



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Updated Guidance: Trade with Israel

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-israel-trade-and-partnership-agreement>

Updated Guidance: Trade with the Palestinian Authority

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/summary-of-the-uk-palestinian-authority-political-trade-and-partnership-agreement>

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Other Relevant Information

CST

CST Antisemitic Incidents Report 2020 published today

CST's *Antisemitic Incidents Report 2020*, published today, shows that last year CST recorded 1,668 antisemitic incidents across the UK. This is an 8% fall from the 1,813 incidents recorded in 2019 but is still the third-highest number of incidents CST has ever recorded in a calendar year. There were 1,690 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2018, 1,420 in June 2017 and 1,275 antisemitic incidents in 2016. ...

There were 41 incidents that referenced the pandemic alongside antisemitic language, and 19 cases of Jewish religious, educational or social events being 'zoombombed' by antisemites who accessed the events to express antisemitic abuse. There was a reduction in the number of incidents affecting Jewish schools, teachers and school students, but an increase in the number of incidents at people's homes. ...

... CST still recorded over 100 incidents in all but one month in 2020, which continues the pattern of historically high antisemitic incident figures in recent years: December 2020 was the first month for three years in which CST recorded fewer than 100 antisemitic incidents. ...

CST recorded 100 violent antisemitic incidents in 2020, a 39% fall from 158 incidents involving violence in 2019. Ninety-seven of these violent incidents were in the category of Assault while three were classified by CST as 'Extreme Violence', meaning they involved potential grievous bodily harm (GBH) or a threat to life, compared to just one in 2019. CST is not able to share details of these three incidents for legal reasons. There were 72 incidents of Damage & Desecration of Jewish property in 2020; 1,399 incidents of Abusive Behaviour, including verbal abuse, antisemitic graffiti, antisemitic abuse via social media and one-off hate mail; 85 direct antisemitic threats; and 12 cases of mass-mailed antisemitic leaflets or emails. All these totals are lower than the comparable figures in the same categories in 2019.

Online antisemitic incidents decreased by 9%, from 700 in 2019 to 634 in 2020. Nevertheless, this is still the second-highest annual total of online incidents ever reported to CST, reflecting the growing role that online platforms play as a medium for transmitting hate, especially at a time when social distancing has made face-to-face contact less common. ...

Home Secretary Priti Patel said: *"It is shameful that in the 21st century, the Jewish community still faces racist abuse and the desecration of their synagogues and other religious and community sites. As Home Secretary, I will continue my work across Government and with the police to tackle hate crime and ensure perpetrators are rightly punished."*

Shadow Home Secretary Nick Thomas-Symonds said: *"A fall in antisemitic incidents is to be welcomed and is testament to the work of CST and the wider Jewish community. However, any act is one too many and the overall numbers remain far too high. We all have a duty to be vigilant and act against antisemitism and the hatred that gives rise to these appalling acts."*

HM Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, Lord Mann, said: *"Whilst the CST figures show a decrease in antisemitic hate incidents in 2020, these figures are worryingly still the third-highest ever recorded by CST. It is clear that Covid-19 has led to a rise in antisemitic conspiracy theories and the use of dangerous alternative media platforms. Whilst it is partly to do with better reporting and knowledge, it is worrying that this trend isn't coming down and it also shows the vital importance of CST. I am wary of complacency in taking CST's work for granted. I commend CST for their hard work in keeping the community safe and I call on those who can to give them more support."*

National Policing Lead for Hate Crime, Deputy Chief Constable Mark Hamilton said: *"We are deeply grateful to our partners at the Community Security Trust for the support that they provide to us and the service they offer to victims of antisemitic hate crime. We share a determination to reduce the incidents of antisemitism but, where antisemitism fuels criminal activity, we need victims to have the confidence to report the crimes so we can ensure they get the support they deserve and that we bring offenders to justice. ... We have observed that the conspiracy theories that have affected many communities often include antisemitic tropes. This presented us new challenges in 2020 and, as we've come to expect, CST is able to help others to stay safe, as well as the Jewish community. One example was the guidance on how to stay safe in online events, created after the earlier 'Zoom-bombing' incidents mentioned in this report. This was shared with a broad range of community groups to provide the resource for the protection of all communities. ..."*

To read the full press release see

<https://cst.org.uk/news/blog/2021/02/11/cst-antisemitic-incidents-report-2020-published-today>

Antisemitic Incidents Report 2020

<https://cst.org.uk/public/data/file/7/2/Incidents%20Report%202020.pdf>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Animal Welfare (Sentencing) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2622>

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

**** Domestic Abuse Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2709>

Committee Stage, House of Lords

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/lords/2021-02-10/debates/70D5F720-E766-402D-BCBA-1FF3F9DB6F22/DomesticAbuseBill>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

Scottish Parliament

Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/domestic-abuse-protection-scotland-bill>

Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/hate-crime-and-public-order-scotland-bill>

Post-mortem Examinations (Defence Time Limit) (Scotland) Bill

<https://beta.parliament.scot/bills/post-mortem-examinations-defence-time-limit-scotland-bill>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 8 days**

Introduction of a statutory opt-out system for organ donation for Northern Ireland
(closing date 19 February 2021)

<https://www.health-ni.gov.uk/consultations/organ-donation>

Human Rights Act Review (closing date 3 March 2021)

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/93/human-rights-joint-committee/news/138635/call-for-evidence-the-governments-independent-human-rights-act-review/>

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19
(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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