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

# **HOUSE OF LORDS**

## **WRITTEN STATEMENTS AND WRITTEN ANSWERS**

**Written Statements ..... 1**

**Written Answers.....3**

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<i>Minister</i>	<i>Responsibilities</i>
<b>Baroness Evans of Bowes Park</b>	Leader of the House of Lords and Lord Privy Seal
<b>Earl Howe</b>	Minister of State, Ministry of Defence and Deputy Leader of the House of Lords
<b>Lord Agnew of Oulton</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Education
<b>Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon</b>	Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office
<b>Lord Ashton of Hyde</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
<b>Lord Bates</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Development
<b>Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and Wales Office
<b>Baroness Buscombe</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions
<b>Lord Callanan</b>	Minister of State, Department for Exiting the European Union
<b>Earl of Courtown</b>	Deputy Chief Whip
<b>Lord Duncan of Springbank</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office and Scotland Office
<b>Baroness Fairhead</b>	Minister of State, Department for International Trade
<b>Lord Gardiner of Kimble</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>Baroness Goldie</b>	Whip
<b>Lord Henley</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
<b>Lord Keen of Elie</b>	Advocate-General for Scotland and Ministry of Justice Spokesperson
<b>Baroness Manzoor</b>	Whip
<b>Lord O'Shaughnessy</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care
<b>Baroness Stedman-Scott</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Sugg</b>	Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport
<b>Lord Taylor of Holbeach</b>	Chief Whip
<b>Baroness Vere of Norbiton</b>	Whip
<b>Baroness Williams of Trafford</b>	Minister of State, Home Office and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development
<b>Lord Young of Cookham</b>	Cabinet Office Spokesperson and Whip
<b>Viscount Younger of Leckie</b>	Whip

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# Written Statements

Tuesday, 20 November 2018

## Post-Council: EU Foreign Affairs Council (Trade)

[HLWS1063]

**Baroness Fairhead:** My hon Friend the Minister of State for Trade Policy (George Hollingbery MP) has today made the following statement:

The EU Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) took place in Brussels on 9 November 2018. I represented the UK at the meeting. A summary of the discussions follows.

### *WTO Modernisation*

Member States unanimously supported the Commission's approach to modernising the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The discussion focused on the blocking of new appointments to the WTO Appellate Body and what this meant for its ability to function as the most urgent and serious issue. The functioning of the WTO more generally was also discussed. I highlighted the significance of these issues, and the need for political engagement to support the international rules-based system. I also highlighted the importance of engaging developing countries in the process of reforming the WTO.

### *Legislative Files*

The Presidency provided updates on Foreign Direct Investment Screening and the Bilateral Safeguard Regulation. The Commissioner is seeking political agreement on both files by the end of November. The Commissioner also called on Council to agree a mandate for the recast of the existing EU Dual-Use Regulation by the end of 2018.

### *Ongoing Trade Negotiations*

The Commissioner updated the Council on the state of play of ongoing EU trade negotiations. On EU-Vietnam, the Commission had adopted and published the English language text for Council Decisions on the signature and conclusion of the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the Investment Protection Agreement (IPA). The Commissioner also informed Ministers that the European Parliament was due to vote on the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in December and on the EU-Singapore FTA and IPA in early 2019.

The Commission hoped to conclude negotiations with Mercosur and to present the Mexico agreement at the earliest opportunity ahead of the European Parliament elections in Spring 2019.

Negotiations were also progressing with Chile, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand and Tunisia, and on a Multilateral Investment Court (MIC).

### *Implementation of EU FTAs*

The Commissioner presented the EU's second annual implementation report. She highlighted how FTAs

remove trade barriers and open markets, whilst allowing protection of sensitive products. She also noted that insufficient preference utilisation rates can leave some of the potential from FTAs untapped.

Member States welcomed the report. I highlighted the UK's ratification of CETA on 8 November and suggested that more could be done to demonstrate the development impact of Economic Partnership Agreements.

## Universal Children's Day

[HLWS1064]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families (Nadhim Zahawi) has made the following written ministerial statement.

