



mend

Muslim Manifesto 2017

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Muslim engagement
& development





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48%

of Muslims are aged 24 and under

British Muslims make up 4.4% of the UK population. They are the second largest faith group in the UK after Christians.

Introduction

British Muslims make up 4.4% of the population in the UK, comprising 2,786,635 out of the roughly 63 million living in the country.^{1,2,3} They are the second largest faith group in the UK after Christians and have the youngest age profile of all religious groups, with 48% of Muslims aged 24 and under.⁴

In the vast majority of constituencies, Muslims make up less than 5% of the local population. However, in 26 parliamentary constituencies Muslims constitute more than 20% of the electorate.⁵ Constituencies with a Muslim population greater than 10% are mapped in Appendix 1.

A poll by Ipsos MORI for the Electoral Commission in 2010 found an estimated voter turnout rate among Muslims of 47%, when voter turnout in the population as a whole was 65%.⁶ The poll also revealed that British Muslims had the highest number of first-time voters in the 2010 general election, more than any other religious group. Similar data was not available for the 2015 general election; however given the young age profile of the British Muslim community, this trend is again likely to be the case in the 2017 general election.

This manifesto highlights a range of policy areas that are of particular importance to British Muslims. MEND works to promote greater Muslim engagement at all levels in our democracy. Our recommendations highlight areas of interest to us as British Muslims and we hope that our political parties will look at them and debate them in the positive spirit in which we offer them. The key manifesto pledges sought are summarised overleaf.

This manifesto is our contribution to furthering the social, civic, economic and political integration of British Muslims in UK society.

1. '2011 Census analysis: Ethnicity and religion of the non-UK born population in England and Wales: 2011,' Office for National Statistics, June 18, 2015, accessed May 10, 2017, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/2011censusanalysisethnicityandreligionofthenonukbornpopulationinenglandandwales/2015-06-18#appendix>.

2. 'Ethnicity, Identity, Language and Religion', National Records of Scotland, accessed May 12, 2017, <http://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ethnicity-identity-language-and-religion>

3. 'Country of Birth by Religion - Muslim (Islam): CT0070NI', Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, accessed May 12, 2017, <http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011/CT0070NI.ods>.

4. 'Ethnicity and religion by age,' Office for National Statistics, September 10, 2015, accessed May 10, 2017, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/aboutus/transparencyandgovernance/freedomofinformationfoi/ethnicityandreligionbyage>.

5. Aisha Gani, 'Muslim population in England and Wales nearly doubles in 10 years,' The Guardian, February 11, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/11/muslim-population-england-wales-nearly-doubles-10-years>.

6. Simon Hooper, 'Could the Muslim vote sway the UK's general election?,' Al Jazeera English, March 13, 2015, <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/03/muslim-vote-sway-uk-general-election-150311055142181.html>.

Policy Pledges



Commit to proactively engage with a broad and representative spectrum of the British Muslim community.



Commit to a review of the 2006 Racial and Religious Hatred Act as advised by the Law Commission's "Hate crime: the case for extending the existing offences" report and introduce legislation to extend legal protection to cover religion, homophobia and disability hate crime.



Commit to (a) working with social media companies to protect free speech while developing an efficient strategy to tackle hate speech online (b) consider primary legislation to deal with social media offences and hate speech online.



Commit to developing teaching materials to educate young people on Islamophobia, racism, and antisemitism; to prioritise religious education in the national curriculum to prepare young people for life in a religiously plural society.



Commit to supporting faith school provisions in the state sector for Muslim pupils and parents; support 'twinning' of faith and non-faith schools to encourage cultural exchange between pupils of different racial, religious, ethnic and other backgrounds.



Commit to tackling religious discrimination in the workplace and address the low level of economic activity among Muslims through targeted interventions at stages of recruitment, retention and promotion; improving access to employment for British Muslim women.



Commit to media reform and the full implementation of the Royal Charter on a Leveson compliant regulator; support industry initiatives to promote positive, diverse representations of Muslims and minorities in the mainstream media.



Commit to improving ethnic diversity in all sectors of business, politics and media through schemes encouraging BME recruitment, mentoring and promotion.



Commit to supporting the growth of the shari'ah compliant financial services industry and providing shari'ah compliant student loans for British Muslim students.

Commit to preserving the Human Rights Act and the protection of minority rights including rights to religious slaughter, circumcision and wearing of religious dress or symbols.

Commit to fostering social cohesion and community resilience to all forms of extremism; support de-radicalisation programmes that work with Muslim communities not against them.

Commit to repealing the current statutory Prevent duty, and replacing this with a more effective, evidence based and non-discriminatory counter-terrorism strategy by engaging with Muslim communities.

