Sir Alan Duncan), has made the following written Ministerial statement:

My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs will attend the Foreign Affairs Council (FAC) on 19 March. The Foreign Affairs Council will be chaired by the High Representative of the European Union (EU) for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (HRVP), Federica Mogherini. The meeting will be held in Brussels.

Prior to the FAC there will be an informal meeting, over breakfast, with the Ukrainian Foreign Minister. The Foreign Secretary will brief EU Ministers on developments in our response to the incident in Salisbury. The FAC will then discuss Ukraine, Syria and Iran. There will also be a lunch with the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea to discuss recent events.

Foreign Affairs Council

Ukraine

Ministers will have a substantive discussion on Ukraine. This will address the twin strategic challenges facing Ukraine: its crucial reform agenda and ongoing Russian aggression, including in Crimea. The UK remains fully engaged in Ukraine, and will focus on continuing our support to Ukraine in tackling these fundamental challenges.

Syria

Ministers will be joined by UN Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura to discuss Syria, including implementation of UN Security Council resolution 2401 and support for the UN-led Geneva talks. Ministers will also discuss preparations for the second Brussels conference, which will take place on 24-25 April and will focus on humanitarian support and bolstering the UN-led political process in Geneva.

Iran

Ministers will discuss shared concerns around Iran's destabilising regional activity and the EU's role in responding to this.

General Affairs Council

[HLWS539]

Lord Callanan: I will attend the General Affairs Council in Brussels on 20 March 2018 to represent the

UK. Until we leave the European Union, we remain committed to fulfilling our rights and obligations as a full member.

The provisional agenda includes:

Preparation of the European Council on 22-23 March 2018

Ministers will discuss the draft conclusions for the March European Council. The conclusions cover Jobs, Growth and Competitiveness, which include the Single Market, Trade, the European Semester and Social Issues. The EU-Western Balkans Summit in Sofia on 17 May 2018 is also covered in the conclusions.

European Council follow-up

The Bulgarian Presidency will update Ministers on progress in implementing December European Council conclusions which covered Security and Defence, Social Issues, Education and Culture, Climate Change, and Jerusalem.

2018 European Semester

The Commission will present a report on priorities for the 2018 European semester. This is expected to cover the implementation of reforms undertaken by Member States in response to their Country-Specific Recommendations last year.

Informal Trade Foreign Affairs Council

[HLWS533]

Baroness Fairhead: My Rt hon Friend the Minister of State for Trade Policy (Greg Hands) has today made the following statement.

The EU Foreign Affairs Informal Council (Trade) took place in Sofia on 27 February 2018. I represented the UK at the meeting. A summary of the discussions follows:

On follow up to the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference held in December 2017, Ministers discussed the lack of negotiated outcomes at the multilateral level. Nonetheless, there was a broad welcome for the new joint initiative statements at MC11. The objective was for a critical mass of interested WTO Members to make progress in the areas addressed by the joint statements. These discussions should be open to everybody to join. Developments around the WTO Appellate Body were also discussed.

Commissioner Malmström updated the Council on the state of play of the EU's Free Trade Agreements, stating that Japan and Singapore would be presented to Council imminently, and that negotiations with Indonesia and Chile were ongoing. Negotiations with Malaysia were set to resume in the near future.

Discussion revolved around Mexico and Mercosur, which were both reported to be in the end game but with a number of issues remaining to be resolved. I called on the Commission to show ambition on data flows in the Mexico agreement.

Under AOB, and after I had had to leave, the Commission gave an update on EU-US relations, and assessed that the US' likely imposition of import tariffs or

quotas on steel and aluminium on national security grounds was unjustified. The Commission and Member States agreed to continue to engage the US Government and Congress in order to argue against any measures, highlighting the knock-on impact of safeguards on global markets. Since the President's announcement on 1 March that he intends to impose tariffs, discussions with the EU have continued and the UK will stay closely engaged on this live issue.

Private Pensions

[HLWS538]

Baroness Buscombe: My Right Honourable Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (The Rt. Hon. Esther McVey MP) has made the following Written Statement.

Today the Government is publishing a White Paper "Protecting Defined Benefit Pension Schemes" which sets out our proposals to improve confidence in defined benefit pensions. It builds on last year's Green Paper, "Security and Sustainability in Defined Benefit Pension Schemes".

As we said when we published the Green Paper, defined benefit schemes are an important pillar of the UK economy. Around £1.5 trillion is invested by about 5,500 schemes. More importantly, these pensions are a key part of many people's retirement income. There are 10.5 million members in the UK with a defined benefit pension: it is crucially important that the system delivers the retirement income they have saved for over many years of hard work.

We know that the vast majority of employers with these schemes want to do the right thing by their employees. Our 2017 Green Paper examined the evidence around defined benefit scheme affordability, and concluded that the majority of employers can and do fund their schemes appropriately. The responses to the Green Paper supported this. However, to help trustees and employers work even more effectively towards a long-term goal, we are introducing changes to scheme funding. Where employers want the best for their employees, we want to ensure that the system supports this.

However, it is clear that not all employers want to act fairly. At the heart of the White Paper is a strong message for employers tempted to act in a way that is detrimental to their pension scheme. We will not tolerate such behaviour, and will come down heavily on attempts by employers to avoid their responsibilities. We are supporting the Pensions Regulator to be a clearer, quicker and tougher organisation by giving it new and improved powers to gather information and require employer co-operation. Where there is evidence of unscrupulous behaviour, we are introducing measures including a punitive fines regime and, in the most serious cases, a new criminal offence for those who deliberately and recklessly put their pension scheme at risk.

Finally, we are consulting on the legislative framework and accreditation regime for consolidation, providing

industry with the opportunity to innovate whilst ensuring there are robust safeguards in place to protect members' benefits. This will be the first step in enabling schemes greater opportunities to realise the benefits of scale achieved through consolidation, and will benefit both members and employers.

The White Paper relates only to private sector defined benefit schemes and is not concerned with other types of pension provision, such as public service pension schemes

or defined contribution schemes. A response to our consultation on the future of the British Steel Pension Scheme (BSPS) is included in chapter four of the White Paper.

Defined benefit pensions are a subject of great importance to many people, representing their hopes for the future. We are determined to ensure that these hopes are protected. This White Paper is a key step towards a more secure future for members of these schemes.

Written Answers

Monday, 19 March 2018

Absent Voting: Northern Ireland

Asked by **Lord Maginnis of Drumglass**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 3 July 2017 (HL3), 15 September 2017 (HL1448), and 13 October 2017 (HL1671), whether the Chief Electoral Officer (Northern Ireland) has completed her enquiry into the increase in proxy voting by over 500 per cent between 2010 and 2017; whether she initiated any further investigation; if so, whether that investigation involves the Police Service of Northern Ireland; when any further investigation was initiated and commenced; and when a definitive outcome is expected to be published. [HL6045]

Lord Duncan of Springbank: The Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) has completed her post-election review into absent voting and has written to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding the findings of this review. A copy of this letter has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

These are operational matters for the CEO. However, I am aware that a very small number of cases were referred to the PSNI for investigation last year. The Electoral Office for Northern Ireland pass all cases of possible fraud to the PSNI however, the CEO's review did not reveal any additional cases that warranted investigation.

Air Routes: Northern Ireland

Asked by **Lord Eames**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what priority they place on the maintenance of a regular air link between Northern Ireland and London; and how frequently they consult on that issue with (1) British Airways, and (2) Aer Lingus. [HL6357]

Baroness Sugg: The Government recognises that air connectivity between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK is of the utmost importance given its geographical circumstances. There were over 1.5 million passenger journeys between Belfast Airports and Gatwick and Heathrow Airports in 2016. We expect this demand to continue, given that Northern Ireland is a competitive destination in its own right.