Today is Universal Children's Day, a day that marks the anniversary of the date that the UN General Assembly adopted both the Declaration and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The UK is a proud and long-standing signatory of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and this Government remains fully committed to the promotion and safeguarding of children's rights.

The UNCRC sets out an enduring vision for all children to grow up in a loving, safe and happy environment where they can develop their full potential, regardless of their background. This Government shares that vision and is dedicated to providing the best possible opportunities for all children but especially those who have the hardest start in life.

It has now been over 2 years since the UN scrutinised the UK's progress in implementing the UNCRC and published their Concluding Observations. Since the last report, the UK Government has continued to raise its ambitions for all children and has made concrete progress in making sure that all children have the opportunity to thrive and develop.

For example, my Department has:

- Strengthened the quality and range of support for society's most vulnerable children through the Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Revised the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance to better safeguard and promote the welfare of children;
- Improved support for children's mental health in schools; and,
- We are making Relationships and Sex Education compulsory for all secondary school pupils so that young people learn what healthy, safe and respectful relationships look like.

We, as parliamentarians, all play a role in building a fairer society where children can lead happy lives and fulfil their potential. I urge all Government Departments to consider what more you can do to make sure your policies promote the best interests of the child. To help Government Departments to do this, we are proud to be

launching a comprehensive children's rights training package across Government today, which has been developed with the support of children's rights experts. I strongly encourage my ministerial colleagues to encourage the civil servants in their Departments to take up this training so that children's rights are further embedded in policy and law making.

In 2010, the UK Government made a commitment to give due consideration to the UNCRC when making policy and legislation. As we approach the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, I would like to reaffirm the value that this Government places on the UNCRC and our ongoing commitment to give due consideration to the UNCRC when making policy and legislation.

# Written Answers

Tuesday, 20 November 2018

## Absent Voting: Northern Ireland

Asked by *Lord Maginnis of Drumglass*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to Written Answers by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 3 July 2017, 15 September 2017, and 2 October 2017 (HL3, HL1448, and HL1671) and the Written Answer by Lord Duncan of Springbank on 21 Dec 2017 (HL3975), what assessment they have made of the case for (1) increased safeguards against organised abuse of the electoral system in Northern Ireland to take account of the 2017 figure for proxy vote applications being 555 per cent of that in 2010, and (2) a further review of absent voting procedures by the Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland. [HL11393]

Asked by *Lord Maginnis of Drumglass*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to Written Answers by Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth on 3 July 2017, 15 September 2017, and 2 October 2017 (HL3, HL1448, and HL1671) and the Written Answer by Lord Duncan of Springbank on 21 Dec 2017 (HL3975), what assessment they have made of the risk of abuse of the electoral system in future elections in (1) Northern Ireland, and (2) elsewhere in the UK; and what steps they are taking to mitigate that risk. [HL11394]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** Proxy and postal voting is a permitted part of elections. Any allegations of electoral fraud are referred to the PSNI, and the Chief Electoral Officer has made clear that she is content that applications are processed and approved in accordance with the law. The Chief Electoral Officer has also made it clear that she has seen no evidence of systematic electoral abuse.

The Government continues to consult with key stakeholders and keeps electoral legislation under review. We are committed to tackling possible abuse through a number of measures including piloting voter ID in Great Britain, supporting the Private Member's Postal Voting Bill and consulting on the recommendations of the Committee of Standards in Public Life relating to intimidation of Parliamentary candidates and other public office-holders.

## Armed Forces: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Asked by *Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder among (1) serving members of the British Armed Forces, and (2) former service personnel. [HL11334]

**Earl Howe:** Defence Statistics publishes annual reports on mental health in the UK Armed Forces. The most recent of these shows that, in the financial year 2017-18, 299 UK Armed Forces personnel had an initial assessment for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder at a Ministry of Defence (MOD) Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH). This represents 0.2% of the total Armed Forces population, or 2 in 1,000 personnel.

Neither the Ministry of Defence nor the Department of Health hold equivalent verified data on the number of former Service personnel who were diagnosed with a mental disorder (including PTSD) after leaving service. However, the Government is committed to ensuring that ex-Service personnel receive effective care and treatment through the NHS, and in his Budget on 29 October the Chancellor announced an additional £10 million to support veterans' mental health projects. The £10 million will be distributed to projects throughout the UK by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust under an open application programme to be called the Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund.