Commit to curbing the encroachment of counter-terrorism policies on civil liberties by reviewing all counter-terrorism legislation enacted since 2000.

Commit to tackling the high number of Muslim prisoners through schemes to facilitate rehabilitation, cut re-offending and develop pathways for social inclusion.

Commit to support the creation of an independent state of Palestine and the end to Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories.

Commit to support the principles of the EU Equal Treatment Directive to advance protection against discrimination on the grounds of religion to education, healthcare, housing, access to goods and services and social protection, into UK law post-Brexit.

Commit to democracy and human rights promotion abroad, including the rights of religious minorities.



Executive Summary

This manifesto serves to highlight some of the major issues that are facing British Muslim communities. Many of these issues that British Muslims face have frequently been shown to be further compounded by issues of race, ethnicity and/or gender.

The key policy concerns that we have highlighted throughout this manifesto are:

- **Islamophobia and Racial/Religious Equality:** We have drawn attention to the pervasive character of Islamophobia amongst certain elements within the UK and argue for the immediate need to tackle inadequate legislation on racial and religious hate crime. While there is a severe lack of legislation protecting Muslims from instances of Islamophobia, the Government has shown an increased willingness to understand hate crime in the past year. This is commendable, but not enough. We call on Parliament to properly investigate anti-Muslim prejudice in the UK and undertake all necessary steps to tackle this abuse with a view to building a fairer and more compassionate society for all.
- **Youth and Education:** In terms of youth and education, the Muslim population in Britain is increasingly made up of young people – according to the 2011 census, 33% of Muslims in Britain are aged 15 or under. They continue to face significant disadvantages as 46% of Muslims live in the 10% most deprived districts in England and Wales. BME students, including Muslims, are also less likely to have parents in higher management careers, go on to ‘elite’ universities or gain first-class degrees. This is despite the fact that Muslim pupils routinely achieve high exam results at school and Muslim schools often reach high positions in national league tables. As such, political parties must commit to developing teaching materials to educate young people on Islamophobia, racism, and antisemitism, as well as funding projects that promote educational programmes on inter-faith awareness.
- **Employment:** Muslims experience a significant level of disadvantage in the labour market. They are discriminated against during the recruitment process, as well as in the workplace environment, and are frequently victims of frustrated ambitions as they are under-represented in the higher positions within their professions. This is in addition to suffering from significantly high unemployment rates as well as noticeable pay gaps, when compared to their Christian counterparts. Considering the young demographic age of the British Muslim population and this age group’s additional obstacles to the labour market, the UK as a whole is failing to benefit from the creative and innovative dynamism and potential that accompanies this young population. As such, we maintain that there is a desperate need to address religious discrimination in the workplace and tackle the low level of economic activity among Muslims through targeted interventions at all stages of recruitment, retention and promotion. In particular, political parties need to focus on improving access to employment for British Muslim and BME women.
- **Integration and Community Cohesion:** The overwhelmingly negative portrayal of Muslims within the media is detrimental to any integration strategy based on creating and maintaining “common ground”. Furthermore, such negative misrepresentation is incredibly harmful to social cohesion by fuelling stereotypes through irresponsible and sensationalist reporting. Consequently, the Leveson recommendations must be fully implemented. Furthermore, there needs to be support for industry initiatives that promote positive, diverse representations of Muslims and minorities in the mainstream media.

