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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

Written Statements1

Written Answers.....2

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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>
Lord True	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
Earl Howe	Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Baroness Barran	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
Lord Bellamy	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Justice
Lord Benyon	Minister of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist	Spokesperson, Wales Office, Whip
Lord Caine	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office, Whip
Lord Callanan	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Energy Security and Net Zero
Earl of Courtown	Deputy Chief Whip
Lord Davies of Gower	Whip
Lord Evans of Rainow	Whip
Baroness Goldie	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence
Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park	Minister of State, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
Lord Harlech	Whip
Lord Johnson of Lainston	Minister of State, Department for Business and Trade
Lord Markham	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
Lord Murray of Blidworth	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Baroness Neville-Rolfe	Minister of State, Cabinet Office
Lord Offord of Garvel	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Scotland Office
Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport
Baroness Penn	Parliamentary Secretary, HM Treasury
Baroness Scott of Bybrook	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
Lord Sharpe of Epsom	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office
Lord Stewart of Dirleton	Advocate-General for Scotland
Baroness Vere of Norbiton	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
Baroness Williams of Trafford	Chief Whip
Viscount Camrose	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Science, Innovation and Technology
Viscount Younger of Leckie	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions

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Written Statements

Wednesday, 15 March 2023

Publication of the Health and Disability White Paper

[HLWS623]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: My Right Honourable Friend, the The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mel Stride MP) has made the following Written Statement.

I would like to update Hon and Rt Hon Members on the publication later today of *Transforming Support: The Health and Disability White Paper*.

This White Paper is a significant milestone demonstrating this Government's commitment to ensuring disabled people and people with health conditions can lead independent lives and fulfil their potential. It sets out an ambitious policy reform package that will transform the health and disability benefits system and help disabled people and people with health conditions to start, stay and succeed in work. This will help to deliver the Prime Minister's priority of growing the economy, creating better-paid jobs and opportunity right across the country.

We set out our case for reform in *Shaping Future Support: The Health and Disability Green Paper*, published in July 2021. During the consultation, we heard from more than 4,500 people and organisations on which proposals we should take forward. From the responses, we know many disabled people want to work and could work, with the right support. Our White Paper responds to those views.

We are proud of our record on disability employment and support. Last year, we surpassed our 2017 manifesto goal to see one million more disabled people in work – delivering our manifesto commitment five years earlier than expected. Our ambition remains to close the disability employment gap, and I will set a new disability employment goal.

The measures set out in this White Paper will build upon our achievements, unlock new opportunities, and support people most in need. With low unemployment and more than a million vacancies, we are focused on ensuring more people are supported into the workforce so that they can seize the opportunities of work and employers can access the skills they need to grow their businesses.

We will deliver action in these areas in three ways:

First, the Government will transform the future benefits system so it focuses on what people can do, rather than on what they cannot, including removing the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). In our new system, there will be no need to be found to have limited capability for work, or

limited capability for work or work-related activity, to receive additional income-related support for a disability or health condition. We will introduce a new Universal Credit health element that people receiving both Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Universal Credit will be entitled to, which will enable people to try work without the fear of losing their benefits. We will also introduce a new personalised approach to employment support and engagement, with the aim of helping people to reach their potential and live a more independent life. We will give people confidence that they will receive support, for as long as it is needed, regardless of whether they are working.

Second, we will invest in our employment offer to help more disabled people and people with health conditions start, stay and succeed in work and contribute to a growing economy. Our research shows that 20% of people with limited capability for work-related activity (LCWRA) on Universal Credit, or who are in the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) Support Group, would like to work at some point in the future. We are therefore investing in additional work coach time and tailored support to help disabled people to get the support they need to start work. We will continue to work with employers and the occupational health sector to help more people remain in work and reduce health-related job loss.

Third, we will ensure that people can access the right support at the right time and have a better overall experience when applying for and receiving health and disability benefits. We are doing this by testing new initiatives to make it easier to apply for and receive health and disability benefits. This includes extending the Enhanced Support Service, which offers support for those who find it hardest to navigate the benefits system. We are also testing a Severe Disability Group which means people with the most severe health conditions can benefit from a simplified process without needing to complete a detailed application form or go through an assessment.

