



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

Contents

Home Affairs

Holocaust

Relevant Legislation

Consultations

Home Affairs

House of Commons Oral Answers

Hate Crimes: Prosecution Rate

3. **Bob Blackman (Conservative):** What steps the CPS is taking to improve the prosecution rate for hate crimes. [900228]

8. **Sally-Ann Hart (Conservative):** What steps the CPS is taking to improve the prosecution rate for hate crimes. [900235]

The Solicitor General (Michael Ellis): The CPS is committed to tackling hate crime, working closely with partners across government under the hate crime action plan. The CPS has trained its prosecutors, drawing on expertise and insight from key community groups, and has established national and local scrutiny panels to inform decision making. As a result, last year the number of convictions for hate crimes with a recorded sentence uplift increased to 73.6%, the highest rate yet.

Bob Blackman: I thank my right hon. and learned Friend for that answer. Antisemitism and hate crimes are on the rise right across this country. What further action can he take to make sure that the perpetrators are brought to justice and we eliminate hate crime forever?

The Solicitor General: I thank my hon. Friend for that question. He is right to be concerned about this issue. The rise in antisemitism is significant. One thing that has been happening is that mandatory hate crime training for the CPS has been developed, with community involvement, including that of the Community Security Trust. That has been delivered, and the CPS has refreshed a guide for lawyers on antisemitism, with the assistance of that trust. The guide includes key aspects of the law and victim support. We must do everything we can to stamp out this scourge of antisemitism.

Sally-Ann Hart: I thank my right hon. and learned Friend for his response. The internet has hugely positive values, but it can allow the spread of hate crime behind a veil of anonymity. What steps is his Department taking to ensure that crime online attracts and is subject to the same penalties in law as offline crime?

The Solicitor General: The proportion of hate crime convictions with an announced and recorded sentence uplift has increased from just 12.1% in 2014 to 73.6% now. My hon. Friend is right about online instances of hate crime, and the hate crime

conviction rate has also increased in the past decade significantly. It now stands at 84%, but we are continuing to work on dealing with the issue of hate crime online.

Peter Kyle (Labour): Overall prosecutions have fallen from a quarter to only one in 10. Why is the CPS prosecuting so few people for hate crime? Why is the number of prosecutions falling, not rising? Is that not deterring people from reporting hate crime in the first place?

The Solicitor General: There is considerable evidence that people are particularly concerned about hate crime, and I do not think they are being put off making complaints to the police about that. We are constantly liaising at the Crown Prosecution Service with local police forces about their conduct, and we focus very much on getting results in instances of hate crime. As I have said, the number of convictions for hate crime has increased to its highest ever level.

Jim McMahon (Labour Co-op): There is no doubt that the rise of Islamophobia is causing real concern and fear in the community, and particularly in the community that I represent in Oldham. The online platforms have been allowed to self-regulate for far too long. It would be easy for them to have a simple "report it once" button that automatically feeds through to the police. Will the Government do far more to make sure that victims are protected and that we raise the tone of the debate in our politics?

The Solicitor General: The hon. Gentleman is right to focus on this issue. The issue of Islamophobia is of particular concern, as are all forms of hate crime. We see examples of cases in this area being robustly prosecuted throughout the country, and likewise we see examples of courts recognising the seriousness of these offences with exemplary sentences. The sentencing tribunal has noted that such sentences have been increased because of the Islamophobic or antisemitic element, or because of elements relating to other areas of hate crime. That is right and should be a warning to all.

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-01-16/debates/5F2C8AAE-5F7F-4595-A20B-5617B1C471FE/HateCrimesProsecutionRate>

House of Commons Written Answers

Religiously Aggravated Offences

Matthew Offord (Conservative) [1723] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what information his Department holds on the religion of victims of religiously aggravated hated crime.

Kit Malthouse: The Home Office has collected data on the number of religious hate crimes recorded by the police in England and Wales by perceived religion of the victim on a mandatory basis since 2017/18.