The Government does not frequently consult with British Airways or Aer Lingus about flights between Northern Ireland and London. We believe that air passengers are best served by a commercial airline market which is able to operate in a competitive environment. This allows airlines to determine the routes that they operate, and from which airports, based on their assessment of routes' viability.

The Government is considering the issue of regional connectivity across the UK as part of developing its future aviation strategy.

Apprentices: Taxation

Asked by **Lord Porter of Spalding**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to ensure that any Apprenticeship Levy underspend is retained in the areas where it is raised, in order to address local skills gaps. [HL6052]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: There are no plans to ring fence any funds for specific areas. This would prevent employers in higher demand areas that are currently developing apprenticeship programmes from accessing available funds.

We are working with providers so that apprenticeships meet employers' skills needs and support productivity across the country.

Army

Asked by **Lord Empey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether a log of the daily activities of HQ 39 Infantry Brigade is still in existence; and if so, under whose control it is kept. [HL6100]

Earl Howe: Army formation records, including operational logs, are subject to the Public Record Acts 1958 and 1967. These require that records aged 30 years (reducing to 20 years following the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010) are to be reviewed for selection for permanent preservation at The National Archives. Where the record is required for ongoing Departmental business, or the record contains information that is still sensitive, authority will be sought for the record's retention by the Ministry of Defence (MOD). Where a record is not selected for permanent preservation by The National Archives or retention within the Department, it is destroyed.

39 Infantry Brigade originally formed during World War 1, reforming in the 1950's and becoming involved in Northern Ireland in 1969 until its disbandment in 2007. To examine logs for the entirety of the Brigade's formation would require detailed searches through MOD's Main and Sensitive Archives and through The National Archive.

We are unable to determine if any Daily Logs exist without incurring disproportionate cost. If any daily activity logs do exist, they will be under the control of the MOD or The National Archive in line with the review process described above.

Borders: Northern Ireland

Asked by **Lord Eames**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of the Republic of

Ireland about security arrangements for the border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland following Brexit. [HL6147]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We have a close relationship with Ireland and have regular contact on a range of issues including security arrangements. This cooperation is ongoing and we remain committed to maintaining it as the UK leaves the EU.

Both Governments are equally committed to ensuring that our departure from the EU does not lead to a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the PSNI regarding border security, in the light of Brexit. [HL6150]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: We will use our future exit from the EU to look at further strengthening UK border security. The Home Office is in regular contact with PSNI across a wide range of EU Exit policy issues, including border security.

Of particular relevance to Northern Ireland is the Government's commitment, as set out in the December Joint Report, to protecting and supporting continued North-South cooperation with Ireland across the full range of contexts, including security, and to ensuring that the UK's departure from the EU will not lead to a hard border between Northern Ireland and Ireland.

Brexit

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which local authorities are satisfied with the level of support and engagement that they are receiving from HM Government in regard to Brexit. [HL6068]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: I am working to support a smooth and orderly Exit which delivers an outcome that works for local authorities across the country. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government's engagement with local authorities on EU exit has included hosting EU Exit roundtables alongside colleagues from the Department for Exiting the European Union in Cornwall and Great Yarmouth. My officials attend regional engagement events facilitated by the Local Government Association. I would encourage local authorities to continue their positive engagement with the Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry 'Brexit and Local Government' to complement our own engagement with the sector.

Brexit: Gibraltar

Asked by Baroness Quin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what mechanisms they have established to facilitate regular consultation with the government and people of Gibraltar in relation to Brexit negotiations. [HL6316]

Lord Callanan: The UK Government is clear that we will fully involve Gibraltar as we leave the EU, to ensure their interests are properly taken into account. We have established the quarterly Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar EU Negotiations) to deliver on this commitment. Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Robin Walker MP chaired the sixth meeting of the JMC (GEN) on 8 March, with the Economic Secretary to the Treasury and the Minister for Europe alongside the Chief Minister, Deputy Chief Minister, Finance Minister and Attorney General of Gibraltar. This is underpinned by extensive official-level engagement, including through working groups on key priorities such as financial services.

Asked by Baroness Quin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to the economy of Gibraltar in negotiations on the UK's withdrawal from the EU. [HL6317]

Lord Callanan: The UK Government is working closely with the Government of Gibraltar to agree Gibraltar's particular priorities in EU exit. Through this work, we know that Gibraltar also values its strong trade with the UK, particularly in financial services and online gambling. We are discussing all these issues with the Government of Gibraltar through the Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar EU Negotiations). Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Robin Walker MP chaired the most recent meeting of the JMC (GEN) on 8 March where we agreed a series of measures, including on the economy, detailed in my Written Ministerial Statement of 15 March.

Asked by Baroness Quin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assurances they have given to the government of Gibraltar regarding Gibraltar's access to the EU Single Market for services after Brexit. [HL6318]

Lord Callanan: The Government has been clear that we are leaving the Single Market when we leave the EU. We are discussing this matter with the Government of Gibraltar through the Joint Ministerial Council (Gibraltar EU Negotiations) chaired by Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Robin Walker MP. We are fully involving Gibraltar as we leave the EU, to ensure their interests are properly taken into account.

Broadcasting: Internet

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ashton of Hyde on 7 March (HL5757), what plans they have to enable Ofcom to regulate podcasts which are not produced by the BBC. [HL6210]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: There are no plans to regulate podcasts that are not produced and owned by the BBC.

Carillion: Insolvency

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government who in the ministerial team in the Cabinet Office was responsible for oversight of Her Majesty's Government's Carillion contracts; whether proposals were presented by Ernst and Young to the Cabinet Office in December 2017; if so, what were those proposals; what assessment they made of the extent to which any such proposals might have saved public funds, protected employee pensions and avoided the company becoming bankrupt; whether they decided not to proceed with those proposals; and if so, at what level that decision was made. [HL5997]

Lord Young of Cookham: The Minister for Government Resilience and Efficiency (until 8 January 2018) and the Minister for Implementation (since 9 January) have had Ministerial responsibility for public procurement policy, including the strategic supplier risk management policy, but the responsibility for overseeing individual contracts with Carillion rests with individual contracting authorities.

In July 2017, Carillion engaged EY to assist with its restructuring plans. Government was not a party to this arrangement but we understand that EY's recommendations were considered by Carillion's board on 19 December.

The proposals from EY were put before the directors of Carillion, for their consideration and for them to act on accordingly, in line with their director duties. EY did not present this information to HMG. We were privy to the contents of the report after it had been presented to the Carillion Board, which enabled us to prepare for the various scenarios facing Carillion.

The decisions and conduct of the management of the company will be investigated by the Official Receiver.

Castes: Discrimination

Asked by Lord Cashman

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many responses to their consultation on caste in Great Britain and equality law were accepted after the closing date for submissions; and whether statistics on any responses accepted after the closing date will be declared separately. [HL6091]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Following the closure of the Government's consultation on 'Caste in Great Britain and Equality Law' on 18 September 2017, we received 42 late responses in five separate postal mailings. This constituted 0.26% of the total number of responses received, and included responses from both those in favour of and those opposed to explicit legal protection against caste discrimination being included in the Equality Act 2010. Almost all late responses were campaign responses identical to others which had arrived on time.

Respondents had already had almost six months to reply to the consultation, and late responses were not taken into account in the Government's analysis of the consultation's results. The Government will be publishing this analysis and its response to the consultation in due course.

