



This report shows written answers and statements provided on 10 June 2016 and the information is correct at the time of publication (03:39 P.M., 10 June 2016). For the latest information on written questions and answers, ministerial corrections, and written statements, please visit: <http://www.parliament.uk/writtenanswers/>

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**Notes:**

Questions marked thus **[R]** indicate that a relevant interest has been declared.

Questions with identification numbers of **900000 or greater** indicate that the question was originally tabled as an oral question and has since been unstarred.

## ANSWERS

## BUSINESS, INNOVATION AND SKILLS

## ■ Apprentices

**Stephen Timms:** [39541]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, what support his Department is offering to small and medium-sized enterprises to assist with the cost of setting up an apprenticeship programme.

**Nick Boles:**

The government provides £1,500 per apprentice to smaller employers taking on new apprentices aged 16-24 through the Apprenticeships Grant for Employers. Additional support provided for employers includes funding training for 16-18 year old apprentices, those young people who are aged 19-24 who have been in the care of the Local Authority, apprentices with additional learning needs, and apprentices who don't have the level of English and maths that is required to meet the minimum standard. Further funding detail and provisional funding rates are due to be published in June.

Since April, employers have not been required to pay employer National Insurance contributions for almost all apprentices aged under 25 up to the Upper Secondary Threshold (£827 per week in 2016-17).

This change makes the business case for apprenticeships even stronger, reducing the cost of employing a young apprentice by over £500 a year on a salary of £12,000, and over £1,000 a year on a salary of £16,000.

Employers can access information about employing an apprentice on the gov.uk website <https://www.gov.uk/take-on-an-apprentice>

## ■ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: Sheffield

**Paul Blomfield:** [39618]

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, with reference to the Written Statement of 26 May 2016, HCWS30, how many roles there are (a) at and (b) below Senior Civil Service level based in the Sheffield office at St Paul's Place.

**Joseph Johnson:**

As at 31 May 2016 the number of employees of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, working in the Sheffield office at St Paul's Place at (a) Senior Civil Service level and (b) below Senior Civil Service level, are shown in the table below.

GRADE	EMPLOYEES
Senior Civil Service level	8
Below Senior Civil Service level	214

## ■ Trade Agreements

**Jonathan Edwards:**

[\[38835\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, how many civil servants currently working for the Government have been involved in negotiating trade deals over the last 20 years.

**Anna Soubry:**

Trade policy is an EU competence. The European Commission conducts trade negotiations on behalf of the EU and its Member States. It does this working closely with the Member States and the European Parliament.

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) leads the cross-Whitehall effort to influence the EU's negotiating position in trade negotiations and ensure this reflects UK interests. There are approximately 40 officials in BIS currently working on the full range of EU trade policy matters, including trade negotiations. They are assisted by officials in other Government Departments.

## CABINET OFFICE

## ■ Anti-corruption Summit

**Mark Menzies:**

[\[39135\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, for what reason the British Virgin Islands were not invited to the UK Anti-Corruption Summit on 12 May 2016.

**Matthew Hancock:**

The Government invited leaders from those Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories that had agreed to the recent initiative on automatic exchange of beneficial ownership information.

## ■ Cabinet Office: Freedom of Information

**Tom Watson:**

[\[39724\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many Freedom of Information requests have been refused by his Department in the last 12 months.

**Matthew Hancock:**

Statistics in relation to Freedom of information requests are publically available on gov.uk at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/government-foi-statistics>

**■ Cabinet Office: Staff**

**Tom Watson:** [\[39680\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many officials in his Department have applied for special leave to carry out work for non-governmental departments in the last 12 months.

**Matthew Hancock:**

The information requested is not held.

**■ Civil Servants: Recruitment**

**Paul Blomfield:** [\[39302\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what progress the Government has made on implementing its policy to move graduate recruitment outside London and establish a regional assessment centre.

**Matthew Hancock:**

The Bridge Group Report into Socio-Economic Diversity in the Fast Stream recommended that the Fast Stream should introduce at least one regional assessment centre from Autumn 2016 and move to a greater number of regional assessment centres in future years.

**■ Civil Servants: Redundancy Pay**

**Stuart C. McDonald:** [\[39163\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, when the Government expects to complete its analysis of responses to the consultation on reform of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

**Matthew Hancock:**

The Government is giving very careful consideration to the responses it received to the consultation. In particular we are looking closely to see if there is any scope to find a set of reforms that will deliver the Government's objectives and which will be agreeable to the unions. I expect that we will be able to publish our analysis within the 12 week target set out in the consultation document.

**■ Companies: Ownership**

**Mike Kane:** [\[39208\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, what the Government's policy is on requiring companies bidding for government contracts to declare their ultimate beneficial ownership before a decision to award such contracts is made.

**Matthew Hancock:**

At the Anti-Corruption Summit held in London on 12 May we announced our intention to require foreign companies to provide 'beneficial ownership' information to a new,

publicly accessible register prior to being able to buy or sell UK property or bid for UK central government procurement contracts. We will be consulting on proposals later this year.

The UK will be first country in the world to require this.

#### ■ Government Departments: Equal Pay

**Philip Davies:** [\[39236\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many complaints relating to equal pay were made by (a) male and (b) female employees of government departments in each of the last three years.

**Matthew Hancock:**

This information is not held centrally.

#### ■ Regulation

**Tom Watson:** [\[39723\]](#)

To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office, how many officials of his Department have specific policy responsibility for deregulation.

**Matthew Hancock:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 11 March 2016 to UIN: 29744.

### TREASURY

#### ■ Child Benefit: EEA Nationals

**Chris Heaton-Harris:** [\[38889\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to HM Revenue and Custom's publication Statistics on recently arrived non-UK EEA nationals subject to income tax and National Insurance contributions or receiving HMRC administered benefits of May 2016, how many child benefit claims of what amount were made by (a) non-UK EEA nationals and (b) recently arrived non-UK EEA nationals in each of the last three years.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Government has made it clear that UK rates of Child benefit should not be paid to EU children overseas. The Government paper, "The best of both worlds: the United Kingdom's special status in a reformed European Union"

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-of-both-worlds-the-united-kingdoms-special-status-in-a-reformed-european-union>, sets out what was agreed at the February European council.

#### ■ Economic Growth: EU Law

**William Wragg:** [\[38690\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to page 148 of his Department's analysis: the long-term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives, Cm 9250,

if he will set out which EU regulations are to be reformed to cause an increase in UK gross domestic product of four per cent after 15 years.

**Mr David Gauke:**

As set out on pages 145 to 150 of HM Treasury's analysis on the long-term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives: "Successful EU-wide economic reform would make a substantial positive contribution to UK economic prospects. Combining the 4 key areas of EU economic reform gives an estimate of the benefits of reform of up to 4% of UK GDP after 15 years. In 2015 terms, this would mean up to an extra £2,800 a year of GDP per household."

This estimate of the impact of additional reform for the UK inside the EU is constructed and quantified around the best available evidence on 4 reform priorities: Single Market for services, Digital Single Market, single energy market and external trade agreements (i.e. those with non-EU countries).

Further to the quantified benefits of EU reforms that are agreed or in the process of being implemented, there are other additional EU reforms that will bring benefits but are unquantified and not included in the "4% of UK GDP after 15 years" estimate. The UK could benefit from reduced EU regulatory burdens: the UK's new settlement includes a commitment to reduce the regulatory burden on businesses, particularly small and medium-sized businesses, with specific targets established in key sectors. The EU has also committed to deliver a Capital Markets Union to deepen and integrate the EU's capital markets.

■ **Equity Release**

**Julian Knight:**

[38508]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what studies and research his Department has undertaken or commissioned on the potential benefits of equity release on retirement incomes; and if he will estimate the potential effect on the public purse of a lower take-up rate of means-tested old-age benefits resulting from greater use of equity release.

**Harriett Baldwin:**

Figures published by the Equity Release Council, an industry body, on the extent of equity release lending are available here:

<http://www.equityreleasecouncil.com/document-library/equity-release-market-report-spring-2016/>

The Government has not undertaken or commissioned any recent studies on the relationship between equity release and means-tested benefits.

■ **EU Budget: Contributions**

**William Wragg:**

[38927]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what estimate he has made of the level and amount of the UK EU rebate in each year to 2030.