Our benefit reform proposals will take time to implement. They will require primary legislation, which we would aim to take forward in the next Parliament. These reforms would then be rolled out, for new claims only, on a staged, geographical basis from no earlier than 2026/27. We would expect the new claims roll-out to be completed within three years (so by 2029 at the earliest), when we would then begin to move the existing caseload on to the new system.

Throughout and beyond the work of this White Paper, we will continue to listen to, and work with, disabled people, organisations, charities, and experts, to ensure the voices of disabled people remain at the heart of delivering action.

I am certain that our White Paper reforms will support more people to reach their full potential and reap the health and wellbeing advantages of work.

Written Answers

Wednesday, 15 March 2023

Asylum: Applications

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to require written asylum applications to be submitted in English. [HL6031]

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the letter to the Minister of State for Immigration from the Chartered Institute of Linguists and the Institute of Translation and Interpreting on 27 February about the use of online translation tools to assist written asylum applications. [HL6032]

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the use of online translation tools to assist written asylum applications on the level of appeals against asylum decisions. [HL6033]

Asked by *Baroness Coussins*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to provide public service interpreters to assist asylum seekers if they are required to submit a written asylum application in English. [HL6034]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: 12,000 asylum seekers from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Syria, Yemen, and Libya who lodged asylum claims before 28 June 2022 will be considered through a Streamlined Asylum Process. This will involve eligible claimants being sent a questionnaire asking them to provide all the necessary information so claims can be considered more quickly. This will speed up decisions for those in genuine need, ending the uncertainty over their future, and help us remove people with no right to be here.

It is standard practice for the Home Office to issue correspondence and questionnaires to asylum claimants in English. This is to avoid responses being received in other languages.

Asylum claims will continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis against published Immigration Rules, policy guidance and country information. These five nationalities had a grant rate of over 95% in the year-ending September 2022, therefore it is right to accelerate the processing of these claims where appropriate. An automatic grant of protection status for these countries is certainly not guaranteed – all individuals will be assessed on a case-by-case basis and an interview will follow the questionnaire if more information is needed.

All individuals will have already undergone a screening interview, including criminal checks and will have their biometrics, such as their fingerprints, taken before they can be considered for a grant of protection status.

If individuals do not reply to the questionnaire, and the Home Office is unable to trace them, their claim could be withdrawn.

We will respond to the correspondence from the Chartered Institute of Linguists and the Institute of Translation and Interpreting in due course.

China: Cybercrime

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask His Majesty's Government how many cyber attacks against UK state entities or parliamentarians have been attributed to China with medium or high confidence in each of the past three years. [HL6022]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK government has strong defences and resilient systems in place to counter the threat posed by malicious cyber activity. Alongside our allies, the UK government has publicly attributed malicious cyber activity to China where we have had compelling evidence to do so and judged this to be in the UK's national interest. The UK has joined international partners in exposing Chinese malicious cyber activity, most recently Chinese state-backed actors' responsibility for the Microsoft Exchange Server attack in early 2021. But the government has not publicly attributed responsibility to the Chinese state for malicious cyber activity against UK state entities or parliamentarians.

Duty Free Allowances: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the Windsor Framework on duty free purchases when flying from airports in Northern Ireland. [HL6036]

Baroness Penn: The Windsor Framework does not impact the government's duty-free policy. The government has always been committed to maintaining frictionless trade between Northern Ireland and Ireland and between Northern Ireland and Great Britain.

Enabling duty-free shopping between Ireland and Northern Ireland or between Northern Ireland and Great Britain would lead to significant distortions of trade on the island of Ireland as well as a significant revenue loss for both UK and Ireland by creating a legal route for unlimited amounts of alcohol and tobacco to flow into the UK market duty-free.

East Africa: Humanitarian Aid

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Leicester*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to support (1) an international pledging conference to encourage humanitarian assistance to the East Africa region, and (2) negotiations for the renewal of the Black Sea Grain Initiative. [HL6089]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK is working closely with our partners to raise the profile of the crisis in East Africa to help secure a broad base of donor funding. We are considering all options on how best to do this, building on our existing life-saving aid, international partnerships and work to ensure a robust response from humanitarian and development actors.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI) has successfully supported the export of over 23 million tonnes of grain and other foodstuffs from Ukrainian ports since August 2022. The UK works closely with the UN and like-minded partners to ensure the continued success and stability of the initiative. We call on all parties to cooperate to ensure that the potential of the BSGI is maximised.