- **Minority Rights:** This manifesto outlines the policy issues pertaining to minority rights and the right to freedom of religion - and religious practice particularly - that dominate public debate. This includes Muslim women's dress, animal slaughter, the right to religious practice, and the accommodation of minority culture. While these issues are constantly topics of debate, these discussions are rarely conducted in a productive manner and are often infiltrated by anti-Muslim sentiment. Political parties engaging in such debates must be mindful of the distress that is caused by insensitive representation and handling of these issues. Furthermore, we call on these parties to preserve the Human Rights Act and protect minority rights, including rights to religious slaughter, circumcision and wearing of religious dress or symbols.
- **Counter-terrorism and Civil Liberties:** The Government has continued to implement counter-terrorism legislation which disproportionately impacts Muslim communities, with the statutory Prevent duty having a particularly detrimental impact on young British Muslims. The protection of civil liberties has taken a regressive step with the recent introduction of the 'Snooper's Charter', giving the security services and other public bodies extensive powers to mine citizens' electronic records. In light of this continued situation and the huge amount of evidence demonstrating the counter-productive nature of much of this legislation, we call on political parties to commit to curbing the encroachment of counter-terrorism policies on civil liberties by reviewing all counter-terrorism legislation enacted since 2000. Furthermore, it is essential that all future strategies are geared towards fostering social cohesion and community resilience to all forms of extremism, as well as supporting de-radicalisation programmes that work with Muslim communities and not against them.
- **Crime and Policing:** The disproportionate use of stop and search and Schedule 7 powers on minority communities continues to leave its impact. Although welcome steps have been made in both areas, further work is required to ensure racial and religious stereotyping is prevented. While representation of minority communities within the police force has improved, focus on tackling the continuing growth in Muslim prisoner numbers is urgently needed.
- **International Affairs and Human Rights Promotion Abroad:** Regarding Britain's foreign and international policy Muslim countries have regrettably consistently been in the spotlight since 2001. The invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan continue to have resonance, as do the allegations of abuse and ill-treatment against citizens of those countries at the hands of the British Armed Forces. These revelations have been accompanied by Government Inquiries into the kidnapping and rendering of terrorist suspects by the Secret Intelligence Service and the Security Services. Developments since 2015 also include the rise in hate crimes against Muslims in the aftermath of the vote to leave the European Union ('Brexit'), as well as the attempts by new US President Donald Trump to ban people from a number of Muslim countries from entering the USA. It is to be hoped that the next government will learn from Britain's recent military mistakes in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya and the impact these have on domestic affairs, and will work instead with international institutions to peacefully promote the rule of law and the spread of human rights. Moreover, Britain has a responsibility as one of the major world powers to speak out against injustices, be they in the occupied Palestinian territories or places like Burma or Yemen.

It is imperative that political parties actively engage with these issues and with Muslim communities themselves in a positive and constructive manner. Furthermore, the politics of hatred and division that have characterised political discourse both during and since the 2016 referendum cannot be allowed to continue. Therefore, we call on all political parties to adopt the recommendations as policy commitments, in order to address these critical issues within their policy development and implementation strategies.

Islamophobia and racial/ religious equality

The Runnymede Trust in its seminal report 'Islamophobia: a challenge for us all' defined Islamophobia as a cluster concept stemming from attitudes towards the religion and faith community that corresponded to 'open' or 'closed' views of Islam.

The UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia, and Related Intolerance, defined Islamophobia as:

*"...a baseless hostility and fear vis-à-vis Islam, and, as a result, a fear of and aversion towards all Muslims or the majority of them. [Islamophobia] also refers to the practical consequences of this hostility in terms of discrimination, prejudices, and unequal treatment of which Muslims (individuals and communities) are victims and their exclusion from major political and social spheres."*⁷

Current legislation that enables the prosecution of anti-Muslim hate crime is an extension of established race relations legislation where 'religiously aggravated' crimes have been added to the existing racial motives for prosecuting offenders. Since Muslims do not form a racial group, race relations legislation which protects communities such as Jews and Sikhs, does not extend to Muslims.

The Racial and Religious Hatred Act establishes different criteria for racial and religious incitement restricting the latter to acts that are intended to stir up religious hatred. The scope of the provisions also varies between protections afforded on grounds of race and those available to faith communities. The Act covers 'threatening, abusive and insulting words' in the context of racial groups but only 'threatening words and behaviour' in relation to faith groups. This is further qualified by the need to prove 'intent' for a criminal offence on incitement to religious hatred to have been committed, which is difficult to prove.

7. Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance: Follow-up to and Implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action' United Nations Human Rights Council, August 21, 2007, accessed May 2, 2017, <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UN-DOC/GEN/G07/137/32/PDF/G0713732.pdf?OpenElement>.

As such, the disparity in legal protection has been keenly exploited by the far right claiming they are not 'anti-Muslim' but 'anti-Islam'. The burden of 'intent' has thus inherently impeded prospects for successful prosecution in such cases and has been a major hindrance in reducing the prevalence of Islamophobia.

Commit to a review of the 2006 Racial and Religious Hatred Act as advised by the Law Commission's "Hate crime: the case for extending the existing offences" report and introduce legislation to extend legal protection to cover religion, homophobia and disability hate crime.⁸

In recent years, race equality has slipped off the Government agenda. The last major piece of policy by the Coalition Government was the Equality Strategy in 2010 and priorities have shifted to 'integration' of which race equality is said to play a part. Government rhetoric on integration seems to have shifted from integration being a two-way process to the promotion of 'British values'. Indeed Dame Louise Casey, author of the Casey review on 'opportunity and integration' published in December 2016, has publicly stated that integration was not a 'two-way street'.⁹

The rhetoric on 'British values' provides a fertile environment for the festering of far right ideas and the myth of 'non-integration' by Muslim communities. Promoting 'British values' should take heed of the racial, ethnic and religious plurality of the UK and should recognise the many success stories of minority integration into British society.