**Mr David Gauke:**

HM Treasury's approach to estimating the net cost of the EU budget to the UK over the long term is set out in Annex B of HM Treasury Analysis: the long-term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives, publicly available at the following link:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/517415/treasury\\_analysis\\_economic\\_impact\\_of\\_eu\\_membership\\_web.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/517415/treasury_analysis_economic_impact_of_eu_membership_web.pdf)

**■ Overseas Trade****Nick Herbert:**[\[38548\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to his Department's analysis: the long-term economic impact of EU membership and the alternatives, what estimate he has made of the long-term reduction of trade from leaving the EU in each UK region.

**Mr David Gauke:**

In April 2016 HM Treasury published analysis that showed that reduced access to the Single Market under each of the alternatives set out would have a negative impact on trade.

The analysis does not make any estimate of the impact on the long-term trade position in each UK region. HM Revenue and Customs Regional Trade Statistics on the value of trade in goods in each region are publically available through the UK Trade Info website. The value and percentage share of goods exports to the EU from each region are shown in the table below.

REGION	VALUE OF GOODS EXPORTS TO THE EU IN 2015 (BILLIONS)	VALUE OF GOODS EXPORTS TO THE EU AS A SHARE OF TOTAL GOODS EXPORTS IN 2015
North East	£7.0	58%
North West	£11.6	47%
Yorkshire & the Humber	£7.8	47%
West Midlands	£12.0	42%
East Midlands	£8.7	45%
East of England	£11.4	54%
London	£12.7	39%
South East	£19.0	47%
South West	£9.7	64%
Wales	£5.0	41%
Scotland	£6.7	38%

REGION	VALUE OF GOODS EXPORTS TO THE EU IN 2015 (BILLIONS)	VALUE OF GOODS EXPORTS TO THE EU AS A SHARE OF TOTAL GOODS EXPORTS IN 2015
Northern Ireland	£3.5	55%

### ■ Sanitary Protection: VAT

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[38610\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what date he expects the planned removal of VAT on women's sanitary products to take effect.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The zero rate of VAT for sanitary products will take effect as soon as possible after Royal Assent of the Finance Bill, with some notice to retailers.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[38611\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what dates in each of the last three months officials of his Department have discussed the UK's plans for an exemption of VAT on sanitary products with the European Commission.

**Mr David Gauke:**

At March European Council, the Prime Minister secured the agreement of all Member States to European Council Conclusions which welcomed 'the intention of the Commission to include proposals for increased flexibility for Member States with respect to reduced rates of VAT, which would provide the option to Member States of VAT zero rating of sanitary products'.

Following that meeting, the issue of a zero-rate of VAT on sanitary products was discussed on 17, 19 and 29 April and 10 May. Most recently, on 25 May, ECOFIN agreed Conclusions which called for a proposal 'foreseeing an option to Member States of VAT reduced or zero rating for women's sanitary products at the earliest opportunity'.

**Alison Thewliss:** [\[38612\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, if he will publish all correspondence between his Department and the European Commission on the UK's request to introduce a zero rate of VAT on women's sanitary products.

**Mr David Gauke:**

On 3 November 2015, I wrote to Commissioner Pierre Moscovici and other Member States setting out the Government view that EU Member States should have full discretion over what rate of VAT they apply to sanitary products. I reiterated that call in a letter to Commissioner Pierre Moscovici on 17 December 2015.

At the March European Council, the Prime Minister secured the agreement of all Member States to European Council Conclusions which welcomed 'the intention of the Commission to include proposals for increased flexibility for Member States with respect

to reduced rates of VAT, which would provide the option to Member States of VAT zero rating of sanitary products'.

The Chancellor wrote to Pierre Moscovici on 19 April, requesting that the Commission urgently bring forward a specific proposal to cover VAT rates on sanitary products.

On 25 May ECOFIN agreed Conclusions which called for a proposal 'foreseeing an option to Member States of VAT reduced or zero rating for women's sanitary products at the earliest opportunity'.

## ■ Tax Evasion

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[38862\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, which government department has responsibility for the cross-agency taskforce established to examine the Panama Papers.

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[38863\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, who in Government is responsible for overseeing the cross-agency taskforce set up to examine the Panama Papers.

**Jonathan Ashworth:** [\[38869\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what activity the cross-agency taskforce on the Panama Papers has undertaken since it was established.

**Mr David Gauke:**

The taskforce will report jointly to the Chancellor and to the Home Secretary. It will provide a progress report later this year which will set out the taskforce's initial assessment of the information in the Panama papers and proposed actions for further analysis and strategy for pursuing any evidence found of wrongdoing and regulatory breaches.

The taskforce is jointly led by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the National Crime Agency (NCA), with other partners including the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) and Financial Conduct Authority. The NCA, HMRC and others already regularly work together to tackle serious and organised financial crime of many types.

The UK multi-agency taskforce has begun analytical work on all the data published by the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), in addition to continuing to develop a wide range of other intelligence which includes more than 700 HMRC leads with a connection to Panama. As part of this work, the task force is currently analysing and reviewing the names and addresses published by the ICIJ with alleged links to the UK and Mossack Fonseca.

While the sensitivity of the work means that it will not be possible to give a running commentary on any investigations, or number of investigations, Parliament will be kept updated on any significant developments.

## ■ Taxation: EU Action

**Mrs Anne Main:**[\[38668\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, what assessment he has made of the potential implications of the EU Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee's decision of 27 May 2016 to introduce European Taxpayer Identification Numbers for the administration of tax in the UK.

**Mr David Gauke:**

To date there has been no formal proposal for a European Tax Identification Number (EU TIN), and this European Parliament committee has no power to put forward a proposal in the tax space.

Tax is a Member State competence. All Member States have to agree with unanimity on tax proposals, so if a proposal were brought forward regarding an EU TIN the UK would need to formally agree in order for it to proceed.

## ■ Taxation: Fraud

**Deidre Brock:**[\[38713\]](#)

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the report, Tackling Tax Fraud, published by the National Audit Office in December 2015, how much of the tax revenue at stake for successful prosecutions in each range in Table 16 was recovered.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Figure 16 of the National Audit Office's (NAO) Tackling Tax Fraud report, relates to the (tax) revenue loss prevented (RLP) as a result of HM Revenue and Customs' (HMRC) criminal investigations. RLP represents the revenue that would have been lost in year if HMRC had not taken action – for example, stopping someone claiming VAT repayments that were not due to them.

In addition to RLP, and not included in figure 16 of the NAO report, HMRC also recovers money through confiscation and cash forfeiture. Following a successful prosecution, HMRC and the prosecuting authority will consider whether to pursue confiscation under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002. In 2014/15 – the period of the NAO report - HMRC recovered over £24 million in this way.

In the same period, HMRC also secured the following confiscation orders:

VALUE OF ORDERS MADE	NUMBER OF ORDERS
£0 to £4,999*	38
£5,000 to £9,999	13
£10,000 to £49,999	40
£50,000 to £99,999	22
£100,000 to £499,999	28

VALUE OF ORDERS MADE	NUMBER OF ORDERS
£500,000 to £999,999	2
£1 million and over	9

\* These figure includes what are known as 'nominal orders' where it is impossible to identify recoverable property but allows HMRC and the prosecuting authorities' scope to re-investigate if property is subsequently identified. An increase in order is then applicable to more accurately reflect the benefit figure assessed.

HMRC also works with other law enforcement agencies to collect tax evaded in the course of other criminal conduct – for example, drugs offences. In 2014/15 this brought in over £8 million to the Exchequer.

## ■ Treasury: UK Membership of EU

**Tom Pursglove:**

[R] [[38780](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2016 to Question 37198, how many of the leaflets entitled Why the Government believes that voting to remain in the European Union is the best decision for the UK have been returned to his Department; and what the postage cost to the Government has been of such returns.

**Mr David Gauke:**

I refer the Hon Member to the Prime Minister's response of 25th May 2016. This information is not collated centrally by the Department.

## ■ UK Membership of EU: Referendums

**Chris Heaton-Harris:**

[[38924](#)]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, how many (a) press officers and (b) other officials of his Department have been or are undertaking work related to the referendum on UK membership of the EU; for how long each such official has been working on that matter; and what the salary is of each such official.

**Mr David Gauke:**

Staff within the longstanding International and EU group lead on providing advice to Ministers on EU and EU related issues. Staff within other groups may also provide advice or analysis on EU issues as required.