The UK is also providing £5 million towards the "Grain from Ukraine" initiative launched in Kyiv last November to deliver Ukrainian grain to humanitarian crises. The ship to which we have contributed this humanitarian assistance is currently on its way to East Africa loaded with 30,000 tonnes of much needed grain.

Elections: Christianity

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking, if any, to provide protection for Christians who are running for public office. [HL6050]

Lord Sharpe of Epsom: The Government is committed to ensuring the safety and security of all those participating in the democratic process, including those who decide to stand for election. This commitment extends to individuals of all faiths (or none). Any particular added protection for individuals or groups would be determined on a threat-led basis. The physical security of those taking part in elections is organised at the local level.

EU Law: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask His Majesty's Government what would happen in Northern Ireland under the Windsor Framework if the UK diverged and changed its regulations from those in the EU. [HL6046]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Windsor Framework safeguards the UK internal market and its core principles of market access. It removes constraints on UK-wide policymaking on alcohol duty, enabling NI to benefit from cuts on the duty on a pint of beer. There is a brand new green lane maintaining UK food safety standards, meaning the same food on supermarket shelves in NI and GB. Medicines will be provided across the UK on the basis of licences from UK authorities. Northern Ireland will now be able to take full advantage of the UK's new trade deals around the world and will remain out of the Common Agricultural Policy and Common Fisheries Policy.

Inherent in this new way forward is the prospect of significant divergence between the two distinct economies on the island of Ireland - from food and drink to plants and

pets, building on the existing differences in every area of economic and political life such as services, migration, currency and taxation. This will require increased market surveillance North-South in some instances to ensure that there is no abuse of these arrangements to move goods across the international border from Northern Ireland into Ireland, and new requirements on Ireland and other EU Member States to ensure that sensitive products such as food are not moved illegally across that international border.

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the Stormont Assembly Brake in the Windsor Framework can block the application of new EU laws in Northern Ireland in practice. [HL6051]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Stormont Brake enables amended or replaced EU laws to be vetoed and permanently disapplied by the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom already has a veto on new EU laws applying in Northern Ireland.

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask His Majesty's Government which laws, if any, as listed in Annex 2 of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland have been disapplied to Northern Ireland by the Windsor Framework. [HL6082]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The legal instruments including within the Windsor Framework set out the EU rules that have been disapplied in order to support the changes agreed as part of the deal. This includes the more than 60 specific food safety rules disapplied to support the functioning of the agrifood green lane for retail trade; the provisions in Annex 3 specifically set aside by the changes agreed on VAT and excise; and the rules disapplied to enable the UK-wide licensing of medicines by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). In all, as we have set out more than 1,700 pages of EU rules are disapplied under the Windsor Framework.

European Court of Justice: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask His Majesty's Government, whether the European Court of Justice will have a role in Northern Ireland under the Windsor Framework. [HL6047]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: We have accepted that Northern Ireland will, until the people of Northern Ireland vote otherwise, continue to have special access to the EU market. The minimal number of EU laws that remain - less than 3 percent - safeguard maximum free trade and market access for NI firms. That is something businesses have specifically asked us to protect. We have publicly acknowledged the fact that the European Court of Justice is the final arbiter on matters of EU law.

Fisheries: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Baroness Hoey*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether fishing boats that leave harbours in Northern Ireland can land their catches back in those harbours under the Windsor Framework. [HL6083]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Just as is the case now, fishing boats leaving harbours in Northern Ireland can land their catches back in those harbours.

Fuel Poverty: Rural Areas

Asked by *Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to propose changes to the electricity levy schemes in order to address fuel poverty for people living in rural areas. [HL6061]

Lord Callanan: The Energy Company Obligation scheme is a requirement placed on larger energy suppliers and is focussed on supporting low income and vulnerable households in receiving energy efficiency measures. An additional uplift of 35% is awarded through the scheme to rural off-gas areas in Scotland and Wales in recognition of such properties tending to have higher installation costs. The Home Upgrade Grant scheme also supports rural properties in England with similar efficiency measures.