The latest available data, for 2018/19, can be found in 'Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2018/19' which can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2018-to-2019>

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-09/1723/>

Religious Buildings: Security

Gareth Thomas (Labour Co-op) [1266] To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, how much financial assistance she has made available to improve security for people attending (a) Hindu Temples, (b) Synagogues, (c) Churches, (d) Mosques, (e) Gurdwaras and (f) other places of worship in the 2019-20 financial year; and if she will make a statement.

Victoria Atkins: The Home Office are finalising decisions on funding for the 2019-

2020 Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme and will notify successful applicants shortly.

Over the first three years, we have awarded 134 grants (45 in Round 3 of the scheme) worth approximately £1.5m to places of worship across England and Wales - with 63 to churches, 49 to mosques, 5 to Hindu temples and 17 to Gurdwaras. We use an Independent Advisory Panel made up of representatives of faith communities to recommend which bids should be funded.

Synagogues are covered by the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant. In 2019-2020 a grant of £14 million was provided, mainly to fund security guarding at all Jewish schools, nurseries and some synagogues.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-08/1266/>

Information about the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/places-of-worship-protective-security-funding-scheme-open-for-applications>

Information about the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant, referred to above, can be read at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/funding-for-tighter-security-to-protect-jewish-schools-from-anti-semitism>

and

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-10-19/181646/>

House of Lords Oral Answers

Football: Racism

Lord Addington (Liberal Democrat): To ask Her Majesty's Government what support they have identified that the Football Association requires to address levels of racism in football.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (Baroness Barran): My Lords, racism and all forms of discrimination have no place in football or society. We must confront this vile behaviour. Last February, the Government brought together football stakeholders, including the FA, for an anti-discrimination summit, and in July the football authorities set out their list of actions to tackle discrimination, including increasing the minimum sanction for discriminatory behaviour, introducing stronger education measures and improving reporting systems. I met with the FA yesterday and discussed their actions on discrimination. While progress is definitely being made, obviously there is more to do. We will be calling on the footballing authorities for a further update shortly.

Lord Addington: I thank the Minister for that response. However, can the Government give us an undertaking that they will undertake some of the activities which the Football Association has brought forward in its snappily titled "mandatory education programme offer," ensuring in particular that every fan knows what constitutes racism and the effect that it has not only on players but on fellow fans?

Baroness Barran: I understand the urgency in the noble Lord's question and encourage him to look at the FA's website—I am sure he knows it better than I do—which has excellent links to education resources. The Government cannot ensure that every person has seen it, but we are working closely with and keeping very close tabs on the FA to ensure that it takes this responsibility very seriously.

Lord Woolley of Woodford (Crossbench): My Lords, does the Minister agree that the tackling of racial abuse in the Premiership and the persistent racial disparities within the Premier League is moving painfully slowly? One third of Premiership footballers are non-white—in old money, black—yet we have only one black manager, Nuno Espírito Santo of Wolverhampton Wanderers. I am not sure if there are any Wolverhampton fans here. If so, sorry about last night. I am not sure if there are any assistant coaches, chief executives or board members of colour. Can the Minister pledge to convene a meeting with the necessary actors, including the police, to encourage, and where possible demand, a comprehensive programme to tackle the scourge of racism and close the racial disparities? The beautiful game must confront and deal with this ugly racism.

Baroness Barran: I thank the noble Lord for his question. He raises important points about diversity across all levels and all roles within the game. For the benefit of Chelsea fans, yesterday I met Paul Elliott, who I gather was a former captain of Chelsea, who now chairs the Inclusion Advisory Board for the FA. He felt more confident about the progress that is being made, particularly in relation to coaches. I thank the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, who is not in her place, for sending me research on the importance of this point. Sport England is investing £2 million a year into the FA to support its work in ensuring that the coaching workforce is more diverse. The board of the FA contains four women and two people of colour, so it is trying to lead from the front.

Lord Hayward (Conservative): My Lords, I welcome the opening comments of my noble friend in identifying that this is an issue not only of racism in football but of diversity in sport and society in general and that we have to tackle it in all forms. My own sport of rugby union faced its difficulty in relation to homophobia, and I pay credit to the RFU and other organisations last year who worked so well with my club and others to tackle such issues. However, is it not inherent in our society that if we are to give advice to others, the language used by some Members in this House should be temperate, sensible and appropriate and not what I, as a gay man, would deem to be abusive?