Despite the lack of new legislation from this Government, there has been an attempt to gain a greater understanding of hate crime and how to tackle it. For example, the Home Affairs Committee has initiated an Inquiry on hate crime and its violent consequences. The resulting report covers abuse, hate and extremism online. The decision to undertake the Inquiry followed the murder of Jo Cox MP, as well as the increase in number of ethnic minorities, and their community centres and places of worship, being the target for racially and religiously motivated attacks, particularly in the run up to the EU referendum in June 2016. As a general election was suddenly announced, the committee has not had the time to consider their conclusions on the wide range of issues covered in the report, therefore the committee in the next parliament would have to consider the evidence gathered and propose recommendations if they choose to do so. The report establishes that far-right extremism and Islamophobia are rampant online and require specific attention in order to sufficiently tackle them.¹⁰

Additionally, in October 2016, the Home Affairs Committee published a report on antisemitism in the UK. This also expressed concern about the rise of antisemitism online.¹¹

8. 'Hate crime: the case for extending the existing offences,' Law Commission, Consultation Paper No 213, 2013, accessed May 8, 2017, http://www.lawcom.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/cp213_hate_crime_amended.pdf.

9. Jon Stone, 'Immigrant integration is not a 'two-way street', integration tsar Louise Casey says,' The Independent, January 09, 2017, accessed May 09, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/immigration-integration-tsar-louise-casey-not-two-way-street-a7517936.html>.

10. 'Hate crime: abuse, hate and extremism online,' House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, May 1, 2017, accessed May 2, 2017, <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/609/609.pdf>.

11. 'Antisemitism in the UK,' House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, October 16, 2016, accessed May 2, 2017, <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmhaff/136/136.pdf>.

The report addresses instances of alleged antisemitism within organisations such as the National Union of Students (NUS) and Oxford University Labour Club. By engaging with the Jewish community, and inviting Rabbis and others representatives to provide oral evidence of cases of antisemitism, the committee was able to gain a better understanding of what the Jewish community is facing in terms of hate crime.¹² Taking such measures and ensuring Jewish voices are heard in understanding their experience of antisemitism is something that is vital and commendable.

Consequently, the next logical step to take would be to conduct a similar Inquiry into Islamophobia. Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate crime has a negative effect on minority integration and makes Muslims more vulnerable to being singled out on grounds of race or religion. Islamophobia has also been on the rise, according to incidents reported to the police. For example, according to Metropolitan Police Force statistics, there were 1,115 Islamophobic hate crimes reported in 2015/16, and 1,264 in 2016/17, showing a 13.3% year on year increase.¹³

Additionally, Islamophobia has also impacted the lives of numerous Muslim politicians and public figures alike. Most notably, the 2016 London Mayoral election campaign proved how easily Islamophobic claims were made against the Muslim candidate, Sadiq Khan, from his Conservative opponent Zac Goldsmith. Rather than focusing on policies, his campaign continually attempted to associate Khan with extremists and terrorism, a campaign that has been described as a “clumsy and embarrassing effort” to divide London according to race and religion.¹⁴ The Conservative candidate also had sent out leaflets to targeted Asian communities, making reductive and condescending assumptions about the priorities of Indian and Sri Lankan voters.¹⁵ These allegations were even supported by then Prime Minister David Cameron, who, during prime minister’s questions, claimed that Khan had links to a supporter of Islamic State.¹⁶ This ‘supporter of Islamic State’ was a London Imam called Suliman Ghani, and the Prime Minister was subsequently forced to apologise to him after making these outrageous claims. This apology came after Defence Secretary Michael Fallon was also forced to apologise for repeating the claims outside Parliament following a legal action launched against him by Mr Ghani. This episode reveals the ease in which Islamophobia can permeate into the very heart of Government.¹⁷

While numerous Conservatives did come out in opposition to Goldsmith’s campaign, with life-long Conservative Peter Osborne describing it as “the most repulsive I have ever seen as a political reporter,”¹⁸ this is not enough. Given that the antisemitism amongst the Labour party was deemed worthy of an Inquiry, surely Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate, specifically amongst the Conservatives and those further to the right, should also be analysed and reported on by the government. This is particularly urgent when the former Chair of the Conservative party Sayeeda Warsi has stated that “there is a simmering underbelly of Islamophobia in the Conservative Party.”¹⁹ This is supported by numerous incidents where Conservatives have made statements that are clearly Islamophobic, such as in 2010 when Philip Hollobone MP called the burka “the religious equivalent of going around with a paper bag over your head with two holes for the eyes”.²⁰ Furthermore, in 2016, David Davies MP claimed that the Islamic tradition requiring women

12. Ibid.

13. ‘MPS FY 2016/17 Crime Statistics,’ Tableau Public, accessed May 08, 2017, <https://public.tableau.com/profile/metropolitan.police.service#/?vizhome/MPSFY-201617CrimeStatistics/NOTES>.

