



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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Queen's Speech 2022

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/queens-speech-2022>

The Queen's Speech 2022: Background Briefing Notes

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1074113/Lobby_Pack_10_May_2022.pdf

The Queen's Speech sets out 38 Bills for the coming session:

- **Animal Welfare (Kept Animals) Bill**

England, Scotland, and Wales

The Bill is intended to strengthen animal welfare, including banning live exports, tackling puppy smuggling and banning the keeping of primates as pets without a licence.

- **Audit Reform Bill (Draft)**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to rebuild trust in the UK's audit, corporate reporting and corporate governance system and the insolvency regulatory framework; ensure accountability for those with key roles in that system, and increase resilience and choice in the statutory audit market.

- **Bill of Rights**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to ensure the human rights framework meets the needs of the society it serves and commands public confidence.

Main benefits:

- Defending freedom of speech by promoting greater confidence in society to express views freely.
- Curbing the incremental expansion of a rights culture without proper democratic oversight.
- Reducing unnecessary litigation and avoiding undue risk aversion for bodies delivering public services.

- Tackling the issue of foreign criminals evading deportation.

Main measures:

- Establishing the primacy of UK case law, clarifying there is no requirement to follow the Strasbourg case law and that UK Courts cannot interpret rights in a more expansive manner than the Strasbourg Court.
- Ensuring that UK courts can no longer alter legislation contrary to its ordinary meaning and constraining the ability of the UK courts to impose 'positive obligations' on public services without proper democratic oversight.
- Guaranteeing spurious cases do not undermine public confidence in human rights so that courts focus on genuine and credible human rights claims.
- Recognising that responsibilities exist alongside rights

- **Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to stop public bodies from adopting their own approach to international relations.

Main benefits:

- Ensuring the UK's foreign policy determines how our country interacts with other nations
- Stopping public bodies pursuing their own foreign policy agenda with public money
- Preventing divisive behaviour that undermines community cohesion. There are concerns that such boycotts may legitimise and drive antisemitism as these types of campaigns overwhelmingly target Israel. Such campaigns result in undue politicisation of public institutions.

Main measures:

- Empowering Government to ban public bodies that are already subject to public procurement rules from conducting their own boycott campaigns against foreign countries or territories.
- Stopping public bodies from taking a different approach to the UK Government on sanctions and foreign relations.
- Ensuring that public bodies conduct procurement and investment activities in line with official government measures on both policy and sanctions.

Government comment:

- It is not acceptable that public bodies carry out campaigns where attempts are made to declare policies for boycotts, divestment or sanctions at variance with Government policy. We have seen motions passed by Lancaster City Council in support of such campaigns in June 2021 and Leicester City Council to boycott goods from Israeli settlements in 2014.
- The Government has zero tolerance for discrimination. Such campaigns are not in line with government policy and pit communities against each other, undermining community cohesion. Jewish groups have repeatedly challenged public bodies, including in the courts, that have called for or attempted boycotts, divestment and sanctions campaigns.

- Unofficial boycotts have gone beyond those directed at a particular state and contribute to the horrific rise in antisemitism in the UK – including Kosher food being removed from supermarket shelves, Jewish films being banned from a film festival and a student union holding a vote on blocking the formation of a Jewish student society.
- **Brexit Freedoms Bill**
UK-wide
The Bill is intended to end the supremacy of European law.
- **Conversion Therapy Bill**
England and Wales
The Bill is intended to ban conversion therapy practices intended to change sexual orientation.
- **Data Reform Bill**
Mostly UK-wide
The Bill is intended to create a data rights regime that will create a trusted UK data protection framework; modernise the Information Commissioner's Office; and increase industry participation in Smart Data Schemes.
- **Digital Markets, Competition and Consumer Bill (Draft)**
Mostly GB-wide
The Bill is intended to boost consumer rights, and reform the UK competition regime.
- **Economic Crime and Corporate Transparency Bill**
UK-wide
The Bill is intended to crack down on the kleptocrats, criminals and terrorists and drive out dirty money from the UK.
- **Electronic Trade Documents Bill**
UK-wide
The Bill is intended to put electronic trade documents on the same legal footing as paper documents.
- **Energy Security Bill**
Mostly GB-wide
The Bill is intended to build a more secure, cleaner, and affordable energy system.
- **Financial Services and Markets Bill**
UK-wide
The Bill is intended to maintain and enhance the UK's position as a global leader in financial services.
- **Genetic Technology (Precision Breeding) Bill**
England
The Bill is intended to remove unnecessary barriers inherited from the EU to enable the development and marketing of precision-bred plants and animals.