HM Treasury do not routinely capture information about each employee's specific work. To provide information capturing the length of time official's worked specifically on the referendum would incur disproportionate costs. Information on HM Treasury staff salaries is published on this link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmt-staff-data>

## ■ Welfare Tax Credits: EEA Nationals

Chris Heaton-Harris:

[38886]

To ask Mr Chancellor of the Exchequer, with reference to the HM Revenue and Customs publication, entitled Tax Credits Statistics on non-UK EEA Nationals, of 22 February 2016, how many (a) in-work and (b) out-of-work claims of what amount were made by families with at least one (i) EEA national and (ii) recently arrived EEA national in each of the last three years.

**Damian Hinds:**

The Government has negotiated a new settlement that will enable the UK to have a new emergency brake to limit full access to in-work benefits by newly arrived EU workers for up to 4 years when they enter our labour market. This will be in force for 7 years. The Government paper "The best of both worlds: the United Kingdom's special status in a reformed European Union" <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-best-of-both-worlds-the-united-kingdoms-special-status-in-a-reformed-european-union>, sets out what was agreed at the February European council.

## COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

### ■ Community Engagement Forum

Neil Coyle:

[38633]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, how his Department is monitoring the effectiveness of the Community Engagement Forum; how frequently that forum has met; and how many Muslims that forum has engaged.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

The Community Engagement Forum has met on three separate occasions and has engaged a wide range of people representing, among others, different Muslim communities. Further details on attendance were provided on 2 November 2015 in response to written Question 13090 and on 12 January 2016 to written Question 20784. The discussions at the Community Engagement Forum have informed policy development across several individual Departments, the effectiveness of which will be monitored in the usual way.

### ■ Community Relations

Shabana Mahmood:

[38645]

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what indicators the Government uses to determine levels of community integration.

**Mr Marcus Jones:**

In February 2012, we published *Creating the Conditions for integration* which is built around the five key contributors to an integrated society:

- common ground - a clear sense of shared aspirations and values, which celebrates what we have in common rather than our differences

- responsibility - a strong sense of our mutual commitments and obligations, which brings personal and social responsibility
- social mobility - people able to realise their potential to get on in life
- participation and empowerment - people of all backgrounds have opportunities to take part, be heard and take decisions in local and national life
- tackling intolerance and extremism - a robust response to threats, whether discrimination, extremism or disorder, that deepen division and increase tensions.

The Community Life Survey 2014-15 shows a well-integrated society with 87% of people reporting they belong strongly to Britain and 86% that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. But we know that some communities and places still face challenges, tensions and missed opportunities. That is why the Prime Minister asked Louise Casey to carry out a review into boosting opportunity and integration in the most isolated and deprived communities. The results of the review will inform a major new Cohesive Communities Programme.

## ■ Help to Buy Scheme

Neil Coyle:

[\[38926\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what plans his Department has to improve access to the Help to Buy scheme.

**Brandon Lewis:**

Help to Buy covers a range of different schemes, offering home ownership options for a wide range of people. We are continuing to expand and improve access to Help to Buy, as shown by the development of London Help to Buy which offers equity loans of up to 40%, in recognition of affordability issues resulting from higher house prices in the capital.

On top of this, Help to Buy: Equity Loan enables people to buy a new-build home, with a deposit of as little as 5%; Help to Buy: ISA gives first-time buyers a 25% bonus on savings; and Help to Buy: Shared Ownership enables people to buy 25% to 75% of their home's value and pay rent on the rest.

The Department promotes Help to Buy through dedicated websites and other media, to ensure people are aware of all these options.

## ■ Housing: Construction

Grahame Morris:

[\[38496\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, what guidance his Department issues on housing renewal in former industrial areas and the replacement of dilapidated housing when it no longer meets the needs of the local community.

**Brandon Lewis:**

The current government is committed to increasing the supply of new housing, including through £8 billion announced at the spending review to support the delivery of 400,000 affordable homes and the £140 million to kick start estate regeneration.

We announced at Spending Review that £2 billion in loans will be made available to invest in infrastructure needed for major housing developments. We would expect at least 50% of this funding to support housing on brownfield sites. Full bidding guidance will be available when the fund is launched.

In addition, the National Planning Policy Framework sets out the expectation that local planning authorities should identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies. Planning applications for change to residential use from commercial buildings in areas where there is an identified need for additional housing should be approved provided that there are not strong economic reasons why such development would be inappropriate.

## CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

### ■ Broadband: EU Law

**John Redwood:** [\[38604\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what EU legislation affects the roll-out of superfast broadband in the UK.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

EU legislation includes the current EU Electronic Communications Framework, which aims to incentivise investment in infrastructure, including high speed, high quality broadband.

In addition, the EU directive on 'measures to reduce the cost of deploying high-speed electronic communications networks' aims to reduce the cost of deploying broadband networks by requiring sharing of existing infrastructure across a range of sectors, as well as coordination of publicly-funded civil engineering works. There are also EU Decisions which harmonise the use of spectrum for specific services, including wireless broadband. Finally, any state spending on broadband infrastructure may be subject to EU state aid rules, which aim to avoid disrupting the operation of commercial markets.

### ■ Department for Culture, Media and Sport: UK Membership of EU

**Tom Pursglove:** [\[R\]](#) [\[38767\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2016 to Question 37198, how many of the leaflets entitled Why the Government believes that voting to remain in the European Union is the best decision for the UK have been returned to his Department; and what the postage cost to the Government has been of such returns.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

I refer the Hon Member to the Prime Minister's response of 25th May 2016. This information is not collated centrally by the Department.



**William Wragg:**

[[38813](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if he will place in the Library copies of all letters, leaflets and other material from his Department circulated to (a) stakeholders and (b) members of the public on the EU Referendum; what the costs of the production and distribution of that material has been since 1 January 2016; and what he estimates the cost of any further production and distribution of such material will be between 6 May 2016 and 23 June 2016.

**Mr Edward Vaizey:**

I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 8 June 2016 to Question [38811](#).

## EDUCATION

### ■ Department for Education: UK Membership of EU

**William Wragg:**

[[38815](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will place in the Library copies of all letters, leaflets and other material from her Department circulated to (a) stakeholders and (b) members of the public on the EU Referendum; what the costs of the production and distribution of that material has been since 1 January 2016; and what she estimates the cost of any further production and distribution of such material will be between 6 May 2016 and 23 June 2016.

**Nick Gibb:**

I refer the Hon Member to the answer given by the Minister for the Cabinet Office on 8 June 2016 to Question [38811](#).

### ■ Grammar: Primary Education

**Paul Flynn:**

[[37613](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, if she will set out the reasons for the requirement for year five children in schools in England to learn the meaning of fronted adverbials.

**Nick Gibb:**

Accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar are the cornerstones of effective written communication.

The new national curriculum, introduced in 2014, sets higher expectations supporting pupils to realise their potential in an increasingly competitive global market.

The new programmes of study for English aim to ensure that all pupils acquire a wide vocabulary, a good understanding of grammar, and proper knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and written language. Explicit teaching of grammar is fundamental to this.

For children from homes where parents read and share books with the family, it may be possible over time to assimilate grammatical forms such as modal verbs and fronted

adverbials. For a great number of children, however, the easiest way for a teacher to explain to their pupils the rules that govern our language is to establish a shared vocabulary of grammatical terms.

We have increased the range of grammar and punctuation that should be taught and the terminology that pupils should learn – the meta-language. The aim and the emphasis, however, is not on naming grammatical terms but on being able to use the grammar to be able to speak and write for a full range of purposes.

## ■ Teachers: Recruitment

**Mr Jim Cunningham:**

[37411]

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps her Department is taking to increase recruitment of teachers of priority subjects in secondary schools.

**Nick Gibb:**

Teaching is a hugely popular career with more teachers in schools than ever before and record levels of top graduates entering the profession. To support recruitment in 2016/17 we have increased postgraduate bursaries, which put a premium on degree class, to attract top graduates in priority subjects such as physics, mathematics and modern foreign languages. Prestigious scholarships, worth £30,000 for physics and £25,000 for mathematics, chemistry or computing, are also available to talented graduates with a first or 2:1 degree who are passionate about their subject and have the potential to be inspirational teachers. We are also continuing to fund Teach First and their mission to get the best graduates into challenging schools.

In addition, we are spending £67 million on a programme of measures to improve the knowledge of the existing mathematics and physics teaching workforce, and increase the number of new mathematics and physics specialists who enter the profession through initial teacher training every year. This package aims to recruit up to 2,500 new teachers and train up to 15,000 existing teachers over the next five years. It also includes programmes to encourage the brightest A level students and undergraduates into teaching; salaried part-time and abridged courses for career changers; a salaried route for post-doctoral mathematics and physics researchers; and support for qualified teachers wishing to return to the profession.