14. Suzanne Moore, ‘Zac Goldsmith deserves to lose the mayoral race – and be put out to pasture | Suzanne Moore,’ The Guardian, May 02, 2016, accessed May 02, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/may/02/zac-goldsmith-mayoral-campaign-london-shallow-opportunist>.

15. Anoosh Chakelian, ‘The racial politics of Zac Goldsmith’s London mayoral campaign,’ New Statesman, April 6, 2016, accessed May 02, 2017, <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/devolution/2016/04/racial-politics-zac-goldsmith-s-london-mayoral-campaign>.

16. Rowena Mason, Heather Stewart, and Anushka Asthana, ‘MPs shout ‘racist’ at Cameron after comments on Sadiq Khan during PMQs,’ The Guardian, April 20, 2016, accessed May 02, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/apr/20/mps-shout-racist-at-cameron-after-comments-on-sadiq-khan-in-pmqs>.

17. Charlie Cooper and Caroline Mortimer, ‘Suliman Gani: David Cameron apologises to imam for Isis link as he faces pressure over Khan claims,’ The Independent, May 11, 2016, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/suliman-gani-michael-fallon-forced-apologise-imam-isis-link-david-cameron-pressure-sadiq-khan-claims-a7024656.html>.

18. Peter Osborne, ‘How Zac Goldsmith imported Donald Trump’s politics into Britain,’ Middle East Eye, April 21, 2016, accessed May 02, 2017, <http://www.middle-easteye.net/columns/london-mayor-race-conservatives-game-religious-and-racial-divisions-538083247>.

19. Miqdaad Versi, ‘If Theresa May is happy to call out anti-Semitism in other parties, isn’t it time she addressed Islamophobia in her own?,’ The Independent, May 03, 2017, accessed May 08, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/islamophobia-conservatives-theresa-may-time-she-addressed-it-a7715216.html>.

20. Ibid.

to wear face and head coverings is “an excuse for sexual violence against women”.²¹ In 2013 a Tory councillor compared Muslim children to black plastic bin-liners and another Tory council candidate said a year later it was “good to be anti-Islam” and called Islam the “religion of peace and rape”.²² An Inquiry into Islamophobia in the Conservative party is vital if the Government wants to obtain a greater understanding of lived experiences of anti-Muslim hate from Muslims themselves across the country.

Consequently, it is important that officers are properly trained to deal with religious hate crimes and for such crimes to be accurately recorded so that crime strategies reflect the incidence of attacks and their type. An important and fundamental step forward on police reporting was taken in 2015, with the Conservative Government’s welcome decision to require police forces in England and Wales to specifically record anti-Muslim, Islamophobic hate crimes as a distinct category of hate crime, and record them in a similar manner to antisemitic attacks. Since Islamophobic hate crimes often lie at the intersection of race and religious hate crimes, ensuring that police forces specifically record anti-Muslim attacks will allow the police, prosecutors, local authorities and communities themselves to obtain a better understanding of the extent of Islamophobia, by providing more accurate statistics.²³

Furthermore, in October 2016, new Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance was published setting out the range of offences for which social media users could face prosecution.²⁴ According to the CPS guidance, hate crime falls under the category that outlines communications that are grossly offensive, indecent, obscene or false. It is stated that prosecutors must have regard to whether the offence was motivated by any form of discrimination against the victim’s identity, or that the suspect demonstrated hostility towards the victim based on their identity.²⁵ The guidance also claims that hate crime offences include harassment, stalking or the distribution of written material or visual images online. Consequently, the UK’s hate crime legislation under the Public Order Act 1986 and the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 also applies on social media.²⁶ This means the CPS would prosecute online abuse just as if they had occurred offline.

Commit to (a) working with social media companies to protect free speech while developing an efficient strategy to tackle hate speech online (b) consider primary legislation to deal with social media offences and hate speech online.

However, there still remains room for improvement to ensure hate crime is efficiently tackled on social media. Currently, due to the sheer scale of social media sites, the only way abusive posts are brought to the attention of social media companies is if users themselves report it. However, not all instances of online hate would be reported for their racist or Islamophobic content online. Therefore, much more needs to be done to tackle this issue head on. In April 2017, the Metropolitan Police set up a new team of specialist police officers to investigate abuse on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter. The team of five officers, who will support victims and identify online abuse, will cost £1.7 million and has received £452,000 from the Home Office.²⁷ More actions like these are required, and the incoming government needs to prioritise formulating a strategy that allows for a crackdown on hate speech, while continuing to ensure free speech.