Baroness Barran: I will comment on my noble friend's final remark first. I can only agree with him. Each of us individually has to take responsibility for the language we use and put ourselves in the shoes of those who might find it offensive in any way. Work continues in relation to homophobia, in football specifically, and we very much welcome the Rainbow Laces campaign which the FA led last year.

Lord Bassam of Brighton (Labour): My Lords, it is now 20 years since the Football (Disorder) Act was enacted to tackle racist thugs. Does the Minister agree that, given the shocking 123% rise in racist incidents since 2016, now might be the time to consider increasing penalties and strengthening powers to tackle this appalling problem in our football grounds?

Baroness Barran: The noble Lord is very patient. He raised this point only 19 years ago, but we are now further on. The question of the efficacy of the legislation can be divided into two parts: whether the legislation is fit for purpose and is being implemented properly, and if it is not fit for purpose whether we need to amend it. My honourable friend the Minister for Sport is seeking a meeting with the Home Secretary to discuss this.

Baroness Grey-Thompson (Crossbench): My Lords, many acts of racism occur in grounds during matches. However, social media has become a breeding ground and some providers allow the worst abuse to remain posted. Have Her Majesty's Government considered how the online harms consultation White Paper could be used to look at this form of abuse?

Baroness Barran: ... The noble Baroness is absolutely right. Again, from talking yesterday with the FA, it is clear that players feel racism when they turn on their phones as well as on the field. That is very much part of what we will be considering in the online harms Bill.

House of Lords Written Answers

Universities: Freedom of Expression

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth (Conservative) [HL201] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to promote freedom of speech on campuses at universities.

Baroness Berridge: This government will ensure that our universities are places where free speech can thrive and will strengthen academic freedoms.

The freedom to express views openly, challenge ideas and engage in robust debate is crucial to the student experience and to democracy. Individuals should never be in a position where they can be stopped from, or are made to feel inhibited in, expressing an opinion perfectly lawfully.

The government worked alongside the Equalities and Human Rights Commission which published new guidance in February 2019 on freedom of speech in higher education to support higher education providers and students' unions in delivering their duties.

The Office for Students (OfS) also has an important role to play in championing free speech and promoting good practice. A public interest principle relating to free speech is built into the OfS regulatory framework.

The government will be looking closely at how well higher education providers are meeting these obligations and will consider whether further action is needed, working with a range of partners.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-08/HL201/>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/freedom-of-expression-guide-for-higher-education-providers-and-students-unions-england-and-wales.pdf>

Universities: Hate Crime

Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth (Conservative) [HL202] To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to combat hate crime at universities.

Baroness Berridge: Any incident of hate crime is unacceptable and we cannot tolerate staff and students being victims of it at our world-leading universities.

Higher education (HE) providers have clear responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010. They should discharge their responsibilities fully and have robust policies and procedures in place to comply with the law, and to investigate and swiftly address incidents reported to them.

In its guidance to the Office for Students (OfS), the government has tasked the OfS to tackle these important issues, including the implementation of Universities UK's (UUK) Taskforce recommendations. The OfS and its predecessor body allocated £4.7 million for a safeguarding scheme to address harassment and hate crime in HE. On 9 January 2020, the OfS published a consultation on harassment and sexual misconduct in HE. This consultation, which concludes on 27 March 2020, asks for views on how the OfS will regulate harassment, including hate-based and sexual misconduct. The OfS expects providers to have policies, processes and systems in place to effectively address these issues. Evaluation to date has shown that progress has been made but that there is still more to do. The government will continue to work closely with partners, including UUK and the OfS to support work to address hate crime and harassment in universities.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-01-08/HL202/>

The guidance referred to above can be read at

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/8c8219d4-b565-4310-ad80-84f3872e628f/ofs-strategic-guidance-2019.pdf>

The consultation referred to above can be read at

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf>

Schools: Inspections

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (Non-affiliated) [HL157] To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to remove the restriction on Ofsted's inspection of schools which teach for less than 18 hours a week.