Our marketing campaign, Your Future | Their Future, includes targeted subject specific advertising through a range of media. Those who wish to teach secondary priority subjects are eligible for our enhanced Premier Plus service, which provides support from a dedicated adviser to guide them through the application process. Those applicants who would benefit can also access funded courses to boost or refresh their subject knowledge to a level that will allow them to teach the subject. Officials from the Department also attend more than 35 graduate recruitment events each year.

**ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS****■ Litter****Steve McCabe:**[\[39439\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what progress has been made on the National Litter Strategy which was announced on 5 December 2015.

**Rory Stewart:**

Defra and the Department for Communities and Local Government are working on the Litter Strategy for England to improve the way we all tackle the scourge of litter. We have an ambitious goal, to substantially reduce litter and littering in England, ensuring that our communities, natural landscape, roads and highways are clean and pleasant.

The Strategy will focus on three key themes: education and awareness; punishing offenders; and better cleansing and litter infrastructure. These will be backed up by specific actions under each objective.

We have established a Litter Strategy Advisory Group. We held a Litter Forum earlier this year to gather stakeholder views for the Strategy's content and have begun working with a wide range of stakeholders to develop our approach. We will publish the Strategy this year and a great deal of work will be taken forward in the coming months.

**■ Nature Conservation: EU Law****Stephen Gethins:**[\[39219\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what steps her Department has taken to encourage other EU member states to implement the Birds and Habitats Directive.

**Rory Stewart:**

It is for each EU Member State to decide how best to meet their commitment to implement the Habitats and Birds Directives.

**■ Noise****Royston Smith:**[\[39293\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what guidance her Department provides to local authorities on the (a) issuing and (b) geographical extent of abatement notices to homes affected by noise nuisance.

**Rory Stewart:**

The Government does not consider it appropriate to provide best practice guidance to local authorities on abatement notices. Noise nuisance is best dealt with at a local level. Local authorities should therefore be free to take account of local circumstances when determining how best to apply the powers available to them in relevant noise and nuisance legislation.

**FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE**■ **Bahrain: Human Rights****Andy Slaughter:**[\[39304\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will make it his policy to implement the recommendation in the report by Human Rights Watch and the Bahrain Institute for Rights and Democracy, *The Blood of People Who Don't Co-operate*, published in November 2015, that the Government should suspend support for security service reform until the other recommendations of that report are complied with.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We believe that UK support to Bahrain's reform programme is the most constructive way to achieve long-lasting and sustainable reform in Bahrain. While it will take time to see the full results, UK support is having a direct, positive impact on areas of concern. We continue to work with the Government of Bahrain to ensure momentum and progress on its reforms, for the benefit of all Bahrainis. All Foreign and Commonwealth Office programmes that support security reform are carefully considered in line with HMG's Overseas Security and Justice Assistance Guidance in order to assess and mitigate human rights risks. Our assistance is specially designed to improve human rights standards and strengthen the rule of law in partner countries. These programmes are routinely monitored and evaluated on a quarterly basis to ensure that they are on track for delivery.

■ **British Overseas Territories: Marine Environment****Dr Matthew Offord:**[\[39458\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations his Department has made to the US administration to secure its co-operation in surveillance and enforcement of closed marine areas in (a) British Indian Ocean Territory and (b) Ascension Island.

**James Duddridge:**

Officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are in regular communication with their US counterparts to explore the opportunities for cooperation in surveillance and enforcement of Marine Protected Areas, including the British Indian Ocean Territory and Ascension Island.

■ **Burma: Legislation****Ann Clwyd:**[\[38796\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what discussions the Government has had with the Burmese government on repealing or amending provisions of that country's (a) penal code, (b) Peaceful Assembly Act, (c) Unlawful Associations Act 1908, (d) Telecommunications Act 2013, (e) Official Secrets Act 1923 and (f) other laws that affect the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

Burma's new Government have made rule of law a priority of their administration. It is clear that this will entail significant legislative reform and the, newly formed, Legal Affairs and Special Cases Assessment Commission has identified 142 priority laws for repeal or amendment. Both The Prime Minister, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron) and the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) have offered Aung San Suu Kyi whatever assistance her Government requires as they set about the process of democratic reform.

■ **Cuba: Foreign Relations**

**Chris Law:**

[\[38990\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what steps he is taking to improve relations between the UK and Cuba.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

Our engagement with Cuba is growing. I was the first British Minister to visit Cuba in a decade in 2014 and saw for myself Cuban efforts to reform their economy and encouraged further progress. The Secretary of State for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Philip Hammond), became the first British Foreign Secretary to visit Cuba since 1959 when he visited in April. Whilst there he signed a bilateral agreement restructuring Cuba's debt to the UK, as well as agreements on financial services, energy, culture and education. He also met Cuban Ministers and discussed how to improve the business environment in Cuba for British companies. These agreements build on the steadily increasing engagement between the UK and Cuba in recent years. Examples of cooperation include the joint work between the UK and Cuba to combat Ebola in Sierra Leone and a trade mission to Cuba last year, led by the noble member the Rt Hon. The Lord Hutton of Furness and supported by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, which saw significant progress on projects worth over £350 million.

**Chris Law:**

[\[38991\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what meetings he had with representatives of the Cuban government during his visit to Cuba in April 2016.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my Rt Hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond) was the first British Foreign Secretary to visit Cuba since 1959. During his visit the Foreign Secretary met Raúl Castro, President of Cuba, Bruno Rodríguez, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ricardo Cabrisas, Vice-President, and Rodrigo Malmierca, Minister for Foreign Trade and Investment. The Foreign Secretary also met representatives from Cuba's civil society.

Chris Law:

[\[38992\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment his Department has made of the potential effect of the bilateral EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement and the end of the common position on UK relations with Cuba.

**Mr Hugo Swire:**

Negotiation of the EU-Cuba Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement (PDCA) has concluded after a number of years. The PDCA will support our Cuba policy to seek greater political dialogue, increase trade and investment, strengthen cooperation and support development that benefits the Cuban people.

The 1996 Common Position was widely seen as outdated, prompting negotiations for a new agreement in the form of the PDCA. The Common position remains the basis for the EU's policy towards Cuba.

## ■ Developing Countries: Education

Martyn Day:

[\[39037\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether the Government plans to sign the Safe Schools Declaration following the World Humanitarian Summit discussions on Education in Emergencies and Protracted Crises held on 23 and 24 May 2016.

**James Duddridge:**

The UK is committed to upholding the Geneva Conventions in their entirety and expects other states to do the same. Under our International Humanitarian Law obligations the UK already affords schools and educational establishments a high degree of protection during military operations. Whilst we welcome the spirit and intention of the Safe Schools Declaration, we remain concerned that the supporting Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military use during armed conflict do not mirror the exact language and content of International Humanitarian Law. We have no current plans to sign the Safe Schools Declaration.

## ■ Egypt: Non-governmental Organisations

Neil Carmichael:

[\[39317\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what representations he has (a) received and (b) made to the Egyptian government on investigations in Egypt into non-governmental organisations and their funding which form part of Case No. 173 (2011).

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We have received representations from both Parliamentarians and non-governmental organisations in relation to this case.

We are deeply concerned by growing restrictions on civil society in Egypt, including asset freezes and travel bans against human rights defenders and NGOs. I have frequently raised this with the Egyptian Ambassador and issued a statement on 22 March. Officials regularly raise our concerns with representatives of the Egyptian Government in both Cairo and London, most recently in May.

## ■ European Union

**John Redwood:**

[\[38603\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, when he expects negotiations on the new EU treaty to incorporate the new settlement for the UK in the EU to begin in the event of the UK voting to stay in the EU.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The central element of the deal that the Government has secured is an International Law Decision agreed by all the Heads of State or Government of the Member States of the EU. It is legally-binding under international law and will take effect if the British people vote to remain in the EU. The Decision also includes a legally binding and irreversible commitment that the Member States will at the next opportunity, and subject to compliance with their respective constitutional requirements and the procedures in the EU Treaties, amend the EU Treaties to address key UK concerns.

**Kate Hoey:**

[\[38632\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, whether it is the Government's policy that the UK is part of the European Project, as that term is used by the EU Commission and the European Council; and if the Prime Minister will make a statement.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Government is in favour of the UK remaining in a reformed EU. It has made its position on the referendum clear, and published a number of papers analysing the choice facing the British people.

