

Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answers

Hate Crime: West Midlands

Emma Reynolds (Labour) [259974] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how many hate crimes were recorded in (a) the West Midlands police area and (b) Wolverhampton in 2018; and how many of those cases resulted in a (i) prosecution and (ii) conviction.

Nick Hurd: The Home Office collects and publishes statistics on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police by Police Force Area only. Information for West Midlands Police for 2017/18 can be found in Table 2.01 of the Hate Crime appendix tables available here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2017-to-2018>.

Data for 2018/19 are due to be published later this year.

Information on prosecutions and convictions is the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-06-04/259974/>

The following three questions all received the same answer

Religious Buildings: Security

Imran Hussain (Labour) [257052] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his oral statement of 7 May 2019 on Places of Worship: Security Funding, Official Report, column 468, whether places of faith other than places of worship will qualify for funding for the Ramadan Package.

Imran Hussain (Labour) [257054] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his oral statement of 7 May 2019 on Places of Worship: Security Funding, Official Report, column 468, whether places of worship will be required to demonstrate proof of a previous attack to qualify for the Ramadan Package.

Imran Hussain (Labour) [257055] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with reference to his oral statement of 7 May 2019 on Places of Worship:

Security Funding, Official Report, column 468, how much funding his Department has allocated to date from the Ramadan Package.

Victoria Atkins: Following the attacks in New Zealand, we recognised the increased security anxieties being felt by mosques as we approach Ramadan. A security training scheme commenced on the 5 May. We originally committed to 12 workshops but following significant interest we have agreed to fund an additional 10 workshops during Ramadan.

These workshops have been open to faith leaders and have not been restricted to those who have experienced a previous hate crime. We have also made available funds to pay for the distribution of written advice to mosques, community centres and madrassahs. This is a short-term project for which we have awarded grant funding of £74,725 that will sit alongside the wider £5m fund that has been announced for security training for all faiths.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/257052/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/257054/>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/257055/>

The statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2019-05-07/debates/21C4190A-5CAB-43DA-8360-AA944753E549/PlacesOfWorshipSecurityFunding>

Religious Buildings: Security

Imran Hussain (Labour) [257053] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what proportion of the security funding for places of worship has been allocated to protect (a) Mosques and (b) other Muslim places of faith since 2016.

Victoria Atkins: Over its first three years, the Places of Worship protective security scheme has approved grants worth approximately £1.5m to 134 places of worship. During that time, Ministers have approved 49 grants to mosques worth £638,906.34.

Following the Finsbury Park terror attack in June 2017, we also announced a £1m fund to protect vulnerable faith institutions. Under this scheme, we approved funding to 38 faith institutions including 19 mosques and one Muslim community centre. These grants were worth over £260,000.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-21/257053/>

Welsh Government

Data on ethnicity, disability status, marital status and religion produced from the Annual Population Survey for 2015 to 2017

<https://gov.wales/equality-and-diversity-statistics-2015-2017>

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House of Commons Written Answer

Palestinians: Overseas Aid

Daniel Kawczynski (Conservative) [257489] To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps he is taking to ensure that Official Development Assistance provided to the Palestinian Authority does not end up funding terrorist activities.

Andrew Murrison: DFID has robust measures in place to ensure UK Aid reaches its intended beneficiaries. UK aid to the Palestinian Authority's (PA's) health and education sectors is channelled through the EU Palestinian-European Socio-Economic Management Assistance Mechanism (PEGASE). Our money goes into a special, dedicated bank account before being paid to individuals who have been vetted in advance. The bank account is only used for UK aid. Independent auditors check that the money paid out from the special bank account only went to the vetted individuals after every disbursement.

UK's financial aid to support the PA's water and energy sectors will be channelled through The World Bank Partnership for Infrastructure Development in the West Bank and Gaza Multi Donor Trust Fund. UK aid will flow from the trust fund to dedicated accounts that will be managed by the PA in accordance with rules established by the World Bank, and be subject to the review of external financial auditors to provide assurance that the expenditure of funds was only on agreed programme activities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2019-05-22/257489/>

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Other Relevant Information

European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI)

Hate speech and xenophobic populism remained major concerns in Europe in 2018

Xenophobic populism and racist hate speech continued to make their mark on the contemporary political climate in Europe in 2018, says the annual report of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) published today.

The growing public anxiety about economic, geopolitical and technological changes was exploited by those scapegoating migrants and minorities, in particular populist politicians aiming at dividing societies along national ethnic or religious lines. Not only were such views expressed by fringe politicians, but they increasingly gained footing within mainstream political parties and national governments, which remained a major concern for ECRI. ...

On the positive side, the Anti-racism Commission noted that a growing number of countries have taken important steps to bring their legislation on combatting hate speech in line with European and international standards. An increasing number of member states have introduced special focal points within the police tasked to liaise with vulnerable groups, which has often led to greater trust among members of minority groups in law enforcement agencies. ECRI called for this good practice to be spread, and for the anti-hate legislation to be effectively applied. ...

Islamophobia and anti-immigrant sentiment were still prevalent in most member states in 2018. Muslim women were frequently the targets of violence which often involved pulling

off face veils and headscarves or being spat at. ...

Close co-operation between Jewish communities and national authorities has shown to be an effective tool to counter antisemitism. However, Jewish people in Europe continue to be confronted with antisemitic hatred, including violence, often considered as justifiable reactions to the actions of the Israeli government. Such condoning of antisemitic acts must be more strongly rejected, ECRI says. ...

To read the full press release see

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/european-commission-against-racism-and-intolerance/-/hate-speech-and-xenophobic-populism-remained-major-concerns-in-europe-in-2018>

Annual Report on ECRI's activities: 1 January to 31 December 2018

<https://rm.coe.int/annual-report-2018/168094d6fe>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/holocaustreturnofculturalobjectsamendment.html>

International Development Assistance (Palestinian National Authority Schools) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/internationaldevelopmentassistancepalestiniannationalauthoritieschools.html>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/2017-19/marriageact1949amendment.html>

Online Forums Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/onlineforums.html>

Palestinian Statehood (Recognition) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2017-19/palestinianstatehoodrecognition.html>

Scottish Parliament

**** Human Tissue (Authorisation) (Scotland) Bill**

<http://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/108681.aspx>

SPICe Briefing: Stage 3 Proceedings

<https://sp-bpr-en-prod-cdneq.azureedge.net/published/2019/6/10/The-Human-Tissue--Authorisation--Scotland--Bill---Stage-3-Proceedings/SB%2019-35.pdf>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

Scottish Human Rights Commission Draft Strategic Plan (closing date 28 June 2019)
<http://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/1860/strategic-plan-consultation-vfinal-eh.docx>

Online Harms White Paper (closing date 1 July 2019)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper>

Opt-out organ donation: organs and tissues excluded from the new system (closing date 22 July 2019)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/opt-out-organ-donation-organs-and-tissues-excluded-from-the-new-system>

Regulation of pre-paid funeral plans (closing date 25 August 2019)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/regulation-of-pre-paid-funeral-plans-consultation-on-a-policy-proposal>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438