Social media offences and hate speech online is a growing area of concern as more and more

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. Patrick Wintour, ‘Police told to treat anti-Muslim hate crimes in same way as antisemitic attacks,’ The Guardian, October 12, 2015, accessed May 02, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/oct/13/police-must-record-anti-muslim-hate-crimes>.

24. ‘Guidelines on prosecuting cases involving communications sent via social media,’ Crown Prosecution Service, accessed March 28, 2017, http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/a_to_c/communications_sent_via_social_media/.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. ‘Metropolitan Police to target online hate crime and abuse,’ BBC News, August 14, 2016, accessed March 28, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-37076995>.

people utilise the anonymity of the web to share or post hate messages online. Working with social media companies to develop good practice guidelines to root out extremists from using social media platforms to disseminate hate is a vital area that needs to be tackled.

The National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) has encouraged schools and colleges to adopt an all-encompassing definition of racism that includes anti-Muslim prejudice. Their advice for tackling Islamophobia includes ensuring that race equality policies in schools deal with anti-Muslim prejudice and that policy be supported with clear procedures and strategies for dealing with discrimination in the learning environment.

Anti-Muslim hatred has been identified in the Government's hate crime strategy which requires specific attention as perpetrators of such attacks have been described as "an affront to our society – and their stoking up of hatred and demonising of Islam do not belong in modern Britain."²⁸

Commit to developing teaching materials to educate young people on Islamophobia, racism, and antisemitism; to prioritise religious education in the national curriculum to prepare young people for life in a religiously plural society.

It has become apparent that anti-Muslim incidents tend to spike around the time of terrorist attacks, whether at home or abroad.²⁹

Despite the Conservative Government's claim to support Muslim communities and tackle hatred on grounds of religion, there has been little concrete action to encourage structural change towards Islamophobia or to educate the public about the dangers of anti-Muslim and Islamophobic sentiments. Policies that can sustain long term changes in attitudes and behaviours towards British Muslim communities have not been sufficiently supported.

Some limited progress has been made in the battle to combat Islamophobia with improved reporting of hate crimes, and some funding of organisations which aim to tackle this form of discrimination. However, there is a long road ahead. Government policy continues to conflate religion with extremism. This is dangerous for social cohesion and feeds into myths popularised by the far-right about Muslims.

The integration narratives based on 'British values' and 'national unity' is concerning given the vast number of ethno-religious communities in Britain who share a tendency to observe British values alongside the legitimate expression of minority culture.

'British values' encompasses "tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs". It is important that in championing strategies for integration and inclusion, we do not lose sight of the rich diversity of modern Britain.

28. 'Action Against Hate: The UK Government's plan for tackling hate crime,' Home Office, July 2016, accessed May 2, 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hate-crime-action-plan-2016>.

29. Ibid.



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Muslim youth and education

The demographics of the British Muslim population are changing. The Census 2011 statistics indicate the overall Muslim population in England and Wales is 4.8%, but the Muslim youth population is significantly larger. Almost a tenth of babies and toddlers in England and Wales are Muslim.³⁰ Of the 3.5 million children aged 0-4 years, 320,000, or 9% are Muslim, and 33% of British Muslims are aged 15 or under.³¹

The Census 2011 reveals Muslims make up an average of 9.15% of the age groups 0-4 and 5-9 years across England and Wales. Muslim youth within the age categories of 18-19 and 20-24 years on average make up 6.15% of the general youth population.³²

Muslims are concentrated in some of the most deprived local authorities, with 46% of Muslims living in the 10% most deprived districts in England and Wales.³³ Policies on educational attainment, social mobility and policies tackling bullying in schools will subsequently have a larger impact upon Muslim youth. Using figures from the Participation of Local Areas (POLAR2) and Free School Meals, the Independent Commission on Fees found that in 2010, school leavers in England who were in the least disadvantaged POLAR2 quintile were 3.2 times more likely to enter higher education than the most disadvantaged. This ratio fell to 2.8 by 2013.³⁴

Although the gap in application and entry rates between advantaged and disadvantaged students have slightly narrowed, the Independent Commission on Fees concluded that it remains “unacceptably large”.

The Sutton Trust has found that children who have parents in professional and managerial positions are 3 times more likely to enter a high status university than those with working class parents.³⁵

Similarly, 66.4% of White students studying first degrees received a first class or second class honours qualification in comparison to only 48.1% of BME students and 37.7% of Black students.³⁶ In addition, students who are from low socio-economic backgrounds and attending lower status universities are more likely to drop out.³⁷

30. '2011 Census Data On Nomis,' 2011 Census - Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics, accessed May 12, 2017, <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>.