## Brexit

Asked by *Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further the answer by Lord Callanan on 29 October (HL Deb, col 1111), whether they will (1) withdraw their notice under Articles 2 to 5 of Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, and (2) offer through the European Union Council continuing free trade under the World Trade Organisation, and residence and security to European Union citizens, before agreeing any financial settlement in the Brexit negotiations; and if not, why not. [HL11477]

**Lord Callanan:** The clear position of the Government is that our notice under Article 50 will not be withdrawn. We have agreed in principle the terms of the UK's smooth and orderly exit from the EU, as set out in the Withdrawal Agreement. We have also agreed the broad terms of our future relationship as set out in the outline Political Declaration. Both sides are determined to conclude the full Political Declaration by the end of November, bringing the Article 50 negotiations to a close.

## British Nationality: Children

Asked by *Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Baroness Manzoor on 23 October (HL Deb, cols 763-5), whether they will clarify for which citizenship applications child fee waivers will apply. [HL11385]

**Baroness Manzoor:** I am grateful for the opportunity to put the record straight, having reviewed the Official Report with Baroness Lister. Fee waivers are available for immigration applications based on particular specified human rights reasons in which to require a fee before an

application for leave to remain is considered would be a breach of that individual's human rights. Fee waivers are not available for citizenship applications, and therefore they are not available for children seeking registration as British citizens.

I fully acknowledge that the answer I gave on 23 October did not provide the complete picture and once again am grateful to be able to remove the ambiguity my oral answer will have created. I will be writing to those who took part in the oral question to repeat the clarification in this answer.

### **Cross Country Rail Franchise**

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 5 November (HL10993), whether they anticipate being able to make proposals by Easter 2019 for reducing overcrowding across the Cross Country Trains network. [HL11313]

**Baroness Sugg:** The current Cross Country Franchise is due to expire in October 2019 with an option available of extending the current contract by one year to October 2020. We are currently reviewing options for the Cross Country Franchise and are therefore unable to make any comment as to what and when any decisions will be made.

### **East Coast Railway Line: Trains**

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to alleviate any possible increase in service cancellations caused by the roll out of new Azuma trains to the East Coast Main Line. [HL11311]

**Baroness Sugg:** The Department for Transport is working with Hitachi, the Office of Rail and Road, London North Eastern Railway (LNER), and Network Rail to ensure that the new Intercity Express Programme trains enter service on the the East Coast Main Line as soon as possible, and that the transition from LNER's current fleet to the Azumas is a smooth one.

With the rollout of any new rolling stock, it is prudent to plan for potential issues that might affect services, and the Department is working with LNER to ensure that contingencies are in place for such eventualities.

### **Election Offences: Northern Ireland**

*Asked by Lord Maginnis of Drumglass*

To ask Her Majesty's Government further to the letter from the Chief Electoral Office for Northern Ireland to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland dated 21 December 2017, what discussions they have had with the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) about the (1) eleven cases of potential electoral fraud it had identified from the 2017 General Election, and (2) progress made on the four cases it was proceeding with;

and whether they have received any further information from the Chief Electoral Office for Northern Ireland or the PSNI about any other cases which may have come to light since. [HL11392]

**Lord Duncan of Springbank:** Investigation of allegations of electoral fraud in Northern Ireland are a matter for the PSNI. The Chief Electoral Officer has informed me that she understands that three of the cases reported of possible abuse in relation to the 2017 General Election have resulted in referral to the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland.

### **Electoral Register: Data Protection**

*Asked by Lord Gilbert of Panteg*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Young of Cookham on 5 June (HL7937), what is the status of their review of existing electoral registration legislation; and what discussions on supporting democratic engagement they have held with political parties. [HL11157]

**Lord Young of Cookham:** The Government has been working to ensure there is legal and operational clarity for political parties and elected representatives, including considering the scope for amendments to secondary legislation on electoral registers to reflect changes made in the Data Protection Act 2018.