- **Harbours (Seafarers' Remuneration) Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to protect seafarers working aboard vessels visiting UK ports.

- **High Speed Rail (Crewe – Manchester) Bill**

England and Scotland

The Bill is intended to provide the powers to build and operate the next stage of the High Speed Two (HS2) network

- **Higher Education Bill**

Mostly England and Wales

The Bill is intended to ensure that post-18 education promotes real social mobility, and is financially sustainable.

- **Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill**

England

The Bill is intended to strengthen academic freedom and free speech in universities in England.

Main benefits:

- Ensuring that universities in England are places where freedom of speech can thrive for all staff, students and visiting speakers.
- Ensuring that students' unions will have to take steps to secure lawful freedom of speech for their members and others, including visiting speakers.
- Ensuring that academic staff feel safe to question and test received wisdom and put forward new ideas and controversial or unpopular opinions without risking their careers.
- Creating routes for staff, students and visiting speakers to seek redress if they suffer a loss as a result of specified duties being breached.

Main measures:

- Ensuring that freedom of speech and academic freedom in higher education is supported to the fullest extent.
- Introduction of a new complaints scheme run by the Office for Students, with free to access for students, staff and visiting speakers who believe their speech has been unlawfully restricted
- Introducing new freedom of speech and academic duties on higher education providers, their constituent colleges and students' unions. The Office for Students, will have the power to impose penalties for breaches.

Government comment:

- There is growing concern about a 'chilling effect' on university campuses that means that not all students and staff feel able to express themselves without fear of repercussions. A number of studies, surveys and reports highlight instances where freedom of speech and academic freedom is being curtailed in the higher education sector.
- There are a small number of high profile reported incidents, both international and domestic, where staff or students have been threatened with negative consequences, including loss of privileges

- or dismissal, confirming that the fear of repercussions is not always unfounded. Some of these reports relate to those who do not currently have routes of redress, for example, visiting speakers.

- **Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Bill**

Northern Ireland

The Bill is intended to deliver a carefully balanced package of identity and language measures as negotiated by the Northern Ireland parties under the *New Decade, New Approach Deal*; enhance and develop the Ulster Scots/Ulster British tradition in Northern Ireland, and recognise and protect the Irish language.

- **Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill**

Mostly England

The Bill is intended to level up the UK, grow the economy, regenerate towns and cities, and give communities a louder voice in the planning system.

- **Non-Domestic Rating Bill**

Mostly England

The Bill is intended to review and create a fairer, more accurate business rates system.

- **Media Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to boost public service broadcasters, and enable a change of ownership of Channel 4.

- **Mental Health Act Reform Bill (Draft)**

England and Wales

The Bill is intended to ensure patients suffering from mental health conditions have greater control over their treatment, receive the dignity and respect they deserve, and make it easier for people with learning disabilities and autism to be discharged from hospital.

- **Modern Slavery Bill**

Mostly England and Wales

The Bill is intended to strengthen the protection and support for victims of human trafficking and modern slavery and increase the accountability of companies and other organisations to drive out modern slavery from their supply chains.

- **National Security Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to protect national security and the safety of the British public, undertake an overhaul of state threats legislation, and prevent the exploitation of civil legal aid and civil damage payments by convicted terrorists.

- **Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to address the legacy of Northern Ireland's past by providing better outcomes for victims, survivors and their families, and giving

veterans the protections they deserve and focusing on information recovery and reconciliation.

- **Online Safety Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to make the UK the safest place in the world to be online by improving protections for users, especially children, whilst protecting freedom of expression.