31. Ibid.

32. Ibid.

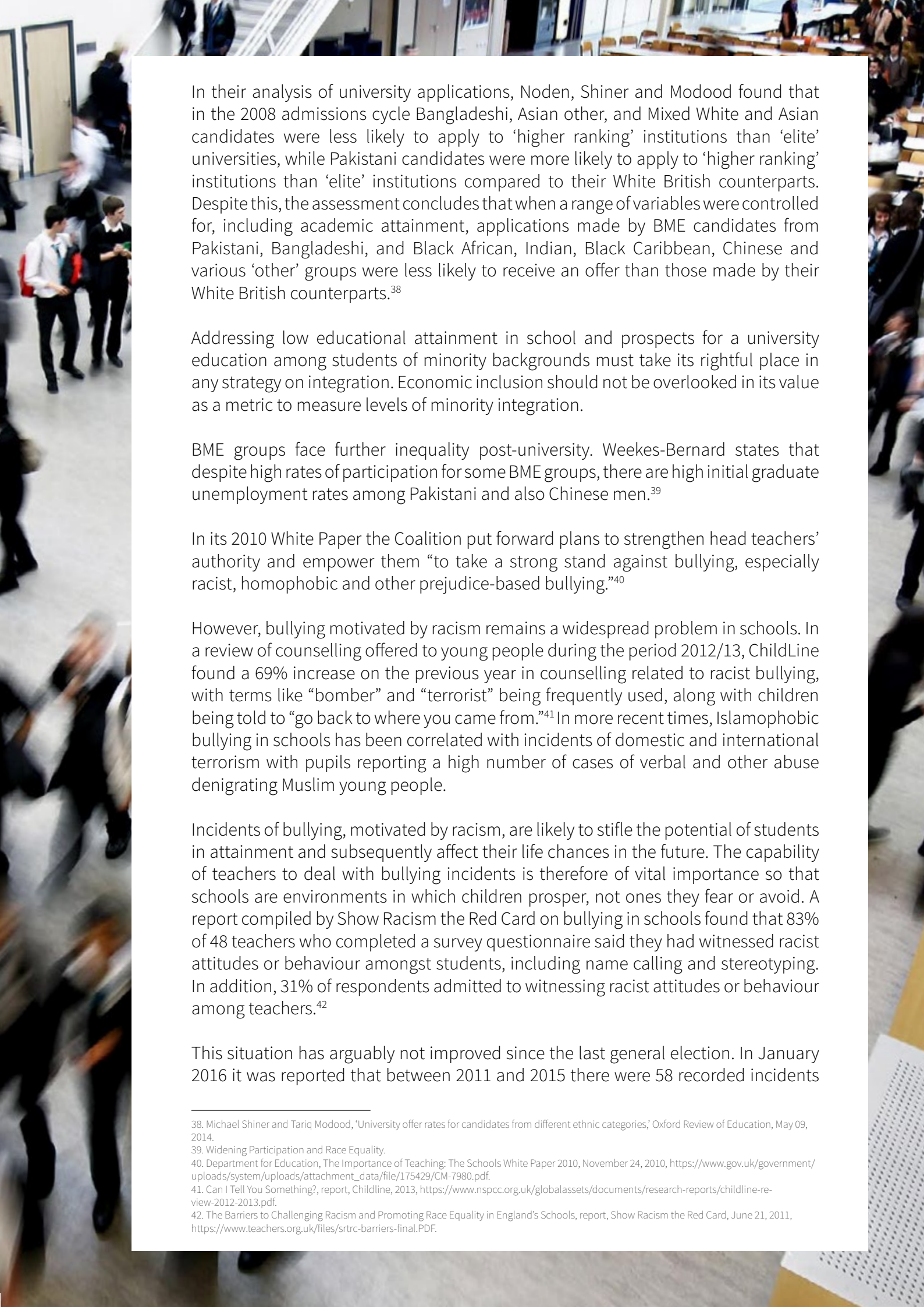
33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. John Jerrim, Family background and access to 'high status' universities, report, November 13, 2013, <http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/john-jerrim-report-final-4.pdf>.

36. Debbie Weekes-Bernard, ed., Widening Participation and Race Equality, report, Runnymede Trust, December 2010, [http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/WideningParticipation-2011\(Online\).pdf](http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/WideningParticipation-2011(Online).pdf).