Lord Agnew of Oulton: Settings that only have pupils attending for less than 18 hours per week are not considered full time and are therefore not required to register as schools. As they are not registered as schools, such settings are not subject to inspection. In March 2018, the department published guidance setting out how the government, Ofsted and local authorities can work collaboratively to help ensure children attending unregistered schools and out-of-school settings are safe and are receiving a suitable education. This guidance is attached and can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/independent-school-registration>.

Part-time settings should be considered to be out-of-school settings, which the department currently defines as “any institution providing tuition, training, instruction or activities to children in England, without their parents’ or carers supervision, that is not a school, college, 16-19 academy or provider caring for children under 8 years old, which is registered with Ofsted or a childcare agency.” This covers a large, broad and diverse sector, ranging from: settings offering part-time or supplementary education to support mainstream or home education and religious settings offering education in their own faith, to extra-curricular clubs and activities, such as dance classes, sports tuition, as well as uniformed youth organisations.

In 2015, the government consulted on proposals to introduce a new system regulation of the sector. However, in 2018 following careful consideration of the large number of wide ranging views and representations received, the government decided not to pursue the model proposed, but to instead further develop the evidence base for a national approach, including future legislation where gaps in existing powers might be identified. In connection with this, the government is currently taking forward a package of measures aimed at enhancing the safeguarding of children in this sector, including the provision of £3 million of targeted funding, in 16 local authorities, to test different approaches to multi-agency working. This work will be used to inform best practice on how existing legal powers, held by local authorities and other agencies, such as the Police, Ofsted and the Charity Commission can best be used to intervene in settings of concern and to help inform the need for any further legislation.

Some part-time settings provide alternative provision which is commissioned by a school or local authority. Ofsted can look at such a part-time setting as part of an inspection of the commissioner. In all cases (whether commissioning a place for a child in care or any other child), the local authority or school acting as the alternative provision commissioner should assure themselves that the setting is registered where applicable and that the provision is delivered by high quality staff with suitable training, experience and safeguarding checks.

Holocaust

House of Commons Written Answer

Holocaust Memorial Day

Lyn Brown (Labour) [2453] To ask the Leader of the House, if he will allocate a three hour debate in Government time, on a motion, That this House has considered Holocaust Memorial Day 2020, before the end of January 2020.

Jacob Rees-Mogg: In my Business Statement today I announced a general debate on the Holocaust Memorial for Thursday 23 January 2020.

<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2020-01-13/2453/>

The Business Statement referred to above can be read at

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-01-16/debates/EB62C222-B933-48AF-B718-58E14B767E26/BusinessOfTheHouse#contribution-7DB3380C-97FD-4D8C-992D-B94D2C5E7F5E>

Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/divorcedissolutionandseparation.html>

** European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill

<https://services.parliament.uk/Bills/2019-20/europeanunionwithdrawalagreement.html>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-16/debates/E966FD8D-C2B9-4BBE-88FF-739E13BE367C/EuropeanUnion\(WithdrawalAgreement\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-16/debates/E966FD8D-C2B9-4BBE-88FF-739E13BE367C/EuropeanUnion(WithdrawalAgreement)Bill)

and

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-16/debates/3B88FEAD-25EC-4DA0-8344-EAFC0EA3FFAE/EuropeanUnion\(WithdrawalAgreement\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2020-01-16/debates/3B88FEAD-25EC-4DA0-8344-EAFC0EA3FFAE/EuropeanUnion(WithdrawalAgreement)Bill)

Scottish Parliament

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/Bills/112997.aspx>

Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes today**

Equality Act 2010: Commencing the socio-economic duty (Welsh Government)

(closing date 17 January 2020)

<https://gov.wales/equality-act-2010-commencing-socio-economic-duty>

Civil Partnership (Scotland) Bill (closing date 31 January 2020)

<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/113449.aspx>

**** Harassment and sexual misconduct in higher education** (closing date 27 March 2020)

[https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf)

[cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/76f6bdd3-bb14-4956-b089-cd1598323d55/consultation-on-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct-in-higher-education.pdf)

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