We intend to discuss this further with the Parliamentary Parties Panel in due course.

### **EU Budget: Contributions**

*Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they anticipate the UK's financial settlement with the EU will be as a result of Brexit; and whether they will publish details of the basis for that figure. [HL11414]

**Lord Callanan:** We have agreed a fair financial settlement with the EU as part of the draft Withdrawal Agreement. Our estimate, based on reasonable assumptions and publically available data, falls within the range of £35bn-£39bn, and the National Audit Office confirmed in April 2018 that these assumptions were reasonable. Details of the basis on which that figure was reached can be found in the EU-UK Joint Report, published on December 8th, 2017. The Chancellor of the Exchequer provided further details to the Treasury Select Committee in January 2018.

### **Flood Control**

*Asked by Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 22 October (HL10504), whether they intend to establish an independent review of the effectiveness of (1) Coastal Protection Authorities, and (2) Shoreline Management Plans, in managing flood risk. [HL11326]



**Lord Gardiner of Kimble:** Coastal change, through erosion or flooding, has always been a risk for those living and working by the sea.

The Environment Agency has strategic oversight of Shoreline Management Plans (20 in England), which are the responsibility of Coastal Protection Authorities. These plans set the direction and preferred management option over a 100 year timeframe and are under-pinned by evidence and a high level economic, social, and environmental assessment.

Over the next three years, we and the Environment Agency (EA) are working closely with the coastal authorities, including funding of £1 million, to refresh Shoreline Management Plans, to ensure that there is consistency and that they are using the best, most up to date evidence. This programme will ensure the Shoreline Management Plans and Coastal Protection Authorities remain effective in light of the most recent UK climate change predictions which will be published later this month.

The EA are also funding a £23 million, five year programme of regional coastal monitoring by these groups, to support decision making.

### Former Prime Ministers

*Asked by Lord Stevens of Ludgate*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what costs were incurred in relation to each former Prime Minister for (1) policing, and (2) transport, including use of the RAF Voyager aircraft reserved for royal and government travel in each of the last three years. [HL11338]

**Lord Young of Cookham:** The Cabinet Office's transparency data publications cover the current Prime Minister only. Details of the Prime Minister's overseas travel are published quarterly and are available on GOV.UK at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ministers-transparency-publications>

We are unable to provide detailed information on the costs incurred for security to protected individuals or groups. To do so would compromise the integrity of the security arrangements of the individuals concerned.

### Gatwick Airport Station

*Asked by Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Sugg on 5 November (HL10994), what proportion of the costs of the Gatwick Airport Station enhancement scheme have been funded by Gatwick Airport Ltd. [HL11312]

**Baroness Sugg:** To date, Gatwick Airport Ltd have contributed 24.9 % of the development costs of the Gatwick Airport Station enhancement scheme.

### Gulf National Security Secretariat Implementation Group

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what role, if any, the Gulf National Security Secretariat Implementation Group (NSSIG) has within the Cabinet Office; and how the role and responsibilities of the NSSIG differs from those of the Integrated Delivery Board. [HL11333]

**Lord Young of Cookham:** National Security Strategy and Implementation Groups (NSSIGs) were established after the 2017 National Security Capability Review to support the delivery of national security priority programmes, including by better utilising the full range of national security capabilities. Each NSSIG is chaired by a Senior Responsible Official (SRO), who is accountable to the National Security Council.

The Gulf Delivery Board has not met since the establishment of the Gulf & Iran NSSIG, which subsumed its primary roles and responsibilities in April 2018. Cabinet Office officials are members of the Gulf & Iran NSSIG and attend all meetings. The Cabinet Office also provides some secretariat support to the NSSIG, alongside that provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

### Higher Education: Pensions

*Asked by Baroness Garden of Frogna*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to delay the changes to actuarial valuations for higher education public service pension schemes until the outcomes are known of (1) the Augar Review of post-18 education and funding, and (2) the Office for National Statistics review of the treatment of student loans in the Public Sector Finances. [HL11320]

**Lord Bates:** The quadrennial valuations of public service pension schemes are ongoing. Changes arising from these valuations are due to take effect in 2019. The process is set down in primary and secondary legislation and we are committed to following it.