The Energy Company Obligation Plus (ECO+) scheme will provide £1bn of support the most vulnerable and those in the least efficient homes in the lower council tax bands. This includes support to consumers in rural areas. The ECO+ Government response will be published in spring and will set out specific details of support for rural consumers.

Home Office: Written Questions

Asked by *Lord Jopling*

To ask His Majesty's Government why they have not answered a Question for Written Answer (HL4285) which was tabled in December 2022. [HL6045]

Lord Murray of Blidworth: There was a technical issue on the answering system WQA – HL4258 was renumbered as HL5062 because Table Office are unable to resolve this technical issue.

HL5062 was answered on 3 February 2023.

Hydrogen: Heating

Asked by *Baroness Worthington*

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Energy Bill [HL] Impact Assessment on a hydrogen heating village grid conversion trial which states that “we expect Gas Distribution Network Operators to reach an agreement with all consumers in the chosen trial location, including those who do not want hydrogen or cannot participate in the trial”, on what grounds

consumers would be considered to be unable to participate in the trial. [HL6064]

Lord Callanan: All consumers will have the right to refuse trialling hydrogen. Alternative heating solutions and appliances will be offered for those who are unable or do not wish to take part.

It is possible that some consumers such as commercial or industrial users with specialised requirements may not be able to participate in the trial if suitable equipment is not available at the time.

Asked by *Baroness Worthington*

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the proportion of consumers who (1) will participate in the Hydrogen Heating Village Trial, (2) will decline to participate in the hydrogen heating village trial and receive an alternative heating solution, (3) will be disconnected from natural gas without their consent, and (4) will be agreed by their Gas Distribution Network Operators (GDNs) to be unable to participate in the trial. [HL6065]

Lord Callanan: The Government has asked the gas networks to engage with local consumers to develop an attractive offer that encourages as many consumers in the trial area as possible to participate. This includes alternative heating solutions and appliances for those who are unable or do not wish to take part. In their trial proposals due in March, the gas networks must include the outcomes of their local engagement and evidence of the likely uptake of both hydrogen and the alternative offer. We will not go ahead with a trial in an area where there is not strong local support.

King Charles III: Ceremonies

Asked by *Lord Jopling*

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps were taken to inform members of the Privy Council that they had been unsuccessful in the ballot to attend the meeting of the Accession Council on the death of Queen Elizabeth II. [HL6044]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: Privy Counsellors who applied to enter the ballot to attend the meeting of the Accession Council and were unsuccessful were advised individually of the outcome by the Privy Council Office shortly after the ballot was conducted.

Monarchy: Ceremonies

Asked by *Lord Jopling*

To ask His Majesty's Government whether there is a reason why the meeting of the Accession Council on the death of the Sovereign needs to be held in St James' Palace. [HL6043]

Baroness Neville-Rolfe: St. James's Palace is the senior Royal Palace in the United Kingdom and the Court of St. James is the Royal Court to which all Realm High

Commissioners are accredited. St. James's Palace has therefore long been agreed to be the most appropriate setting for the Accession Council.

Nigeria: Foreign Relations

*Asked by **The Marquess of Lothian***

To ask His Majesty's Government (1) what steps they are taking to strengthen bilateral relations with Nigeria, particularly through security and trade initiatives, and (2) what meetings they plan to have with the President-elect of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Bola Ahmed Tinubu. [[HL6125](#)]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: The UK Government aims to be a partner of choice to Nigeria on trade, development and security. In November 2022, we held an Economic Development Forum to address barriers to investment and boost bilateral trade. Through our UK-Nigeria Security and Defence Partnership, we are supporting Nigeria in tackling its security challenges and shared threats. In December 2022, the Minister for Development and Africa [Minister Mitchell] discussed opportunities for strengthening our relationship with Bola Tinubu as part of his engagements with Nigerian presidential candidates. We look forward to continuing this partnership with the incoming administration.

Northern Ireland Protocol

*Asked by **Baroness Hoey***

To ask His Majesty's Government what is the status of grace periods granted under the Northern Ireland Protocol. [[HL6084](#)]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Windsor Framework will set out a sustainable basis for arrangements into the future. In the meantime, the existing operation of the arrangements in Northern Ireland will continue.