Central Europe: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions, if any, they have had with the governments of (1) Poland, and (2) Hungary, about fundamental European values, including (a) the rule of law, (b) the independence of the judiciary, and (c) freedom of expression and of the media. [HL6023]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has a proud history of encouraging, respecting and promoting European values. British Ministers and officials continue to discuss these matters - where relevant to the particular country - as part of our regular dialogue with the Polish and Hungarian Governments. Most recently the Foreign Secretary met his Hungarian counterpart in Budapest on 2 March, and the Foreign Secretary and Prime Minister met their Polish counterparts during the Inter-Governmental Consultations in Warsaw on 21 December.

Chechnya: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the state of human rights in Chechnya, including in connection with (1) extra-judicial killings, (2) collective punishment, (3) arbitrary detention, (4) the persecution of LGBTI citizens, (5) shrinking civil society space, and (6) impunity. [HL6027]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The human rights situation in Chechnya continues to deteriorate. We remain deeply concerned about reports of serious human rights violations, including abductions, torture, collective punishment and extra-judicial killings. Ongoing reports of the persecution of LGBT individuals are seriously troubling. It is in Russia's interests to address the root causes of conflict and radicalisation in the North Caucasus, including poverty, governance and human rights issues.

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken to support organisations working to provide access to justice for victims of human rights violations in Chechnya. [HL6029]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We are providing financial and moral support to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and civil society across Russia at a time when they are facing growing pressure. We currently provide funding to a number of NGOs working to counter violent extremism and promote human rights and the rule of law in the North Caucasus.

Children: Disadvantaged

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the future prospects of children in the poorest and most deprived areas in England; and what assessment they have made of whether there has been any disproportionate loss of children's services in those areas. [HL6050]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Although children from more disadvantaged areas often do less well on average than their peers from more affluent areas, significant progress has been made in recent years. The national index measuring the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in key stage 4 narrowed by 10% overall since 2011. For key stage 2, the gap has narrowed by 10.5%. The department recently published plans to improve social mobility and support all children and young people, wherever they live, to fulfil their potential. The report, 'Unlocking Talent, Fulfilling Potential' was placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Government reforms aim to create a culture in which skilled staff are able to operate in environments where strong practice is valued and developed to secure services that meet the needs of local children and families. Where children's services are not of an acceptable standard, the government will intervene to ensure that effective improvement plans are in place and delivered at pace.

Funding for children's services is un-ring fenced, as part of the wider local government finance settlement. This gives local authorities the flexibility to focus on locally determined priorities and, of course, their statutory responsibilities to children. Local authorities used this flexibility to increase spending on children and young people's services to around £9.2 billion in 2016/17. The Spending Review 2015 made more than £200 billion available to councils for local services, including children's social care, up to 2019/20.

A range of measures are available to assess how children are faring in all areas of the country, including the most deprived. These measures include area-based statistics such as the Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI), progress and attainment data at key stages 2 and 4, and data on access to and success at university. The IDACI data can be found at this website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2015>.

Children: Poverty

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what percentage of the child population in the UK is below the poverty line. [HL6134]

Baroness Buscombe: Low income statistics are the indicators most often used as a proxy for estimating poverty. However we recognise the need to understand the complex issues that some families face and to develop a new approach to tackling poverty and engrained disadvantage. Because the root causes are not financial, our approach goes beyond the safety net our welfare system provides.

Estimates for the percentage of children in low income are set out in the annual "Households Below Average Income" (HBAI) publication. Latest estimates for the United Kingdom (2015/16) show the percentage of children in relative low income on a Before Housing Costs basis was 20%

Cybercrime

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written answer by Baroness Williams of Trafford on 5 March (HL5646), whether the improvements to Action Fraud's IT systems will include allowing the registration as a crime of online fraud where an attempt is made to defraud but the intended victim aborts the transaction before any damage is done. [HL6114]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Reports received by Action Fraud are subject to the Home Office Counting Rules for Fraud and Computer Misuse. In most cases a crime will be recorded where the victim responds to a fraudulent approach (such as a phishing email) but does not incur financial loss.

Receipt of a fraudulent approach which did not lead to any further action may be reported to Action Fraud but is not counted as a crime. It is instead treated as an information report and is used by the National Fraud Intelligence Bureau to identify links between seemingly unexpected fraud attempts. This situation will remain the same when the improved reporting portal is launched.

Cyprus

Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the extent to which Russian oligarchs have been able to acquire Republic of Cyprus nationality, (2) the extent to which such acquisitions enable those individuals to obtain visa-free access to the European Union, (3) whether EU arrangements highlight any inequity with which the EU

treats the Turkish Cypriots on the island of Cyprus, and (4) whether Brexit will enable the UK to change its policies towards the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. [HL6044]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The grant of nationality is exclusively a matter for individual states to decide in line with their law and procedures. Under EU law, any Cypriot holding a Republic of Cyprus passport enjoys equal rights of free movement in the EU, whether they are Greek or Turkish Cypriot origin. In line with the wider international community (except Turkey), the UK does not recognise the self-declared “Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus” as an independent state. Several UN Security Council Resolutions and other multilateral agreements also limit links between UK and the north. Our departure from the European Union does not alter our obligations in respect of such agreements. We continue to believe that a just and lasting settlement in Cyprus is the best means of resolving the difficulties caused by partition of the island.

Data Protection Bill (HL)

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the notification by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 17 January (HL Deb, col 649), which prerogatives and interests the Prince of Wales had consented to place at the disposal of Parliament for the purposes of the Data Protection Bill. [HL5999]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: As set out in clause 202, the Data Protection Bill will bind the Crown, the Royal Household, the Duchy of Lancaster and the Duchy of Cornwall. This will maintain the position under section 63 of the Data Protection Act 1998. The Prince of Wales's consent is required for the Bill in its entirety due to its express application to personal data processed by the Duchy of Cornwall.

Diplomatic Service: Ethnic Groups

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in the Diplomatic Service of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in employing black and minority ethnic (BAME) persons, since the adoption in 1998 of the diversity and equality strategy, Bridges into the Future; how many BAME officers are employed in the Diplomatic Service in each grade from DS6 to SC3; and what is the total staff from all backgrounds in each of those grades. [HL6051]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has made good progress on the representation of staff from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds (BAME) and is on track to achieve our target of 13% BAME staff FCO-wide in 2020. The FCO's recruitment initiatives are designed to attract the

widest possible range of talented staff from diverse backgrounds, including people from BAME.

The figures below include all FCO civil servants based in the UK and overseas but they do not include staff from FCO Services or locally engaged staff employed overseas. UK-Based staff are asked to provide information about their ethnicity, but supplying this data is voluntary. Although the FCO encourages staff to supply it, this is not mandatory and reporting rates vary by grade.

	Total	BAME
Band A	455	121 (87% reporting rate)
Band B	610	117% (80.3% reporting rate)
Band C	1778	189% (82.1% reporting rate)
Band D	1302	73 (85.3% reporting rate)
SMS	417	22 (93.8% reporting rate)

EURATOM

Asked by Lord Truscott

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the Prime Minister's Mansion House speech on 2 March, what assessment they have made of associate membership of EURATOM. [HL6079]

Lord Henley: In the Written Ministerial Statement on 11 January 2018, my Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy stated that a close and effective association with Euratom will be sought as part of phase 2 of the exit negotiations with the European Union, and set out the UK's specific objectives in this regard.

The Euratom Treaty does not provide for “associate membership” but does provide the Euratom Community with a number of powers to enter into legally binding agreements with third countries.

The Committee stage debate of the Nuclear Safeguards Bill held on 22 February 2018, (Official Report Vol 789, Col 301) provides the Government's assessment of the relevant provisions in the Euratom Treaty.

Females: Candidates

Asked by Lord Porter of Spalding

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to identify and remove barriers to women standing as (1) local councillors, and (2) Members of Parliament. [HL6120]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government has commissioned an evidence review to identify the barriers that limit women's participation in national Government. The aim is to provide political parties with a range of solutions to draw on.