As stated in the paper "The best of both worlds: the United Kingdom's special status in a reformed European Union" published on 22 February 2016, the Government has secured agreement that the Treaties will be changed in the future so that the UK is carved out of 'ever closer union' and established a mechanism for decision-making to return from Brussels to the UK and other nation states, where this is most appropriate. This is all consistent with the UK's longstanding approach to our relationship with the EU: that it should be based on the practical pursuit of our national interest. Our new settlement means that it has been formally recognised that the UK is not committed to further political integration into the EU and we have secured specific confirmation that the concept of 'ever closer union' will not apply to the UK in the future."

## ■ Saudi Arabia: Arms Trade

**Stephen Twigg:**

[\[39818\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, if he will suspend arms export licences and reject new applications for arms exports to Saudi Arabia while there is a risk that they could be used in contravention of international humanitarian and human rights law.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK Government takes its arms export responsibilities very seriously and operates one of the most robust arms export control regimes in the world. All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and

National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of all relevant factors at the time of the application.

Risks around human rights violations are a key part of our assessment against the Consolidated Criteria. A licence will not be issued for any country, including Saudi Arabia, if to do so would be inconsistent with any provision of the mandatory Criteria, including where we assess there is a clear risk that the items might be used for internal repression or in the commission of a serious violation of International Humanitarian Law.

Our export licensing system allows us to respond quickly to changed circumstances, with the option to suspend or revoke any export licence, where we consider that this is a necessary step. The Government is confident in its robust case-by-case assessment and is satisfied that extant licences for Saudi Arabia are compliant with the UK's export licensing criteria.

#### ■ Turkey: EU Aid

**John Redwood:**

[\[38750\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what the EU budget is for assistance to Turkey for strengthening its external border with Syria, Iran and Iraq in (a) 2016-17 and (b) 2017-18.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance is used in Turkey to promote cooperation on a range of issues that matter to the UK, such as migration management and organised crime. The Department does not hold figures for the funds used for strengthening Turkey's external border.

#### ■ UK Membership of EU

**Deidre Brock:**

[\[38563\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, how many UK citizens currently resident elsewhere in the EU his Department expects to return to the UK in the event of a vote to leave the EU.

**Mr David Lidington:**

Estimates suggest that more than 1.2 million UK citizens are living permanently elsewhere in the EU. These estimates do not include people who reside for part of the year in another Member State or British citizens travelling in the EU.

British citizens living in the EU currently enjoy a range of rights to live, to work and to access pensions, health care and public services that are guaranteed through EU law. There would be no requirement under EU law for these rights to be maintained if the UK left the EU. Should an agreement be reached to maintain these rights, the expectation must be that this would have to be reciprocated for EU citizens in the UK.



## ■ Ukraine: EU External Relations

**John Redwood:**

[\[38605\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what recent assessment he has made of the security implications for the UK of the Association Agreement between the EU and Ukraine.

**Mr David Lidington:**

The EU-Ukraine Association Agreement aims to develop a closer political and economic relationship through the implementation of wide-ranging reforms, including on the rule of law. A stable and reformed Ukraine is of strategic importance to all EU Member States, including the UK.

## ■ Yemen: Children

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[39554\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, what assessment he has made of UN Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict and its Annex, published in April 2016, in which the Saudi-led Coalition is listed as committing grave violations against children in Yemen.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We are aware of the UN Secretary General's annual report on Children in Armed Conflict which was published on 2 June, which includes a section outlining the impact of the conflict in Yemen on children. The conflict in Yemen has had a significant impact on children, in terms of the numbers of child casualties, the recruitment of children as soldiers, and attacks on hospitals and schools. We consider all these reports very carefully. We note the announcement by the UN Secretary General on 6 June that removed the listing of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition from the report's annex, pending the conclusion of a joint review by the UN and Saudi Arabia on the cases and numbers cited in the text. We welcome co-operation between the UN and Saudi Arabia to look in to this matter.

**Jim Shannon:**

[\[39555\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the UN Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict, published in April 2016, if his Department will support the immediate establishment of an international, impartial investigation into reported international humanitarian law violations by all parties in the conflict.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

The UK Government has been clear that we want to see thorough and conclusive investigations where allegations have been made against parties to the conflict in Yemen regarding international humanitarian law. The Saudi Arabian government has its own internal procedures for investigations and they announced more detail on how they investigate such incidents earlier this year and that any lessons learned would be acted upon. We note the announcement on 6 June of the UN Secretary, Ban Ki Moon, that

the United Nations and the Saudi-led Coalition will jointly review the cases and numbers in the Children and Armed Conflict Report.

**Jim Shannon:** [39556]

To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, with reference to the UN Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict, published in April 2016, what steps he is taking to ensure that Saudi Arabia and other Coalition states cooperate with the UN to develop and implement an Action Plan to end and prevent such violations.

**Mr Tobias Ellwood:**

We note the announcement by the UN Secretary General on 6 June that removed the listing of the Saudi Arabian-led Coalition from the report's annex, pending the conclusion of a joint review by the UN and the Saudi-led Coalition on the cases and numbers cited in the text. We welcome co-operation between the UN and Saudi Arabia to look in to this matter.

## HEALTH

### ■ Blood: Contamination

**Alison Thewliss:** [38754]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will remove the restriction that prohibits the publication of official government documents relating to the contaminated blood scandal under the 100-year rule.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Department has transferred records to The National Archives that relate to contaminated blood. There are parts of the documents which are not publicly available as they relate to personal information about named individuals. The names and other identifying information are closed to the public until the individual has reached 100 years of age.

The publication of the names of patients, or other identifying information such as their address and medical condition, would breach their privacy under the Data Protection Act. When the individual reaches 100 years of age, the unredacted documents will be made available. This is consistent with other records held by The National Archives which contains personal and sensitive information.

**Alison Thewliss:** [38755]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what date he plans to publish official government documents relating to contaminated blood that are held under the 100-year rule.

**Jane Ellison:**

Records relating to contaminated blood up to the year 1995 have been transferred to The National Archives for permanent preservation, and are available electronically on their website at:

<http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C14522322>

**Alison Thewliss:**

[\[38757\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many official government documents are held under the 100-year rule relating to the contaminated blood scandal.

**Jane Ellison:**

We do not recognise that a 100 year rule has been established for the retention of records. The Department works to the guidance published by The National Archives on the appraisal and selection of records which are retained and transferred for permanent preservation.

The records relating to contaminated blood have been published in response to obligations under the Freedom of Information Act, and records relating to the period between 1986 and 1995 transferred to The National Archives.

#### ■ Blood: Viral Diseases

**Victoria Borwick:**

[\[38916\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what research the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood, Tissues and Organs plans to undertake or commission on the risk of blood-borne viruses for former sex workers and ex-intravenous drug users.

**Jane Ellison:**

As a Departmental Expert Committee the Advisory Committee on the Safety of Blood Tissues and Organs (SaBTO) does not undertake or commission research directly. SaBTO is carrying out a review of selection criteria for donation of blood, tissues and cells. The review will be wide-ranging and comprehensive and will include evidence relating to the risks of blood-borne infections in people who have previously injected drugs or received money or drugs for sex. Should any gaps be identified in the course of the review, SaBTO could make research recommendations.

#### ■ Cancer: Drugs

**Mr Nicholas Brown:**

[\[38896\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, for what reasons the budget for the revised Cancer Drugs Fund was established at £340 million.

**George Freeman:**

NHS England has advised that the Cancer Drugs Fund budget was increased to £340 million for 2015-16 and, with the new financial control and commercial mechanisms being put in place from 1 July 2016 under the new arrangements for the Fund, that budget increase will be maintained at £340 million for 2016-17.

#### ■ Cancer: Screening

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

[\[38558\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he has made of the National Screening Committee's recommendations for the bowel and cervical screening programmes; and whether he plans to support those recommendations

**Jim Fitzpatrick:**

[\[38559\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when his Department plans to implement the National Screening Committee's recommendations on introducing (a) the Faecal Immunochemical Test into the bowel screening programme and (b) HPV as the primary test in the cervical screening programme.