Personal Income

*Asked by **Lord Field of Birkenhead***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Bright Blue Building up: The future of social security, published in January; and what steps they will take to establish the minimum living income proposed in that report. [[HL6191](#)]

Viscount Younger of Leckie: No assessment has been made.

We will spend £245bn through the welfare system in 2022/23, including £111bn on people of working age and around £134 billion on pensioners. Of the total amount, around £66 billion will be spent on supporting disabled people and people with health conditions in Great Britain.

In April, we are uprating benefit rates and State Pensions by 10.1%. In order to increase the number of households who can benefit from these uprating decisions, the benefit cap levels are also increasing by the same amount.

To further support those who are in work, from 1 April 2023 the National Living Wage (NLW) will increase by 9.7% to £10.42 an hour for workers aged 23 and over - the largest ever cash increase for the NLW.

There is no objective way of deciding what an adequate level of benefit should be - each household will always have different requirements depending on their circumstances. Income-related benefit rates are not made up of separate amounts for specific items of expenditure, such as food. The Government firmly believes claimants should be free to spend their benefit as they see fit, in line with their individual needs and preferences. The Government does not consider it appropriate to introduce changes that would prioritise one particular area of household expenditure over the cost of other essential goods and services that benefit claimants have to meet.

We recognise the pressures of the rising cost of living which is why households on eligible means-tested benefits will get up to £900 in Cost of Living Payments in 2023/24. This will be split into three payments of around £300 each across the 2023/24 financial year. A separate £300 payment will be made to pensioner households on top of their Winter Fuel Payments and individuals in receipt of eligible disability benefits will receive a £150 payment. Further to this, the Energy Price Guarantee will be extended from April 2023 until the end of March 2024, meaning a typical household bill will be around £3,000 per year in Great Britain.

This support is in addition to that provided in 2022/23, including cost of living payments for people on eligible benefits, the Energy Price Guarantee and the £400 non-repayable discount to eligible households provided through the Energy Bills Support Scheme.

Personal Injury: Compensation

*Asked by **Baroness Foster of Aghadrumsee***

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of (1) the conclusion of the Northern Ireland Department of Justice that legislative protections should be established to ensure that compensation monies paid to minors are protected for their benefit, and (2) the data from the Northern Ireland Compensation Recovery Unit that almost one in four personal injury cases in 2022 involving children did not have a legal representative for the injury party; and what steps they intend to take to ensure that minors in England and Wales involved in compensation cases have their compensation monies protected and receive legal representation. [[HL6193](#)]

Lord Bellamy: The administration of justice in Northern Ireland is devolved and a matter for the Northern Ireland Assembly. However, the Government notes that the Northern Ireland Department for Justice has proposed changes to strengthen the way that civil claims on behalf of minors are brought. No changes in this area are planned for England and Wales as children are already protected by the Civil Procedure Rules (CPR). Under the CPR a child must have a litigation friend to conduct proceedings unless the

court orders otherwise, and settlements must be supported by legal advice as well as approved by the court which will direct how the money is dealt with and make a detailed assessment of legal costs payable.

Prisoners: Health

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask His Majesty's Government how next of kin are kept informed about the (1) physical, and (2) mental, health of prisoners. [HL6040]

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they have systems in place to use the concern and knowledge of family members for the benefit of prisoners suffering from ill health. [HL6041]

Lord Bellamy: Ensuring the health and well-being of those in its care is a key priority of His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS). Prisons are required to ensure that arrangements are in place for an appropriate member of staff to engage with the next of kin, or a nominated person, of prisoners who are seriously ill.

Families who have concerns about a prisoner's health or well-being are encouraged to contact the prison via the establishment's safer custody hotline. A separate number is also provided in cases of emergency.

During 2023-24, HMPPS is providing a grant to the Prison Advice and Care Trust to work with prisons across England and Wales to improve their communication with prisoners' families on issues relating to the safety and wellbeing of prisoners. This will include introducing more consistent processes for recording, responding to and acting on concerns raised by family members.