We are also developing a programme to inspire young women to be leaders in their communities, and develop the skills and aspiration for careers in public life, at all

levels of governance. We will share more details in due course.

In November, the Government announced details of the £1.5 Women's Suffrage Centenary Grant Scheme for projects to celebrate the centenary. Large grants of up to £125,000 will include projects to encourage women to participate in public life. The first successful projects will be notified in early April.

Females: Directors

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support the recommendations of the Hampton-Alexander review on FTSE women leaders to ensure that the target of there being at least 33 per cent women on FTSE 350 boards and FTSE leadership teams by the end of 2020 is met. [HL6016]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Information on the number of women on boards and in senior leadership in the FTSE 350 available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658126/Hampton_Alexander_Review_report_FINAL_8.11.17.pdf

There is more to do, which is why the Hampton-Alexander Review has now extended the executive pipeline target of 33% women from the FTSE 100 to the wider FTSE 350. We will continue to support the Review to work collaboratively with business to ensure engagement with these targets across the FTSE and draw attention to the importance of diversity in board and executive roles.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Hampton Alexander Review Report [Improving gender balance in FTSE leadership.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6016>

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they plan (1) to monitor performance of the Hampton-Alexander review voluntary target for Women on Boards, and (2) to minimise pressure for quotas. [HL6017]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Information on the number of women on FTSE 350 boards is available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658126/Hampton_Alexander_Review_report_FINAL_8.11.17.pdf

To monitor progress, Government collects and analyses data on women on boards on a monthly basis, which enables the Review to report annually on the performance of FTSE 350 companies against the target.

Each country has a unique business environment, and we believe that the independent, business-led approach of the Hampton-Alexander Review is the right one for UK

business. By continuing to recognise the importance of gender diversity at board level, we believe that UK businesses can achieve the 33% target for women on boards by 2020 without the need for a quota.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Hampton Alexander Review [Improving gender balance in FTSE leadership.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6017>

Foreign Companies: China

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what powers they have to prevent the sale of UK-owned companies to entities from, or associated with, China; and what criteria they apply in reaching a decision on such investments. [HL6098]

Lord Henley: Under the Enterprise Act 2002, Ministers have powers to intervene in mergers that raise public interest considerations of national security, media plurality and financial stability.

In October 2017, the Government also published a Green Paper on proposals for long-term reform of the arrangements for the scrutiny of investments in relation to national security. The public consultation has now closed and the Government will bring forward a White Paper later this year.

Fracking

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, following publication of the report of the US House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space and Technology Committee, Russian Attempts to Influence US Domestic Energy Markets by Exploiting Social Media, published on 1 March, whether they intend to conduct an investigation to determine whether there is any evidence that Russia has issued fake news on social media to discredit the UK fracking industry. [HL6000]

Lord Henley: The Government currently has no plans to conduct an investigation into the use of fake news on social media to discredit the UK fracking industry.

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the number of shale gas and oil wells that will have been hydraulically fractured by (1) 2020, and (2) 2025. [HL6054]

Lord Henley: Based on information provided by industry dating from 2016, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy previously estimated in 2017 that there could be around 17 wells in 2020 and 155 wells by around 2025. These figures are now considered to be out of date.

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the volume of shale gas and oil that will have been produced by (1) 2020, and (2) 2025. [HL6055]

Lord Henley: The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has not made any estimates of the volume of gas and oil that will have been produced by 2020 and 2025.

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the contribution of UK-sourced shale gas to the energy security of the UK. [HL6057]

Lord Henley: In October 2017, the Government published a report summarising gas security, including consideration of the role of shale gas, over the next 20 years, available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gas-security-of-supply-strategic-assessment-and-review>

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Gas security of supply - strategic assessment [Second attachment to HL6057.pdf]

REVIEW OF GAS SECURITY OF SUPPLY to 2035 [Attachment to HL6057.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6057>

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the proportion of UK gas demand that could be met from UK-sourced shale gas. [HL6058]

Lord Henley: The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has not made any estimates on the proportion of UK gas demand that could be met from UK-sourced shale gas. We do not yet know how much shale gas it will be possible to technologically and commercially extract from UK shale reserves. To determine the potential of the industry and the benefits it could bring the UK, we need exploration to go ahead and Government is supportive of this.

Fracking: Planning Permission

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the average time taken between the first planning application for a shale gas well being received and final consent being granted for drilling. [HL6056]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Mineral Planning Authority decisions to grant or refuse planning permission for exploratory wells have taken between 17 and 83

weeks from date of validation to the date the decision was issued.

Asked by Lord Risby

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce delays in the planning process for shale gas development. [HL6059]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Through the 2017 manifesto we have put forward proposals to treat non-fracking drilling as permitted development. These proposals aim to establish expert planning functions to support local councils, and, when necessary, for major shale planning decisions to be made the responsibility of the National Planning Regime. We will continue to consider any further measures needed to help speed up the planning process.

Gaza: Egypt

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they intend to make to the government of Egypt about permanently reopening the Rafah crossing. [HL6025]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Officials from our Embassy in Cairo make representations about the Rafah Crossing to the Government of Egypt on a regular basis. Officials last discussed this matter with the Egyptian Government in February 2018. We are concerned about the closure of the Rafah crossing and its impact, particularly on urgent medical and other priority cases in Gaza, and continue to call on the Government of Egypt to show maximum flexibility in opening the Rafah Crossing.

Gender Recognition

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of individuals who self-identify as transsexual; and how many individuals have received a Gender Recognition Certificate since the Gender Recognition Act 2004 was passed. [HL6002]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The Government does not have an estimate of the number of individuals in the UK who identify as transgender. The total transgender population is difficult to estimate for a number of reasons. For example, there is no standardised approach to collecting data on gender identity and some individuals are unwilling to disclose that they are transgender due to privacy concerns. The Ministry of Justice publish statistics on the Gender Recognition Act process every quarter. The latest statistics can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/tribunals-and-gender-recognition-certificate-statistics-quarterly-october-to-december-2017>

Gender: Equality

Asked by Baroness Goudie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have in respect of (1) business, and (2) the public sector, to increase visibility and activity to promote gender equality. [HL6018]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: In 2017 the Government introduced ground-breaking regulations requiring large employers, in both the public and private sector, to publish annually the differences between what they pay their male and female staff in average salaries and bonuses. They must do this by the deadlines of March 30th for public sector organisations, and April 4th for private and voluntary organisations

The transparency generated by these regulations will motivate employers to identify barriers to women's progression in the workplace, and to take action to address them. It will also drive employers to increase awareness of the work they are already undertaking to achieve gender equality.

High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to consider supporting local authorities to meet the refurbishment costs of buildings similar to Grenfell Tower, in order to help prevent another tragedy. [HL6131]

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth: Local authorities are responsible for the safety of their buildings. We are working with local authority building owners and the fire and rescue services to ensure that immediate steps have been taken to make buildings safe and that, longer term, remedial work is conducted as quickly as possible. Government will consider financial flexibilities for local authorities to enable essential remedial work to go ahead, and local authorities should get in touch with us if such flexibilities are required.

Higher Education: Equality

Asked by Baroness Falkner of Margravine

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have compiled any statistics on the gender and ethnicity of holders of leadership roles in Russell Group higher education institutions; and if so, whether they will publish those statistics. [HL6152]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) is responsible for the collection and publication of data for UK higher education institutions, including for members of the Russell Group.

Information on the higher education workforce is collected as part of HESA's Staff Record, including ethnicity and gender. However, HESA does not publish

this data specifically relating to those within leadership roles.