### Lord Janner of Braunstone

*Asked by Lord Campbell-Savours*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will place a copy of the report of Operation Enamel in the Library of the House. [HL11314]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Government does not hold a report on Operation Enamel. This investigation is a matter for Leicestershire Police.

### Najah Ahmed Yousif

*Asked by Lord Scriven*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to Formula One to encourage it to abide by the Organisation for Economic

Cooperation and Development's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, following the Bahraini court's decision to uphold the three year sentence of political activist Najah Yusuf, for criticism of the Bahrain Grand Prix. [HL11332]

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** Her Majesty's Government has not had conversations with Formula One on the details of the case of Najah Yusuf. I would refer the Noble Lord to the recent statement made by the Bahraini Government advising that the charges and conviction had no relation to the Bahrain Grand Prix, a copy of which has been placed in the Library of the House.

### Northern: Strikes

*Asked by Lord Greaves*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with Arriva UK Trains in relation to the continuing rail strikes on the Northern Rail franchise; what proposals they have to end the disruption to services caused by the strikes; and what assessment they have made of whether Arriva UK Trains has breached the terms of its franchise agreement on the delivery of services. [HL11323]

**Baroness Sugg:** The Department for Transport has had discussions with Arriva Rail North regarding contingency planning for strike days as well as on progress they have made on discussions with RMT.

Proposals to end the disruption are a matter between the operator and the Trade Union. However, we urge the RMT to call off the strikes and for both parties to work on resolving the dispute.

The assessment on service delivery related compliance is still taking place with a number of claims requiring validation.

### Parents: Death

*Asked by Baroness Altmann*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they record annually the number of children in full-time education whose mothers or fathers have passed away; and if so, how many such children there were in each of the last six years. [HL11309]

**Lord Agnew of Oulton:** The requested information is not held centrally.

Information on schools and pupils is published at the annual 'Schools, pupils and their characteristics' statistical release:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018>.

### Parliamentary Questions

*Asked by Lord Tebbit*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) oral questions, and (2) written questions, tabled by members

of the House of Lords they considered not to relate to matters of Government responsibility in the last 3 months. [HL11339]

**Lord Young of Cookham:** The requested information is not readily available. The information requested can only be provided at disproportionate cost.

### Peers: Computer Software

*Asked by Lord Clark of Windermere*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker whether Members are no longer offered OneDrive; if so, on whose authority; and why. [HL11435]

*Asked by Lord Clark of Windermere*

To ask the Senior Deputy Speaker why Members were not informed that OneDrive would no longer be available at the same time that those working in the Parliamentary Digital Service were informed. [HL11436]

**Lord McFall of Alcluith:** There are no plans to remove OneDrive from Members. A configuration change made to the OneDrive service designed to enhance parliamentary information security had an unintended impact on the ability of Members to use OneDrive. This change has now been reversed and we are grateful to the noble Lord and others for drawing this to our attention.

### Police: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

*Asked by Baroness Sherlock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder among (1) serving police officers, and (2) former police officers. [HL11335]

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** The Home Office does not centrally collect data on the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder among serving police officers or former police officers. However, Home Office officials continue to consider the latest academic research on policing wellbeing, including in relation to trauma.

The role of a police officer can be challenging, and individuals may be exposed to traumatic incidents. It is the duty of Chief Officers to ensure the welfare of their officers, supported by the College of Policing. The College of Policing published guidance on trauma in policing in February 2018, 'Responding to trauma: a practical guide.'

This Government takes police wellbeing very seriously and has invested in programmes to provide direct support to officers, including Mind's Blue Light Wellbeing Programme which provides targeted support and information. In 2017 we also awarded £7.5m to the College of Policing from the Police Transformation Fund to pilot, and if successful, fund a national welfare service. As part of work to develop this service, the College of Policing are overseeing a pilot led by the Metropolitan Police Service which is focussed on trauma support.