Prisons: Health Services and Social Services

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask His Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to improve the (1) physical, and (2) mental, health for all prisoners, given that COVID-19 is no longer a major threat. [HL6039]

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to improve co-operation and joint working between individual prisons, the National Health Service, and social services. [HL6042]

Lord Bellamy: The NHS in England and Wales are responsible for health services within prisons, including physical and mental health provision. These services have now returned to business as usual with the full range of services that were provided pre-pandemic being offered. Prisons continue to work closely with the UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA) and Health Protection Teams to respond to communicable disease incidents and outbreaks which occur and protect the health of everyone who lives and works in them.

Together with health and justice partners, we will continue to improve services in prison to ensure that people have access to timely and effective healthcare that is tailored to their needs. This is reflected in the new National Partnership Agreement on Health and Social Care in England which was published on 23 February 2023. For the first time, the National Partnership Agreement has been expanded to include offenders in the community, delivering on our commitment to improve continuity of care and champion a system wide approach. The new agreement sets out a shared priority workplan to deliver safe, decent and effective care that improves physical and mental health outcomes for people in prison and those subject to statutory supervision by the probation service in the community. The Ministry of Justice, His Majesty's Prison and Probation Service, Department of Health and Social Care, NHS England and the UKHSA have committed to working together and sharing accountability for delivery through our linked governance structures.

Sahel: Security

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the security situation in the Sahel, including activities by organisations such as the Wagner Group; and what steps they are taking, together with international partners, in response. [HL6124]

Lord Goldsmith of Richmond Park: Instability in the Sahel is rising. Partnerships with Wagner Group are counterproductive to long-term stability and we know Wagner Group commits human rights abuses. We are working closely with international partners to counter the malign use of such proxies by Russia and have designated the Wagner Group and its leader Yevgeny Prigozhin under the Russia Sanctions Regime. UK Ministers have also called for unrestricted access to investigate human rights allegations in Mali and reiterated the importance of compliance with International Humanitarian Law during counterterrorism operations. The UK remains committed to supporting regional security through our humanitarian, development and stabilisation programmes.

Sanctions

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask His Majesty's Government, what red lines led them to impose Magnitsky-style sanctions; whether these red lines include responsibility for military coups; and what consideration they have given to further parliamentary oversight of the Magnitsky-style sanction regime. [HL5968]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The UK champions human rights and combats corruption. The UK supports UN sanctions and also have our own autonomous 'Magnitsky' sanctions that are an agile tool to act rapidly against human rights violators and abusers as well as corrupt actors, to maximum effect. Since the UK

Magnitsky regimes were put in place, we have sanctioned 89 persons under the Global Human Rights regime and 35 under the Global Anti-Corruption regime. We will continue to use our Sanctions regimes to pursue designations in response to human rights violations, abuses and serious corruption. Ministers remain accountable for these sanctions through select committees, debates, and answering written or oral questions.

Students: Assessments

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask His Majesty's Government what resources they are providing to students to ensure equitable access to revision support prior to them taking exams. [HL6063]

Baroness Barran: Schools and colleges have autonomy to choose what resources to use or recommend to their individual pupils. It is for schools to decide which resources to use to help deliver their teaching of the National Curriculum or to complement pupils' understanding of the curriculum outside the classroom, including in circumstances when pupils are not under a teacher's supervision.

Oak National Academy, a non-Departmental public body, provides resources in a range of subjects, including at GCSE level. These resources are optional, adaptable, and free for schools to use and are available at Oak's online platform: <https://www.thenational.academy/>.

Oak is now developing improved curriculum packages in English, mathematics, science, history, geography, and music. The first new materials in those subjects will be available from September 2023 and full packages available from September 2024.

Schools also have access to the National Tuition Programme, which makes available subsidised tutoring to boost progress and support pupils' education. Improving educational outcomes for disadvantaged children has always been at the forefront of the tuition programme's purpose and schools are advised to prioritise Pupil Premium pupils when selecting those to receive tuition.

In summer 2023, GCSE, AS and A level examinations in England are largely returning to pre-pandemic arrangements. Pupils will not be provided with advance information of exam content, as was the case for examinations in 2022. Pupils will continue to be provided with formulae and equation sheets in GCSE mathematics, physics and combined science examinations.