Further information on the data collected and published by HESA can be found on the HESA website at: <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/data-and-analysis/publications/staff-2016-17>.

HIV Infection: Discrimination

Asked by Baroness Gould of Potternewton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they propose to include HIV in UK disability laws, in line with the view of UN AIDs that the inclusion of HIV has been an effective means of addressing discrimination based on HIV status and AIDs. [HL6019]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Under the Equality Act 2010, HIV infection is already a qualifying condition for disability from the point of diagnosis. People diagnosed with HIV are, therefore, eligible for the protections in the Act available to those with disabilities.

Home Education

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to collect information from Ofsted on the number of children who are electively home educated, given that this information is already requested by Ofsted as part of the child-level data in its local authority inspections and may be raised by Ofsted during its annual engagement meetings. [HL6041]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Publication or release of information gathered by Ofsted is primarily a matter for that body, but in any case it is unlikely that collation of this data on a national basis would result in accurate information on the total numbers of children educated at home, since it is collected for different local authorities at different times, and relies on varying systems within those authorities. The survey conducted by the Association of Directors of Children's Services in the autumn of 2017, based on local authority data supplied at the time, is likely to produce a more accurate overall estimate.

Home Education: Special Educational Needs

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish at local authority level the annual information obtained through SEN2, regarding (1) the number of children entering home education with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), and (2) the number of children home educated on census date with an EHCP, subject to the needs of confidentiality for very low numbers. [HL6042]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: There is currently no intention to publish this data at a local authority level.

The department does not collect information on the number of children entering home education with an education, health and care plan (EHCP).

The department does collect the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or EHCP and the number of pupils for whom an EHCP has been made for the first time during the calendar year, where arrangements have been made by parents in accordance with Section 7 of the Education Act 1996. This data is currently published at a national level and is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statements-of-sen-and-ehc-plans-england-2017>.

Housing: Charities

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will clarify what relationship, if any, there is between housing charities and the Home Office with regard to accountability. [HL6135]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The provision of housing for victims of domestic abuse and violence is part of our Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy. Housing issues relevant to VAWG are led on by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). The Home Office works closely with MHCLG on their liaison with housing charities to ensure a co-ordinated response to ensuring the housing needs of victims of crimes such as domestic abuse are met.

Israeli Settlements

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to make representations to the government of Israel about encroachments into the land of the occupied West Bank, for example around the illegal settlements of Adi Ad and Ahiya, and about the impact on the people of Gaza. [HL6024]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK's position on settlements is clear. They are illegal under international law, present an obstacle to peace, and threaten the physical viability of a two-state solution. We are also clear that Israeli outposts in the West Bank, illegal under international law and Israeli law, should be removed entirely. The Minister for the Middle East and North Africa issued a statement on 7 February 2018 strongly condemning the Israeli Government's decision to establish a second new settlement in the West Bank in less than a year, which could involve the retroactive "legalisation" of the outpost of Havat Gilad.

We are not aware of any significant impact on the people of Gaza from the construction of settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government what the UK's share of the F-35 Block 4 development is proposed to be; and when those funds will need to be committed. [HL6205]

Earl Howe: The UK's share of the common F-35 Block 4 development programme is approximately 4.5%. Commitments began in 2015 with Block 4 development study work.

Maritime Patrol Aircraft: Torpedoes

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is planned for UK P8 aircraft to use the US Mark 54 torpedo in place of the UK Stingray; what the cost of new weapon stocks will be; and what assessment they have made of the impact of the use of the US Mark 54 torpedo on the holdings of Stingray and any upgrade programme. [HL6179]

Earl Howe: The urgency to establish a Maritime Patrol Aircraft capability led to the decision to procure the P8 aircraft 'off the shelf' with associated weapons fit via a Foreign Military Sales agreement with the US Government. This includes the US Mark 54 torpedo. I am withholding the cost of US Mark 54 torpedo stocks as disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces, but its use will not impact on Sting Ray torpedo holdings. No decision has yet been made on the long-term future of Sting Ray.

Medicine: Research

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they will take to ensure that EU funding into medical research projects within the UK does not stop after the UK leaves the EU. [HL6319]

Lord Henley: Science and research are vital to our country's prosperity, security and wellbeing, and are at the heart of our industrial strategy. This Government wants the UK to be the go-to place for researchers, innovators and investors across the world, and we intend to secure the right outcome for UK research and innovation as we exit the European Union. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said in her speech at Mansion House that the UK is committed to establishing a far-reaching science and innovation pact with the EU, facilitating the exchange of ideas and researchers. The UK and EU in their Joint Statement approved by the European Council on 15 December detailed UK entities' right to participate in EU programmes, including Horizon 2020, will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU.

The Government's underwrite guarantee of Horizon 2020 funding remains in place in the event that commitments made in the Joint Report are not met. The UK will work with the Commission to ensure payment when funds are awarded, and will guarantee all successful bids submitted before EU exit. Whatever happens in the future, the Government is committed to ensuring the UK remains a world leader in international research and innovation, including medical research.

Migrant Workers

Asked by Viscount Waverley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of a required skill for the purposes of immigration; in which sectors of the economy such skills are needed; whether they intend that that definition will change following Brexit; and what is their assessment of future skills requirements. [HL6217]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: Tier 2 is the main immigration route for skilled non-EEA workers. The Tier 2 (General) route is designed to fill skilled vacancies for which no suitable resident workers are available. Applicants must have an offer of a graduate level job, paying an appropriate salary, from an employer which has been licensed by the Home Office to sponsor migrant workers. The skill level of a post must be level 6 on the Regulated Qualification Framework with some exceptions for the Shortage Occupation List and certain creative roles.

In July 2017, the Government commissioned the independent Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to advise on the economic and social impacts of the UK's exit from the European Union and also on how the UK's immigration system should be aligned with a modern industrial strategy. The MAC's call for evidence sought information on EU migrants' skills, amongst other things, and this will be considered in their final report due in September 2018. Details can be found on the gov.uk website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/call-for-evidence-and-briefing-note-eea-workers-in-the-uk-labour-market>

The Government will take account of the MAC's advice when making any final decisions about our future immigration system for EU nationals.

Natalia Estemirova

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Russia about the need to ensure that those responsible for the death of human rights defender, Natalia Estemirova, are held to account. [HL6031]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Impunity for attacks on journalists in Russia remains deeply concerning. We continue to urge the Russian authorities to fully

investigate these cases, including the unsolved murder of Natalia Estemirova, and ensure the safety of all activists and journalists. I expressed my condolences to Lana Estemirova, Natalia's daughter, when I met her on 21 February and made clear that the British Government will continue to support Russian civil society and the brave work of human rights defenders

National Portrait Gallery

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery following the decision to close that gallery to public access to allow a private commercial event on 19 February. [HL6164]

Lord Ashton of Hyde: Government has not had discussions with the trustees of the National Portrait Gallery about its closure on 19 February but it was informed in advance. The National Portrait Gallery is an arm's length body of government and determines its own operational matters in accordance with its management agreement with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. Sponsored museums must protect public access to their permanent collections which is why closures are extremely rare and exceptional.

Out-of-school Education

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 14 December 2017 (HL3782, HL3783 and HL3786), when they expect to publish the guidance on joint working between Ofsted, the Department for Education and local councils to tackle unregistered schools. [HL6038]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The guidance was published on 14 March and is attached. It is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulating-independent-schools>.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Attachment 1 [La_Guidance_March_2018.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6038>

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Agnew of Oulton on 24 January (HL4624), when they will make an announcement on the outcome of the call for evidence on out of school settings. [HL6043]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: The government is committed to improving oversight of out-of-school settings. As part of our Integrated Communities Strategy Green Paper (published on 14 March), we announced a package of activity aimed at enhancing local capacity to identify and

tackle settings of concern, with a view to spreading best practice on the use of existing powers. Out-of-school settings vary considerably in their characteristics, and types of education and activities they offer. We want to ensure any future regulation is effective and carefully takes into account the differences across such a broad and diverse sector. The department will publish a response to the call for evidence soon.