**Jane Ellison:**

Ministers have accepted the UK National Screening Committee's (UK NSC) recommendation on replacing the guaiac Faecal Occult Blood test with the Faecal Immunochemical Test (FIT) in the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme. Following the change to FIT we expect that around 200,000 more people per year will take up the opportunity to be screened as part of the NHS Bowel Cancer Screening Programme in England. This has the potential to save hundreds more lives by detecting bowel cancer earlier. Public Health England is responsible for the leadership of the NHS Screening Programmes and will oversee the change to the programme in partnership with NHS England.

Ministers are currently considering the UK NSC's recommendation that human papillomavirus testing should replace the currently used cytology test as primary screening for cervical disease.

#### ■ Clinical Commissioning Groups: Finance

**Royston Smith:**

[\[39260\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much funding Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group receives from the public purse; and what that funding is for the (a) highest and (b) lowest funded clinical commissioning group.

**Alistair Burt:**

Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) has received an allocation of £315 million for 2016-17, and although it is still 4.71% below its target allocation, this is an uplift of 7.10% on 2015-16 allocations, well above the national average of 3.74%.

The highest funded CCG, when looking at how far it is from its target allocation, is NHS West London (Kensington & Chelsea and Queen's Park & Paddington) CCG who has received an allocation of £353.5 million for 2016-17 and is 30.51% over its target allocation. In line with the pace-of-change policy, NHS West London CCG received an uplift of 1.39% in 2016-17.

The lowest funded CCG is NHS North Manchester CCG who has received an allocation of £280.6 million for 2016-17 and is 5% below their target allocation.

#### ■ Electronic Cigarettes

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[38658\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what his policy is on e-cigarettes as a potential gateway to smoking.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Government has set a regulatory framework in place that aims to prevent the take up of e-cigarettes by children and non-smokers whilst making them freely available to smokers who wish to use them to quit tobacco use. Gateway effect is difficult to prove or disprove but to date, in the United Kingdom, we have not seen any significant use of e-cigarettes outside of existing smokers and ex-smokers.

**Mrs Anne Main:**

[\[38712\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what estimate he has made of the proportion of e-cigarette users who will return to smoking tobacco products in the year ending May 2017 as a result of the Tobacco Products Directive.

**Jane Ellison:**

No such estimate has been made given the range of factors which may impact on rates of smoking tobacco and use of e-cigarettes.

## ■ European Medicines Agency

**Andrew Gwynne:**

[\[38834\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health has seen the complaint by the Nordic Cochrane Centre to the European Medicines Agency regarding maladministration at that organisation; and if he will make a statement.

**Jane Ellison:**

I am aware of the document from the Nordic Cochrane Centre. Whilst the issues raised are a matter for the European Medicines Agency (EMA), we are satisfied that the EMA has adequate processes in place to manage any potential conflicts of interest of its scientific experts and to uphold the integrity and impartiality of its decision-making. There was consensus agreement amongst EU Member States on the conclusions of the recent human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine safety review, and we have confidence in the outcome of this review.

Aside from the EMA review, the World Health Organization's Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety advised in December 2015 that it had not found any safety issues to date that would alter its recommendation to use the vaccine. It concluded that there is no evidence that postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome and complex regional pain syndrome are associated with HPV vaccination. Thorough reviews undertaken by the US Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and Health Canada have also concluded that available evidence does not support a link between HPV vaccine and development of serious and chronic illnesses.

## ■ General Practitioners: Southampton

**Royston Smith:**

[\[39253\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how much of the funding allocation for GPs in the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group area is spent on (a) leases and (b) land.

**Alistair Burt:**

The information requested on the funding allocation for general practitioners (GP) in the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group area that is spent on leases and land is not collected centrally. NHS England advises that premises funding is assessed by the District Valuer and based on the amount of space primary care estates occupy. NHS England confirms that in 2015/16 the amount paid for primary care estates was £2,692,000.

**Royston Smith:**[\[39255\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps his Department has taken to increase the number of health professionals who support GPs in the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group area.

**Alistair Burt:**

NHS England advises the Clinical Commissioning Group has given practices the opportunity to take part in Productive General Practice to evaluate their workforce and this was further supported through a Local Improvement Scheme to develop general practice by undertaking a workforce analysis.

**Royston Smith:**[\[39256\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many people have benefited from improved access to GP services in the Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group area since the announcement of the Challenge Fund in October 2013.

**Alistair Burt:**

Southampton City Primary Care Hub, the local Wave 2 Prime Minister's GP Access Fund scheme in Southampton, supports 276,338 patients (registered population at April 2016) registered across 33 general practitioner practices, and works from five hubs. There were 4,873 referrals to the scheme between 22 June 2015 to 13 March 2016 and the scheme is still operating.

**■ Human Papillomavirus: Vaccination****Andrew Gwynne:**[\[38503\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will request that the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation undertakes an assessment of the recommendation from the Britain Against Cancer conference held in December 2015 to report its review on extending HPV vaccination to boys in 2016.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation's (JCVI) advice needs to be based on a robust cost-effectiveness analysis. This is underway and Public Health England is due to report by early 2017. The JCVI has agreed that shortcuts could undermine the validity of the results and will begin its deliberations on extending vaccination to adolescent boys once all the necessary evidence is available. It is important that we follow a proper process and that the JCVI has a full understanding of the cost-effectiveness of vaccination programmes.

**William Wragg:**

[38847]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what assessment he made of the utility of data from the clinic in Brent and Harrow which has been providing men who have sex with men with HPV vaccinations since 2012 when determining that it was necessary to conduct an HPV vaccination pilot before deciding on a national roll-out; and if he will make a statement.

**Jane Ellison:**

Experience from the two Brent and Harrow clinics providing human papillomavirus vaccinations to men who have sex with men was shared with Public Health England and has helped to inform the development of the pilot. North West London is unlikely to be representative of England as a whole and the pilot will therefore let us consider provision of this vaccination programme in different geographical areas. It will also consider a wider age range than the service provided in these two clinics. The pilot will cover men up to 45 years of age in line with advice from the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI). The pilot will help resolve a range of implementation issues and determine whether a national programme can be delivered through Genito-Urinary Medicine and HIV clinics at a cost effective price in line with the JCVI's advice.

**William Wragg:**

[38848]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, on what date in June 2016 the HPV vaccination pilot for men who have sex with men is planned to commence; and if he will make a statement.

**Jane Ellison:**

The first sexual health clinics involved in the pilot started offering the human papillomavirus vaccine to men who have sex with men, who are already attending the clinic for an existing appointment, on 6 June 2016.

## ■ Mental Health Services

**Rebecca Long Bailey:**

[39030]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether he has responded to the report of the Royal College of Psychiatrists Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care.

**Alistair Burt:**

We welcome the report by the Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care, which along with the independent Mental Health Taskforce report will help shape the future of mental health services.

The independent Mental Health Taskforce recommended that NHS England should work with relevant partners to develop a response to the report by the Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care by the end of 2016/17.

The Department will work with NHS England to develop this response.

John Mann:

[39215]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps the Government has taken to evaluate the effectiveness of the 2014 mental health pilots aimed at helping people with mental health problems back into work.

**Alistair Burt:**

We have published the following evaluation reports of mental health and work pilots:

— Evaluation of the 'Telephone Support' Psychological Wellbeing and Research report (September 2015). A copy of the document is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/telephone-support-psychological-wellbeing-and-work-feasibility-pilot-evaluation> ;

— Evaluation of Group Work Psychological Wellbeing and Work Feasibility (September 2015). A copy of the document is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/group-work-psychological-wellbeing-and-work-feasibility-pilot-evaluation> ; and

— Evaluation of the 'IPS in IAPT' Psychological Wellbeing and Work Feasibility (March 2015). A copy of the document is available at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/helping-people-with-mental-health-problems-find-work>

## ■ Mental Health Services: Hospital Beds

Rebecca Long Bailey:

[39031]

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to address the shortages of acute adult psychiatric beds in England.

**Alistair Burt:**

The reduction in mental health beds over the last decade reflects the move to providing more community-based services. People should be treated, as far as they can be, and wherever clinically appropriate by ensuring we have better support in the community and effective step-up and step-down commissioning so people can access beds if needed. Bed provision should be based on effective local commissioner needs assessments of their local communities.

We know that there is some anecdotal evidence of variable services and difficulties in admissions to mental health beds. This is why we asked Lord Crisp to set up a Commission to review the situation, examine the causes of these pressures and make recommendations for improvement. The Commission found that problems in accessing beds in local areas was not necessarily down to a lack of beds but may also reflect problems in the wider mental health system such as providing alternatives to inpatient care and delayed discharges from hospital.