Main benefits:

- Preventing online fraud and scams.
- Tackling the most serious illegal content.
- Safeguarding freedom of expression.
- Making companies responsible for their users' safety online.

Main measures:

- Introducing a duty of care on online companies, making them responsible for protecting users and tackling illegal content.
- Empowering users by ensuring the largest platforms give users tools to exercise greater control over the types of people and content they interact with.
- Protections for democratic and journalistic content.
- Requiring providers who publish pornographic content on their services to prevent children from accessing that content
- Ensuring the big social media companies enforce their terms and conditions consistently.
- Designating Ofcom as the independent online safety regulator

- **Procurement Bill**

England, Wales, and Northern Ireland

The Bill is intended to reform the UK's public procurement regime.

- **Product Security and Telecommunications Infrastructure Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to improve cyber resilience and digital connectivity, ensure that smart consumer products are more secure against cyber-attacks, and accelerate and improve the roll out of mobile and broadband networks.

- **Protect Duty Bill (Draft)**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to introduce new security requirements for certain public locations and venues to ensure preparedness for and protection from terrorist attacks.

- **Public Order Bill**

England and Wales

The Bill is intended to make the streets safer by preventing a minority of protestors from using guerrilla tactics that cause misery to the hard-working public, disrupt businesses, interfere with emergency services, cost millions in taxpayers' money and put lives at risk.

- **Renters Reform Bill**

England

The Bill is intended to abolish 'no fault' section 21 evictions and strengthen landlords' rights of possession.

- **Schools Bill**

England

The Bill is intended to level up opportunity by delivering a stronger and more highly performing school system that works for every child.

Main benefits:

- Ensuring that funding is allocated on a fair and consistent basis for all schools.
- Strengthening the school attendance regime.

Improving safeguarding for children wherever they are educated, including through 'children not in school' registers.

Main measures:

- Establishing 'children not in school' registers, as well as creating a duty on local authorities to provide support to home educating families. This will provide accurate data to help identify children who are not receiving a safe or suitable full-time education, and to enable support to be offered to interested parents of registered children.

Improving safeguarding by expanding registration requirements for independent educational institutions, enhancing enforcement, and working with Ofsted to expand investigatory powers.

Government comment:

- It is estimated that there were more than 115,000 children who were home educated at some point during the 2020-21 academic year, which is an increase of 34 per cent on the previous year. Local authorities need accurate data to identify children in their areas who are not receiving a safe or efficient full-time suitable education, and also to offer support to interested parents of home educated children.

- **Social Housing Regulation Bill**

Mostly England

The Bill is intended to increase social housing tenants' rights to better homes and enhance their ability to hold their landlords to account.

- **Social Security (Special Rules for End of Life) Bill**

GB-wide

The Bill is intended to allow more people nearing the end of their life to get fast-tracked access to three key disability benefits.

- **Trade (Australia and New Zealand) Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to make changes to UK domestic procurement regulations to ensure the UK can comply with the obligations in the Free Trade Agreements with Australia and New Zealand.

- **Transport Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to ensure a better and more reliable railway service, and deliver the reforms to decarbonise transport, and better connect communities.

- **UK Infrastructure Bank Bill**

UK-wide

The Bill is intended to finalise the creation of the UK Infrastructure Bank by establishing it in law with clear objectives to support regional and local economic growth and deliver net zero, and ensuring it has the full range of spending and lending powers.

- **Victims Bill (Draft)**

England and Wales

The Bill is intended to put victims at the heart of the criminal justice system, encouraging them to remain engaged in the criminal justice system, and restoring victims' confidence that their voices will be properly heard and that perpetrators will be brought to justice.

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2862>

Online Safety Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3137>

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Consultations ** new or updated today

Independent Review of Social Cohesion and Resilience (closing date 2 June 2022)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence/independent-review-of-social-cohesion-and-resilience-call-for-evidence>

**** Public Participation at the Scottish Parliament** (closing date 30 June 2022)

<https://yourviews.parliament.scot/cppp/participation-2022/>

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