Out-patients: Attendance

Asked by Lord Dobbs

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many missed appointments at hospital out-patient services there were in each year between 2007 and 2017; and what is their estimate of the total cost of missed appointments at hospital out-patient services in each year between 2007 and 2017. [HL6008]

Lord O'Shaughnessy: Data for missed outpatient appointments in the years 2006-07 to 2016-17 is provided in the following table. This includes consultant and non-consultant-led appointments. Information surrounding the cost of missed appointments at hospital out-patient services is not collected centrally.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Total outpatient appointments</i>	<i>Did not attend (DNA) appointments</i>	<i>DNA appointments as % of total appointments</i>
2006-07	63,217,226	5,311,966	8.4%
2007-08	66,649,484	5,553,244	8.3%
2008-09	74,853,493	5,993,680	8.0%
2009-10	84,198,458	6,690,258	7.9%
2010-11	87,998,505	6,883,886	7.8%
2011-12	90,956,844	6,785,034	7.5%
2012-13	94,091,748	6,860,222	7.3%
2013-14	101,844,824	7,095,839	7.0%
2014-15	107,188,423	7,442,949	6.9%
2015-16	113,298,661	7,519,829	6.6%
2016-17	118,578,912	7,938,009	6.7%

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics, NHS Digital

This is a count of hospital appointments, not individual patients, as the same person may have been booked into a National Health Service hospital on more than one occasion.

Overseas Trade

Asked by Lord Teverson

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many organisations, individuals, and other stakeholders have been consulted in relation to the comprehensive series of engagement activities undertaken by the Department

for International Trade surrounding its approach to its future trade policy, including future trade agreements; what were the names of those consulted; and by what means they were consulted. [HL6071]

Baroness Fairhead: The Department for International Trade has consulted widely since the EU referendum with a broad range of stakeholders, including businesses, trade associations, devolved administrations, civil society and consumers across the UK. Means of engagement have included townhall meetings, roundtable discussions, webinars, written consultations and bilateral meetings. The Government will continue to engage widely with stakeholders and welcomes continued input as it develops a future trade policy which supports the Government's industrial strategy and businesses and consumers across the whole nation.

Oyub Titiev

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to pursue the issue of the detention and prosecution of Oyub Titiev, Director of the Memorial Human Rights Centre, in Chechnya; and whether they intend to call for his immediate release. [HL6030]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We remain concerned by the continued detention of Oyub Titiev. The Foreign Secretary expressed our concerns on 11 January, and the Minister for Europe and the Americas issued a statement on 18 January calling for the authorities to ensure Mr Titiev's safety and his right to a fair trial. Together with our partners, we will continue to reiterate this message to the Russian authorities. I made this assurance to representatives from the Russian non-governmental organisation Memorial when I met them on 21 February.

Professions: Qualifications

Asked by Baroness McIntosh of Pickering

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the timetable for the certification of professional qualifications to be agreed through mutual recognition under the Brexit negotiations for doctors, lawyers, architects and other professions. [HL6200]

Lord Callanan: As the Prime Minister set out in her Mansion House speech, the UK is committed to a continued system for the mutual recognition of professional qualifications as part of a bold and ambitious future economic partnership.

In December, the UK Government agreed in the Joint Report with the EU the continued recognition of qualifications for frontier workers and residents, where recognition decisions were received or where recognition procedures were ongoing, before the withdrawal date. This will include qualifications recognised under the MRPQ Directive (Directive 2005/36/EC), as well as lawyers practising under host title and approved statutory

auditors, which are currently covered separately in EU legislation.

The Government is firmly committed to the agreement in December and we are working with the Commission to agree how they should be translated into legal form in the Withdrawal Agreement. We are committed to turning the Joint Report into legal text as soon as possible and it remains our shared aim to reach agreement on the entire Withdrawal Agreement by October.

Pupils: Registration

Asked by Lord Lucas

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of recent amendments to the Pupil Registration Regulation requiring schools to improve the information provided to local authorities when a child is removed from school rolls. [HL6039]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Nothing is more important than keeping children safe and in suitable education. That is why, in September 2016, the department amended the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2006, to include further duties on schools to improve the information they provide to local authorities when a child is removed from their roll. This will better enable local authorities to carry out vital enquiries to ensure children are safe from harm.

The government has committed to reviewing the impact of the regulation changes by September 2019.

Railways: North of England

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what specific schemes will be included in the £3 billion programme of upgrades to the Trans Pennine route. [HL6088]

Baroness Sugg: We are working with Network Rail and Rail North to determine the best way to achieve major improvements for passengers, through a rolling programme of upgrades.

To support this, Network Rail has now established options for infrastructure works that could deliver improved journeys. We will now consider these before making further decisions later this year. No scope decisions have yet been taken.

Regulation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to minimise the costs arising from regulatory divergence after Brexit, as identified in HM Government's impact assessments published by the House of Commons Exiting the EU Committee. [HL6276]

Lord Callanan: As the Prime Minister has made clear, we are seeking the broadest and deepest possible partnership with the EU. We have set out proposals for an ambitious future relationship with the EU that minimises the regulatory barriers for goods and services. This will be underpinned by high standards, a practical approach to regulation, trust in one another's institutions, and a shared spirit of cooperation.

Reparation by Offenders

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to promote the practice of restorative justice for all levels of crime, with a view to reducing custodial sentences and re-offending. [HL6021]

Lord Keen of Elie: I refer the honourable member to the answer given to PQ HL5791 on 8 March 2018.

The Ministry of Justice supports the provision of good quality, victim-focused restorative justice as one of a range of measures to help victims cope and recover from crime. The Ministry of Justice also supports the availability of restorative justice to offenders because of its potential to reduce the frequency of reoffending and so contribute to their rehabilitation.

We continue to work with prison and probation services and Police and Crime Commissioners to provide a supportive environment to deliver restorative justice to achieve these ends.

Russia: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the governments of (1) Russia, and (2) Chechnya, about the use of the collective punishment in response to crimes allegedly committed by individuals. [HL6028]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We continue to have significant concerns about the use of collective punishment in Chechnya, including the burning down of houses of the relatives of suspected militants. We encourage Russia to implement European Court of Human Rights judgments relating to the North Caucasus – a vital step to ending the climate of impunity in the region. The UK will continue to call for action on individual cases in multilateral fora, such as the Council of Europe.

Schools: Mental Health Services

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the finding of the report from The Place2Be's survey of headteachers that children with mental health problems are suffering as a consequence of school environments with a paucity of mental health support staff for teachers. [HL6047]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Good mental health is a priority for the department. It can have a profound impact on the whole of a child's life. Schools and colleges have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by developing approaches that suit their needs.

The department recognises that teachers are not mental health professionals and that many schools and colleges have reported having to deal with an increase in mental health problems requiring support from specialist services. The findings from Place2Be's survey echo the findings from our Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges study and Teacher Voice omnibus survey. These indicate teachers would like more information on what works in schools in promoting good mental wellbeing and better access to specialist support. That is why the government is committed to supporting schools and colleges to promote good mental wellbeing in children, to provide a supportive environment for those experiencing problems, and to secure access to more specialist help for those who need it. The Department of Health and Social Care have committed £1.4 billion for mental health services for children, young people and new mothers over the five years to 2020.