The independent Mental Health Taskforce recommended that NHS England should work with relevant partners to develop a response to the report by the Commission on Acute Adult Psychiatric Care by the end of 2016/17.

The Department will work with NHS England to develop this response.

#### ■ Muscular Dystrophy: Drugs

**Mr David Anderson:**

[\[39182\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2016 to Question 37646, what preparatory work NHS England is undertaking on Translarna; and whether a date has been set for a commercial meeting between NHS England and PTC Therapeutics after that preparatory work.

**George Freeman:**

Further to the answer given in Question 37646, NHS England has been undertaking the detailed preparatory work required to meet the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence's request that NHS England and the supplier, PTC Therapeutics, work towards agreeing an acceptable managed access arrangement for Translarna (ataluren) by 7 July 2016.

NHS England will be meeting with the supplier when it has concluded this preparatory work. There have not been any commercial meetings with PTC Therapeutics in the period since 15th April 2016 - however, NHS England is in regular contact with the supplier and will be agreeing mutually convenient times to meet.

#### ■ Pharmacy

**Imran Hussain:**

[\[39074\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what the distance is between two pharmacies that his Department uses to define a cluster.

**Alistair Burt:**

The Department has defined a cluster for the purposes of the consultation on community pharmacy in 2016/17 and beyond as pharmacies in clusters of three or more, where a pharmacy is within 10 minutes' walk of two or more other pharmacies. A 10 minute walk at an average speed of three miles per hour is equivalent to 0.5 miles distance.

#### ■ Primary Health Care

**Royston Smith:**

[\[39251\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he has taken to introduce (a) video consultations and (b) other new technology into primary care service delivery.

**Alistair Burt:**

From April 2014 to April 2016, the Government has invested £175 million in developing innovative approaches to extend access to general practice through the Prime Minister's GP Access Fund which has included testing, adoption, and evaluation of:

- new types of consultations such as phone, video and online consultations;
- of new general diagnosis tools; and
- to help close the research and health care gaps

During 2017/18, £171 million will be made available to clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to enable practices to upscale and implement measures tested through the Access Fund.

A further £1 billion multiyear investment has been committed via the Estates and Technology Transformation Fund from April 2015 to April 2019, to help GP practices go further and faster to increase the use of technology and develop the primary care estate. Funding will be aligned with local digital roadmaps priorities and will support technology led improvement and innovation which improve patient and clinician experience of services, and access to primary care.

The 'General Practice Forward View', released in April 2016, announced a commitment to greater use of technology. This includes an increase of over 18% in allocations to CCGs for provision of IT services and technology for general practice, alongside revised funding arrangements for GP IT in 2016-18. This will allow CCGs sufficient local flexibility to commission and procure GP IT services to meet local need. There will also be an additional £45 million multiyear national programme to stimulate uptake of online consultation technology for every practice.

The National Information Board also has a programme of work known as Transforming General Practice which will use technology to free GPs from time consuming administrative tasks and provide patients with online services.

**Royston Smith:**

[\[39261\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what framework assessment is undertaken when determining the allocation of financial resources to a clinical commissioning group for primary care.

**Alistair Burt:**

The allocations for primary medical care announced in January 2016 are based on a statistical model of workload which takes into account differences due to the age and sex of the population, differences associated with deprivation, and the higher workload associated with new registrations. There are also adjustments for differences in the unavoidable costs of general practitioner practice staff across the country and for unmet need.

The model determines target allocations, while pace of change policy sets how quickly actual allocations move over time towards target allocations. The pace of change policy announced in January for the period 2016-17 to 2020-21 was that no clinical commissioning group's area is further than 5% below target by 2018-19 for primary medical care allocations.

## ■ Primary Health Care: Southampton

**Royston Smith:** [\[39252\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of UK funding for primary care is spent on BME communities in the Southampton City Council area.

**Alistair Burt:**

The information requested on the proportion of United Kingdom funding for primary care spent on Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in the Southampton City Council area is not collected centrally. NHS England advises that funding is provided to practices to deliver a service and is not attributable to communities or neighbourhoods. NHS England confirms practices in the centre of the city support the majority of the BME communities; however, their boundaries encompass other areas as well.

**Royston Smith:** [\[39258\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what proportion of Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group's funding for primary care services was spent on translation services in the latest period for which figures are available.

**Alistair Burt:**

NHS England confirms it commissions translation services for Southampton City general practitioners (GPs) and advises that in 2015/16 there were 70 translation service requests made by Southampton City GP practices costing £7,457.

## ■ Vaccination

**Andrew Gwynne:** [\[38831\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what measures are in place to support people who have had adverse reactions to vaccines administered by the NHS.

**Jane Ellison:**

The Vaccine Damage Payments Scheme (VDPS) was set up under the Vaccine Damage Payments Act 1979 to provide a measure of financial help in those very rare circumstances where it is established that severe disability was caused by vaccination administered by the National Health Service.

It is only one part of the wide range of support and help available to severely disabled people in the United Kingdom. The VDPS does not prejudice the right of the injured person to pursue a claim for compensation against the manufacturer of the vaccine.

## HOME OFFICE

### ■ Islam: Culture

**Andrew Rosindell:** [\[38375\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if she will publish a list of all Islamic cultural centres in the UK primarily funded by foreign donations; and if she will make a statement.

**Karen Bradley:**

HM Government does not collect information on the funding of religious institutions in the UK. If such institutions, in England and Wales, are registered charities with the Charity Commission and have an annual income of over £25,000, their accounts are made publically available on the charity's entry on the Public Register of Charities, which is accessible from [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)

In addition to the requirement to file accounts, the Charity Commission, as the charity regulator in England and Wales, can review and inspect the financial records of charities to ensure that their trustees comply with their duty to account.

■ **Visas**

**Julie Cooper:** [\[38655\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what the average processing time is for settlement visas using the priority visa service.

**James Brokenshire:**

The average processing time for settlement applications made using priority visa services between 01-Jan-2015 and 31-Dec 2015 is 7.41 days.

This is a provisional management information that is subject to change. It has not been assured to the standard of Official Statistics.

**INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**■ **Bangladesh: Overseas Aid**

**Rushanara Ali:** [\[39150\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to help people in Bangladesh build resilience against future extreme weather events in (a) Chittagong and (b) Bangladesh.

**Mr Desmond Swayne:**

Since 2010 the United Kingdom, through DFID, has made significant investments totalling almost £38 million to enhance Bangladesh's resilience to future extreme weather events - including in Chittagong.

Across Bangladesh approximately 3 million people have benefitted from community-level risk reduction initiatives. In Chittagong efforts have focussed on enhancing resilience to cyclone and storm surges. UK funding has also helped to plant 65,000 trees across Chittagong district as part of re-forestry activities to help stabilise soil and reduce the impact of coastal flooding.

■ **Bangladesh: Storms**

**Rushanara Ali:** [\[39144\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department is taking to help (a) women and (b) all people in Bangladesh affected by Cyclone Roanu.

**Mr Desmond Swayne:**

To mitigate the effects of Cyclone Roanu the UK is helping to provide an immediate package of relief assistance to benefit approximately 27,000 people across Bhola, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Noakhali and Laxmipur districts. Of this number at least 13,500 or 50% are women.

**Ms Diane Abbott:**

[\[39168\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps her Department has taken to assist people in Bangladesh to mitigate the effects of Cyclone Roanu.

**Justine Greening:**

To mitigate the effects of Cyclone Roanu the UK is helping to provide an immediate package of relief assistance to benefit approximately 27,000 people across Bhola, Cox's Bazar, Chittagong, Noakhali and Laxmipur districts.

## ■ Syria: International Assistance

**Jo Cox:**

[\[39235\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, with reference to the finding of the Concern Worldwide (UK) report of 20 May 2016, Still Paying the Price, on the proportion of funding pledged during the Supporting Syria and the Region Conference in February 2016 so far received, what steps her Department is taking to ensure that all pledges are being fulfilled.

**Mr Desmond Swayne:**

The Supporting Syria and the Region Conference raised an unprecedented \$12 billion for Syria and the region, including \$6 billion for this year. Since the Concern Worldwide (UK) Report was published, further funding has been received by the UN towards their 2016 appeals, bringing total 2016 disbursements to \$1.7 billion.