Trams

Asked by Lord Marlesford

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to switch public spending from buses with rubber tyres to lightweight trams in urban areas to reduce the toxic effects from particulates generated by rubber wheels. [HL6202]

Baroness Vere of Norbiton: The Department has no current plans to reallocate funding for buses to light rail,

including tramways. Light rail is largely devolved and it is for local authorities to determine if light rail interventions are appropriate and proportionate, and to identify funding.

Transcaucasus: Roads

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask His Majesty's Government, following the ruling of the International Court of Justice on 22 February, what discussions they have had with the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding transit between Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh through the Lachin corridor. [HL5990]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: On 2 March the UK Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe delivered an intervention urging both sides to take note of all the rulings of the International Court of Justice and prioritise negotiations between themselves to secure peace and stability in the region. This is the same message that the Minister for Europe, Leo Docherty MP, delivered in his recent visit to Baku and will deliver during his upcoming visit to Yerevan.

UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland

Asked by Lord McCrea of Magherafelt and Cookstown

To ask His Majesty's Government whether the parts of Article VI of the Acts of Union 1800 that were suspended or modified by the effect of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland will cease to be suspended or modified following the implementation of the Windsor Framework. [HL6049]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: Through the Windsor Framework we have established a new legal framework of democratic consent and control. This ensures the smooth flow of internal UK trade; protects Northern Ireland's place in our Union; and safeguards sovereignty and addresses the democratic deficit in Northern Ireland. These changes ensure that Northern Ireland's place in the United Kingdom is fully respected, as expressed through the Acts of Union and the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in their modern contexts. And we will underpin this new framework through amendments to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to provide constitutional and democratic guarantees for the people of Northern Ireland.

Windsor Framework

Asked by Baroness Hoey

To ask His Majesty's Government which parts of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland have been superseded by the Windsor Framework; and to what extent in each case. [HL6035]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Windsor Framework restores the balance needed to uphold the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its dimensions. It puts in place a new legal and constitutional framework, changing the text

of the treaty and scrapping more than 1,700 pages of EU rules on internal UK trade.

While we have been upfront that this does not remove EU rules entirely in Northern Ireland, the less than 3 percent of EU rules which remain are the minimum necessary to maintain maximum market access and free trade for NI businesses.

The changes we have made include the Stormont Brake, which enables amended or replaced EU rules to be vetoed where they would have significant and lasting effects on everyday lives. This is in addition to the existing veto the UK has for new EU rules. This ends the automatic presumption of dynamic alignment of EU rules.

The draft legal instruments underpinning the package are set out in full on the Government's website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-windsor-framework>

*Asked by **Baroness Hoey***

To ask His Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the enhanced economic value to Northern Ireland of "privileged access" to (1) the UK home market, and (2) the EU single market, as described by the Prime Minister on 28 February, compared to the ordinary access enjoyed elsewhere in the UK. [HL6085]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon: The Windsor Framework maintains the full, unfettered access for Northern Ireland firms to the whole United Kingdom market. As we make clear in the Command Paper, that trade with Great Britain is by far Northern Ireland's largest market and East-West trade is the principal arterial route of Northern Ireland's economy. That is why the Windsor Framework locks in unfettered access to that market for NI firms on a permanent and ongoing basis, and smoothes the flow of internal UK trade from Great Britain. At the same time, it secures maximum free trade and market access for NI firms by ensuring full access to the EU market as well.

Index to Statements and Answers

Asylum: Applications	2
China: Cybercrime.....	2
Duty Free Allowances: Northern Ireland	2
East Africa: Humanitarian Aid	2
Elections: Christianity	3
EU Law: Northern Ireland.....	3
European Court of Justice: Northern Ireland.....	3
Fisheries: Northern Ireland.....	4
Fuel Poverty: Rural Areas	4
Home Office: Written Questions.....	4
Hydrogen: Heating	4
King Charles III: Ceremonies.....	4
Monarchy: Ceremonies	4
Nigeria: Foreign Relations	5
Northern Ireland Protocol.....	5
Personal Income	5
Personal Injury: Compensation	5
Prisoners: Health	6
Prisons: Health Services and Social Services.....	6
Sahel: Security.....	6
Sanctions	6
Students: Assessments.....	7
Trams.....	7
Transcaucasus: Roads.....	7
UK Internal Trade: Northern Ireland.....	7
Windsor Framework.....	7