## Social Security Benefits: Children

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure that potential claimants are aware of the policy to provide Child Tax Credit and Universal Tax Credit to a maximum of two children; and what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of any such awareness-raising measures. [HL11316]

**Lord Bates:** The policy to provide support for a maximum of two children in Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Universal Credit (UC) was originally announced at Summer Budget 2015 and legislated for in the Welfare Reform Act 2016. The government chose to implement the policy from April 2017 to ensure households were aware of the policy before choosing to have third or subsequent children. HMRC also provided information in leaflets to all claimants renewing their CTC claim since 2016 and a leaflet has also been included in the CTC new claim pack since the policy came into force. Since August 2016 high level messaging about the policy has been available on GOV.UK.

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to monitor and review the impact of the policy to provide Child Tax Credit and Universal Tax Credit to a maximum of two children on (1) children's well-being, and (2) on the financial resilience of families affected by that policy. [HL11317]

**Lord Bates:** The policy to provide Child Tax Credits and Universal Credit for a maximum of two children ensures that those on benefits face the same financial choices around the number of children they can afford as those supporting themselves solely through work.

Work is the best way out of poverty and Universal Credit is supporting people into the labour market so they can get the skills they need to access better opportunities. There are 637,000 fewer children in workless households than in 2010 and unemployment is at a record low.

We are also supporting the finances of low-income families by decreasing the taper rate and increasing work allowances in Universal Credit, so people can earn more without losing their benefits. Our National Living Wage means the lowest paid have seen their wages grow by 8% above inflation between 2015 and 2018.

## Social Security Benefits: Families

Asked by *Baroness Lister of Burtersett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Buscombe on 5 November (HL Deb, col 1581), what evidence informed her statement that the UK "provides more benefits for families than any other advanced nation"; and what measure of "benefits for families" was used. [HL11324]

**Baroness Buscombe:** The latest data shows that the UK spends 3.8 per cent of GDP on expenditure classified by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as "family benefits". This is more than any other country in the OECD.

"Family benefits" include cash benefits, such as personal tax credits, Child Benefit; maternity benefits and child Disability Living Allowance; and benefits in kind covering child care and social services. They do not include other benefits that might be available to the claimant, such as Personal Independence Payment or Housing Benefit.

## Universal Credit: Children

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Durham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to their decision to extend the policy to provide Universal Tax Credit to a maximum of two children to new Universal Credit claimants from February 2019, whether there will be an exception for families with three or more children who were born before 6 April 2017. [HL11318]

**Baroness Buscombe:** Since 6 April 2017 families with third and subsequent children born on or after this date are able to claim additional support through Child Tax Credit or Universal Credit for their first two children only. This maximum support will also apply to entirely new claims to Universal Credit on or after 1 February 2019, regardless of the date of birth of their children.

Claimants that are already receiving support for those born before 6 April 2017 will continue to do so. If they subsequently move to or reclaim Universal Credit (following a break in claim of less than 6 months) they will receive the child element for the same number of children they were previously. This will apply both if they naturally migrate following a significant change of circumstances or are moved as part of managed migration, so long as they remain responsible for the same children.

## Index to Statements and Answers

### **Written Statements.....1**

Post-Council: EU Foreign Affairs Council (Trade) .....	1
Universal Children’s Day .....	1

### **Written Answers.....3**

Absent Voting: Northern Ireland.....	3
Armed Forces: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder ....	3
Brexit .....	3
British Nationality: Children .....	3
Cross Country Rail Franchise.....	4
East Coast Railway Line: Trains .....	4
Election Offences: Northern Ireland.....	4
Electoral Register: Data Protection .....	4
EU Budget: Contributions .....	4
Flood Control .....	4
Former Prime Ministers.....	5
Gatwick Airport Station .....	5
Gulf National Security Secretariat Implementation Group.....	5
Higher Education: Pensions .....	5
Lord Janner of Braunstone .....	5
Najah Ahmed Yousif.....	5
Northern: Strikes .....	6
Parents: Death.....	6
Parliamentary Questions.....	6
Peers: Computer Software.....	6
Police: Post-traumatic Stress Disorder .....	6
Social Security Benefits: Children .....	7
Social Security Benefits: Families.....	7
Universal Credit: Children .....	7