A recent letter from the Prime Minister – signed by all Conference co-hosts – pressed leaders for prompt disbursement of their pledges. We are also in final negotiations with a provider to develop and implement a tracking mechanism for all the financial commitments made at the London Conference. On 24 May the Secretary of State chaired a constructive meeting in the margins of the World Humanitarian Summit to review implementation of both financial and policy agreements made at the London Conference, and progress will be reviewed again at the UN General Assembly in September. I am working closely with Syria Conference co-hosts to ensure these measures help to maintain pressure on donors to honour their pledges through more rapid disbursement.

**JUSTICE****■ Companies: Criminal Liability**

**Catherine West:** [\[38677\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what plans he has to bring forward legislative proposals to make banks and large companies criminally responsible for employees who embezzle funds, launder money and evade tax.

**Dominic Raab:**

The Government is consulting until 10 July on legislation and guidance for a corporate offence of failure to prevent the criminal facilitation of tax evasion.

Separately, The Prime Minister announced on 11 May that the Government will consult on extending the criminal offence of “failure to prevent” to other economic crimes such as fraud and money laundering.

**■ Domestic Violence: Legal Aid Scheme**

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[R\] \[38519\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of reform of access to legal aid in cases of domestic violence on children; and if he will make a statement.

**Mr Shailesh Vara:**

When reforming legal aid the government was careful to protect legal aid for the highest priority cases, including those relating to domestic violence and child abuse.

The government is committed to undertaking a post-implementation review of the reforms within 3 to 5 years of their implementation.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[R\] \[38520\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, if he will review charges made by the (a) police and (b) NHS for obtaining official documentation when such papers are required for applications for legal aid in cases of domestic abuse.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[R\] \[38521\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what assessment his Department has made of the effect on applicants for legal aid in cases of domestic violence of the requirement that victims provide substantial written evidence; and if he will make a statement.

**Liz Saville Roberts:** [\[R\] \[38522\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, what provision is made within the family justice system to assist victims of domestic abuse in private family law cases who do not have the financial capability to provide documented evidence when applying for legal aid.

**Mr Shailesh Vara:**

The Government is absolutely clear that victims of domestic violence must have access to the help that they need, including access to legal aid.

As I updated the House on 21 April, the Ministry of Justice has begun work with domestic violence support groups, legal representative bodies and colleagues across government to gather data and further develop our understanding of the issues facing victims of domestic violence when applying for legal aid. The findings will be used to inform an evidence-based and sustainable solution, with the aim of drawing up replacement regulations.

■ **Tivium: Judgements**

**Andrew Stephenson:**

[[38659](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, how many (a) court judgments have been made against Tivium and (b) such judgments have been satisfied in (i) England, (ii) the North West and (iii) Lancashire.

**Mr Shailesh Vara:**

There have been one hundred and fifty eight judgments made in England against County Court respondents with the word Tivium in their name. Forty three of those had judgements issued and entered at the County Court Money Claims Centre in the North West. There were no judgments recorded as being issued and entered in courts in Lancashire. A judgment is not necessarily made near to the claimant's residential address. Data on how many judgements have been satisfied is not held.

## PRIME MINISTER

■ **Prime Minister: UK Membership of EU**

**Tom Pursglove:**

[R] [[38963](#)]

To ask the Prime Minister, pursuant to the Answer of 25 May 2016 to Question 37198, how many of the leaflets entitled Why the Government believes that voting to remain in the European Union is the best decision for the UK have been returned to 10 Downing Street; and what the postage cost to the Government has been of such returns.

**Mr David Cameron:**

I have nothing further to add.

## TRANSPORT

■ **Bus Services: Disability**

**Mr Roger Godsiff:**

[[39166](#)]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, if he will include a requirement in the Bus Services Bill for all new buses to be talking buses.

**Andrew Jones:**

Accessible on-board information helps a range of passengers to feel confident when using buses, safe in the knowledge that they will know when to alight.

Traditionally systems providing next stop announcements have been expensive to fit and maintain, meaning that mandating their use would have placed a significant burden on bus operators.

Related technology continues to evolve however, and we are keeping these developments under review.

#### ■ Govia Thameslink Railway

**Andy McDonald:** [38787]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what discussions his Department has had with Govia Thameslink Railway on extending Driver Only Operation; and what the outcome of those discussions was.

**Claire Perry:**

Officials regularly meet with Govia Thameslink Railway. The proposals relating to train doors being operated by drivers have been part of those discussions. Any subsequent change to employee terms and conditions and the management of any such change(s) are a matter for the relevant employer and their employee(s) and/or employee representatives.

#### ■ Railways: East of England

**Mr Mark Prisk:** [38994]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, in which month he expects the Greater Anglia rail franchise to be awarded.

**Claire Perry:**

The next franchise to provide services in the Anglia region will be known as the East Anglia franchise, following devolution of service to Crossrail and London Overground. The franchise schedule can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/523791/may-2016-rail-franchise-schedule.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/523791/may-2016-rail-franchise-schedule.pdf).

#### ■ Tolls

**Lilian Greenwood:** [38422]

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what plans he has to increase the number of locations with paid toll crossings in England.

**Andrew Jones:**

The Government has a longstanding policy of funding estuarial crossings through tolls. Work on a new Lower Thames Crossing has assumed that it will be tolled, although no decisions have yet been made. Beyond this, there are no plans for further tolled crossings in England. The £15 billion to be invested in strategic roads over the period 2015 to 2020, set out in the Road Investment Strategy, is wholly funded by Government.



The new Mersey Gateway Bridge and existing Silver Jubilee Bridge will be tolled when the new bridge opens in 2017, although these are the responsibility of Halton Council.

## ■ Trust Ports

**Richard Burden:** [\[39076\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to recommendation 9 of his Department's Trust Port Study, published on 26 May 2016, what (a) guidance and (b) additional assistance his Department plans to provide to trust ports for periodic reviews of their model.

**Richard Burden:** [\[39077\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what steps he plans to take to implement the recommendations of his Department's Trust Port Study, published on 26 May 2016; and what steps he plans to take to support parliamentary scrutiny of that implementation.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The Department for Transport will implement the Trust Port Study's recommendations over the course of 2016 and 2017. The Secretary of State is subject to Parliamentary scrutiny. As part of implementing the recommendations, the Department is preparing revised good governance guidance for trust ports. The intention is for this to include guidance on how major trust ports should carry out periodic reviews of their strategic objectives. Trust ports are expected to carry out such reviews using their own resources.

## ■ Unmanned Air Vehicles: Safety

**Richard Burden:** [\[39003\]](#)

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, with reference to the Answer of 27 April 2016 to Question 34680, if he will provide an update on his Department's work through the EU and the European Aviation Safety Agency on developing safety rules for drones; and whether his Department holds information on the number of other EU member states which already have registration systems for drones.

**Mr Robert Goodwill:**

The aviation working group of the EU Council is currently negotiating a revised aviation safety Regulation which contains the framework for the adoption of harmonised rules for the operation of drones within the EU. My Department and the Civil Aviation Authority are actively participating in these discussions. We are also participating in the European Aviation Safety Agency technical working group, which is developing the detailed implementing rules that will be adopted under the new Regulation.

Regarding registration schemes for drones within other EU Member States, we are only aware of the registration scheme in Ireland. This was introduced in December 2015.

**WORK AND PENSIONS**■ **Pension Funds**

**Mr Alistair Carmichael:** [38500]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, whether the Pensions Regulator will now update its rules on defined benefit (DB) schemes to clarify the legal responsibilities of DB trustees.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Parliament has given the Pensions Regulator operational independence from the Government. It would not, therefore, be appropriate for the Government to comment on such matters. However, we can confirm that the Regulator provides clear guidelines for pension scheme trustees on the requirements for a well-run and well-funded defined benefit scheme, to enable them to meet their legal obligations. These guidelines include a detailed online learning programme for trustees. Trustees must also appoint the right people, including actuaries, auditors, and other appropriate advisers, to help them run their scheme. The Government keeps the Regulator's role and remit under review.

■ **State Retirement Pensions: Civil Partners**

**Owen Thompson:** [38913]

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what guidance his Department issues to inform people of state pension age of the implications for their surviving civil partner in the event of their death they are not married; and how many civil partners have been denied a claim to their partner's pension following a claimant's death.

**Justin Tomlinson:**

Guidance on the circumstances in which the surviving member of a married couple or civil partnership may be entitled to State Pension based on their late partner's National Insurance contributions is available on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

Information on the number of applications for State Pension based on a late partner's National Insurance contributions which have been disallowed is not available.