The attached green paper, 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision', sets out proposals to provide significant further support linked to schools, supported by over £300 million funding. These include incentivising and supporting all schools and colleges to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health, to deliver whole school approaches to promoting better mental health. The government will also fund new Mental Health Support Teams, to provide additional, clinically-supervised, staff trained in evidence-based interventions and to ensure schools and the NHS work together.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Attachment 1
[Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6047>

Asked by Lord Ouseley

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are considering the provision of independent mental health counselling for pupils in all secondary schools in England. [HL6048]

Lord Agnew of Oulton: We believe that schools are best placed to make decisions on the most appropriate support for their pupils, and we know that many schools already provide a valued counselling service. To support more schools to do so, the government has provided the attached guidance on delivering high quality school-based counselling.

Our green paper, 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision', attached, sets out

proposals to provide significant further help to schools. These include the introduction of Mental Health Support Teams, which will increase the support available to pupils with emerging mental health problems. Additional funding will be provided for new professionals trained in evidence-based interventions, with supervision from expert clinicians. The teams will provide better routes into specialist NHS services for the pupils who need them.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Attachment 1
[Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf]

Attachment 2 [Counselling_in_schools.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:
<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6048>

Shops: Publications

Asked by Lord Bird

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they (1) support, and (2) plan to support, independent booksellers and bookshops across the UK, including any initiatives undertaken in cooperation with local authorities and the devolved administrations. [HL6284]

Lord Henley: The Government works with all types of retailers based in the UK to better understand their concerns and has taken action to support them. Specific initiatives which have benefited independent booksellers and bookshops include: making 100% Small Business Rate Relief permanent, whilst increasing the threshold of the relief, taking 600,000 of the smallest businesses out of business rates and the introduction of the Employment Allowance, giving employers up to £3000 off their National Insurance contributions (NICs) bill, benefitting 1m employers. The Government has also established the Future High Street Forum, chaired by the Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth. It provides joint business and government leadership to help support new and small business to start up and compete by having regard to the costs and regulatory burdens for small retailers, whilst factoring in the opportunities of digital trends.

Small Businesses: Taxation

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to make it easier for small businesses to navigate complex and expensive tax procedures; and how they plan to increase awareness of tax relief schemes amongst small businesses. [HL6066]

Lord Bates: The government is committed to having a tax system that is simple to understand and easy to comply with. Autumn Budget 2017 took a number of practical steps to simplify the tax rules for small businesses including:

- Extending the option of using mileage rates to property businesses; and

- Ending receipt checking on subsistence costs when employees are reimbursed using benchmark scale rates.

These measures build on action taken since 2010 including:

- Establishing the Office of Tax Simplification and then putting it on a permanent, statutory basis so that it can provide independent advice on simplifying the tax system; and

- Implementing over 200 of the OTS's recommendations since 2010. This includes simplifying employee benefits and expenses saving employers an estimated £25 million per annum.

The government also takes action where appropriate to raise awareness of reliefs which support small businesses. For example, at Autumn Budget 2017 the Government announced an R&D tax credits awareness campaign directed primarily towards Small and Medium Enterprises.

Students: Finance

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the impact of the abolition of maintenance grants on university students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and (2) the report from the Sutton Trust, Home and Away, which found that students who cannot afford to live away from home while at university are disadvantaged in terms of social mobility. [HL6003]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: The government published the attached equality analysis, in November 2015, which sets out the impact of the abolition of maintenance grants on protected and disadvantaged groups of students.

We are seeing record rates of 18 year olds, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, entering full-time higher education. Our new reforms to higher education will go further to ensure the system is offering more choice and value for money for all students.

We have increased support for full-time students' living costs by 2.8% in 2017/18 to £8,430 a year for eligible full-time students from households with low incomes who live away from home and study outside London – the highest ever amount.

The Sutton Trust's report provides helpful insight into the experience of students who choose not to relocate for study. This is why government's review of post-18 education and funding will consider how we can encourage and support learning that is more flexible for students, including commuter study options.

The review will also consider what more can be done through the financial support available to widen access to university for disadvantaged students, including making sure that the right maintenance support is available

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Student Finance Equality Analysis 2015 [HL6003 Attachment.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-05/HL6003>

Syria: Armed Conflict

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they support proposals for a 30-day ceasefire throughout Syria; and whether they intend to call for the permanent ending of Turkish military attacks into Afrin Canton. [HL6026]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK fully supports UN Security Council Resolution 2401, which calls for a 30-day ceasefire to allow for humanitarian aid and medical evacuations, which are urgently needed across Syria, but particularly in eastern Ghouta. In line with the resolution, the UK urgently wants to see the safe, unimpeded and sustained delivery of humanitarian aid and services across the country, and medical evacuations of the critically sick and wounded, in accordance with applicable international law. The UK has urged de-escalation in Afrin and the protection of civilians, while recognising Turkey's legitimate security interests.

Syria: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made any representations to the governments of (1) Russia, and (2) Syria, to allow food and medical supplies into Eastern Ghouta. [HL5994]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK has repeatedly urged Russia bilaterally and in other multilateral fora to use its influence with the Asad regime to ensure that it allows rapid, unimpeded and sustained UN-led humanitarian access to deliver urgently needed food and medical supplies to Eastern Ghouta, and that it adheres to the ceasefire demanded by UN Security Council Resolution 2401. On 27 February, the Minister of State for Europe and the Americas, Sir Alan Duncan, met the Russian Ambassador to the UK, Alexander Yakovenko, stressing UK concern at the current situation in Syria, particularly the crisis in Eastern Ghouta. The Foreign Secretary also wrote to Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov on 27 February regarding the crisis in Eastern Ghouta and urging Russia to uphold its commitments to ensure that UN Security Council Resolution 2401 is implemented in full. The UK also raised its concerns with Russia on 7 March in the UN Security Council.

We have had no direct contact with the Syrian regime about Eastern Ghouta but we have used our position in the UN Security Council to call upon the regime to cease its campaign of violence, to protect civilians and allow rapid and unhindered humanitarian access to all.

Torpedoes

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the extent to which the US Mark 54 torpedo is as effective operationally and intrinsically safe as Stingray. [HL6183]

Earl Howe: The UK is buying the P-8A through a Foreign Military Sales arrangement with the US Government and the US Mark 54 torpedo is the weapon that is fitted to the aircraft. I am withholding details of the operational effectiveness of the US Mark 54 torpedo as disclosure would, or would be likely to, prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Trade Agreements

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the UK's ability to secure beneficial trade deals with other nations without EU backing. [HL6065]

Baroness Fairhead: While we remain a member of the EU, the UK will continue to press for and support an ambitious EU trade agenda.

As we get ready to leave the EU, the Department for International Trade (DIT) is working across HMG, to make sure that DIT has the world class capability to deliver an effective and ambitious trade agenda. We are preparing for an independent trade policy by talking to a number of countries on a variety of future trading options, exploring the best ways of progressing our trade and investment relationships. Discussions include preparatory work on the potential of future trade agreements, where the response has been encouraging.

Turkey: Human Rights

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to discuss with the government of Turkey the high rate of arrests in Turkey for reasons reported to be connected with the 2016 attempted coup, together with detentions in Turkey of foreign citizens and attempts to have other foreigners extradited from Europe. [HL6022]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have made clear to the Turkish government that legal measures under the State of Emergency following the failed coup in 2016 should be proportionate, justified and in line with its democratic principles and its international human rights obligations. We regularly engage with Turkish ministers over human rights issues and will continue to do so. Whenever the Turkish authorities wish to make an extradition request supported by sufficient prima facie evidence of a criminal act recognised in English law and in compliance with the provisions of the Extradition Act 2003, such a request will be considered.

Type 45 Destroyers

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the status of the Power and Propulsion Upgrade for the T45; when the first ship will be taken in hand; and when all six T45s will be fully operationally capable. [HL6218]

Earl Howe: I refer the noble Lord to the answer I gave to the noble Lord, Lord Campbell of Pittenweem on 5 March 2018 to Question HL5775.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

HL5775 - WQnA extract on Type 45 Destroyers
[20180305_HL5775_Type_45_Destroyers.docx]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-08/HL6218>

UK Border Force: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have for the Border Force in Northern Ireland following Brexit. [HL6148]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: The UK is committed to avoiding a hard land border between Northern Ireland and Ireland. It is our priority to deliver a practical solution that recognises the unique social, political and economic circumstances of the border. As set out in the Northern Ireland and Ireland Position Paper (16 August 2017) one of the Government's essential aims is no physical infrastructure at the land border.

Border Force is working closely with other Government Departments on the detailed logistical and operational planning for managing all the impacts of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, on and at the border.

Border Force actively monitors workflows to ensure sufficient resources are in place to meet demand and will continue to do so throughout negotiations and as the UK leaves the EU.

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current numerical strength of the Border Force in Northern Ireland; and what plans they have for recruitment, in the light of Brexit. [HL6149]

Baroness Williams of Trafford: This Government has ensured that sufficient resources are available to ensure the security of the border is not compromised. Security of the border cannot be measured by numbers of staff.

Border Force uses a sophisticated combination of experienced officers, intelligence, data, technology and partnership working. Border Force resources within Northern Ireland are reviewed on a regular basis as part of the wider Border Force business planning process which is led by the Director General of Border Force.

UK Relations with EU

Asked by Lord Kinnock

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the speech by the Prime Minister on 2 March, what estimate they have made of (1) the cost to public funds, (2) the number of personnel, and (3) the number of adapted or new UK institutions required, to operate "reciprocal binding commitments to ensure fair and open completion", to operate "an arbitration mechanism that is completely independent", "to ensure we have the means to consult each other regularly", to manage "an arrangement for data protection", and to maintain economic, cultural, and social links between the people of the UK and the EU following the end of freedom of movement of people. [HL6033]

Lord Callanan: The Prime Minister has set out five foundations that must underpin our future trading relationship with the EU. These are: reciprocal binding commitments to ensure fair and open competition; a completely independent arbitration mechanism; ongoing dialogue with the EU, in particular between our regulators; an arrangement for data protection that goes beyond an adequacy agreement and maintaining the links between our people.

The details underpinning how this will work - including funds, personnel and institutions required - will depend on the outcome of negotiations.

UK Research and Innovation

Asked by Lord Fox

To ask Her Majesty's Government to which Secretary of State the UK Research and Innovation Board reports. [HL6101]

Asked by Lord Fox

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the first independent board effectiveness exercise will be run on the UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Board to ensure that it is meeting its obligations to scrutinise the UKRI Executive. [HL6102]

Lord Henley: The UKRI Board will report to my Rt hon Friend the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The UKRI Board's effectiveness will be reviewed independently on an annual basis. This is in line with the corporate governance code of practice set by the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

Universities: Freedom of Expression

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of protection of freedom of speech at universities, following the violent disruption at the King's College London Libertarian Society meeting on 5 March. [HL6096]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: Hatred, discrimination and violence have no place on our campuses. Universities have a clear responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics, such as race or religion, and those who do not.

Free speech is protected in universities by law and plays a crucial role in generating rigorous debate, advancing understanding and allowing students to challenge conventional wisdom and discuss controversial subjects. Under the Education (No 2) Act 1986, universities have a duty to 'take reasonably practicable steps to ensure freedom of speech for staff, students and visiting speakers,' and this includes having a free speech code of practice. The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 extends this duty to all providers registered with the Office for Students (OfS).

The OfS will have an important role to play in championing free speech. Under our proposals they would also have a range of levers to intervene where issues arise. A principle relating to freedom of speech is also included in the recently published regulatory framework for OfS, see attached.

This government remains committed to freedom of speech within the law – this does not include hate speech, incitement to violence or terrorism. We expect universities to take appropriate action, including involving law enforcement if necessary, in response to incidents such as those at Kings College on 5 March 2018.

The Answer includes the following attached material:

Office for Students framework [HL6096 - OfS framework.pdf]

The material can be viewed online at:

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2018-03-06/HL6096>

Wylfa Power Station

Asked by Lord Howell of Guildford

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to reach a decision on the shape of public financial involvement in the proposed new nuclear power station at Wylfa Newydd on the Isle of Anglesey. [HL6020]

Lord Henley: Ministers and officials are working closely with the developer, Horizon Nuclear Power, on their proposals for building a new nuclear plant at Wylfa Newydd on the Isle of Anglesey.

Horizon is continuing to develop its plans and is making good progress on its work to deliver Wylfa Newydd.

We are in discussions with the developer on their financing plans, but cannot discuss details as they are commercially confidential.

Yassin al-Saradih*Asked by **Baroness Tonge***

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations, if any, they have made to the government of Israel in regard to reports that Yassin al-Saradih was shot and subsequently beaten before dying in Jericho. [[HL6076](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: While we have not raised this specific case with the Israeli authorities, we are closely following developments. The Israeli Military Police have launched an investigation and we encourage full transparency into the incident concerned.

Index to Statements and Answers

Written Statements.....1	
ECOFIN.....1	Gender Recognition..... 12
Agriculture and Fisheries Council.....1	Gender: Equality..... 13
Croatia1	High Rise Flats: Fire Prevention..... 13
Environment Council.....2	Higher Education: Equality 13
European Union Finances.....3	HIV Infection: Discrimination..... 13
Foreign Affairs Council.....3	Home Education 13
General Affairs Council3	Home Education: Special Educational Needs ... 13
Informal Trade Foreign Affairs Council4	Housing: Charities 14
Private Pensions4	Israeli Settlements..... 14
Written Answers.....6	Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft..... 14
Absent Voting: Northern Ireland..... 6	Maritime Patrol Aircraft: Torpedoes 14
Air Routes: Northern Ireland..... 6	Medicine: Research 14
Apprentices: Taxation6	Migrant Workers..... 15
Army.....6	Natalia Estemirova 15
Borders: Northern Ireland..... 6	National Portrait Gallery..... 15
Brexit.....7	Out-of-school Education..... 15
Brexit: Gibraltar.....7	Out-patients: Attendance 16
Broadcasting: Internet 8	Overseas Trade 16
Carillion: Insolvency 8	Oyub Titiev..... 16
Castes: Discrimination..... 8	Professions: Qualifications 16
Central Europe: Human Rights8	Pupils: Registration..... 17
Chechnya: Human Rights..... 8	Railways: North of England 17
Children: Disadvantaged 9	Regulation..... 17
Children: Poverty..... 9	Reparation by Offenders..... 17
Cybercrime9	Russia: Human Rights 17
Cyprus9	Schools: Mental Health Services 17
Data Protection Bill (HL).....10	Shops: Publications..... 18
Diplomatic Service: Ethnic Groups.....10	Small Businesses: Taxation..... 18
EURATOM10	Students: Finance..... 19
Females: Candidates.....10	Syria: Armed Conflict 19
Females: Directors.....11	Syria: Humanitarian Aid..... 19
Foreign Companies: China.....11	Torpedoes 20
Fracking.....11	Trade Agreements..... 20
Fracking: Planning Permission.....12	Turkey: Human Rights 20
Gaza: Egypt.....12	Type 45 Destroyers..... 20
	UK Border Force: Northern Ireland 20

Index to Statements and Answers

UK Relations with EU.....21
UK Research and Innovation.....21
Universities: Freedom of Expression21
Wylfa Power Station.....21
Yassin al-Saradih.....22