37. Family background and access to 'high status' universities.



In their analysis of university applications, Noden, Shiner and Modood found that in the 2008 admissions cycle Bangladeshi, Asian other, and Mixed White and Asian candidates were less likely to apply to 'higher ranking' institutions than 'elite' universities, while Pakistani candidates were more likely to apply to 'higher ranking' institutions than 'elite' institutions compared to their White British counterparts. Despite this, the assessment concludes that when a range of variables were controlled for, including academic attainment, applications made by BME candidates from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Black African, Indian, Black Caribbean, Chinese and various 'other' groups were less likely to receive an offer than those made by their White British counterparts.³⁸

Addressing low educational attainment in school and prospects for a university education among students of minority backgrounds must take its rightful place in any strategy on integration. Economic inclusion should not be overlooked in its value as a metric to measure levels of minority integration.

BME groups face further inequality post-university. Weekes-Bernard states that despite high rates of participation for some BME groups, there are high initial graduate unemployment rates among Pakistani and also Chinese men.³⁹

In its 2010 White Paper the Coalition put forward plans to strengthen head teachers' authority and empower them "to take a strong stand against bullying, especially racist, homophobic and other prejudice-based bullying."⁴⁰

However, bullying motivated by racism remains a widespread problem in schools. In a review of counselling offered to young people during the period 2012/13, ChildLine found a 69% increase on the previous year in counselling related to racist bullying, with terms like "bomber" and "terrorist" being frequently used, along with children being told to "go back to where you came from."⁴¹ In more recent times, Islamophobic bullying in schools has been correlated with incidents of domestic and international terrorism with pupils reporting a high number of cases of verbal and other abuse denigrating Muslim young people.

Incidents of bullying, motivated by racism, are likely to stifle the potential of students in attainment and subsequently affect their life chances in the future. The capability of teachers to deal with bullying incidents is therefore of vital importance so that schools are environments in which children prosper, not ones they fear or avoid. A report compiled by Show Racism the Red Card on bullying in schools found that 83% of 48 teachers who completed a survey questionnaire said they had witnessed racist attitudes or behaviour amongst students, including name calling and stereotyping. In addition, 31% of respondents admitted to witnessing racist attitudes or behaviour among teachers.⁴²

This situation has arguably not improved since the last general election. In January 2016 it was reported that between 2011 and 2015 there were 58 recorded incidents

38. Michael Shiner and Tariq Modood, 'University offer rates for candidates from different ethnic categories,' Oxford Review of Education, May 09, 2014.

39. Widening Participation and Race Equality.

40. Department for Education, The Importance of Teaching: The Schools White Paper 2010, November 24, 2010, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/175429/CM-7980.pdf.

41. Can I Tell You Something?, report, Childline, 2013, <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/childline-review-2012-2013.pdf>.

42. The Barriers to Challenging Racism and Promoting Race Equality in England's Schools, report, Show Racism the Red Card, June 21, 2011, <https://www.teachers.org.uk/files/srrc-barriers-final.PDF>.

of racism in classrooms in North Wales,⁴³ while towards the end of 2015 research was published showing that a majority of Muslim pupils in Scottish schools had endured Islamophobic bullying.⁴⁴ The Paris attacks in November 2015 were also reported by Sky News as having a profoundly negative impact on Muslim school pupils, with Childline receiving 100 calls just after the atrocities took place from those who feared being attacked or bullied because of their religion.⁴⁵

Young people are shown to be more at ease with diversity and are less likely to hold views that are intolerant or prejudicial towards those of other backgrounds. Schools are an important place where diversity, difference and prejudice can be discussed and young people made aware of the dangers of hatred of minorities.

Evidence suggests that teaching materials on Islam awareness and on Islamophobia are underdeveloped and underutilised in the education sector. The failure to develop adequate tools for use by teachers to address Islamophobia has been highlighted by Christine Blower, former General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers.⁴⁶

The low priority given to religious education in the national curriculum is a further factor that inhibits the ability of schools to create environments in which pupils can learn about other religions and cultures and appreciate their significance to fellow pupils and members of their local communities. Religious education is a primary means of helping young people understand the value people at home and abroad attach to religious belief and the role it plays in the lives of religious people.

Muslim faith schools operate at both primary and secondary levels of education and are voluntary aided, free schools or academies. Recent controversies sparked by the ‘Trojan horse’ takeover plot in Birmingham and widespread coverage of failing Muslim academy schools has had a significant impact on the perception of faith schools as socially divisive and selective. However a parliamentary committee report into the ‘Trojan horse’ plot found “no evidence of extremism or radicalisation”, despite a great deal of negative speculative media reports to the contrary.⁴⁷ Indeed faith schools are noted for high achievement with some Muslim faith schools serving as good practice models for non-faith schools in the state sector.

Recent examples of this include how 8 Muslim independent schools were among the top 50 schools ranked by exam results for 2014, and over half of the Muslim schools featured in the league tables had, for the second year in a row, surpassed the national average of students achieving five or more GCSEs of A*-C grades.⁴⁸ Furthermore, in 2016 the Tauheedul Islam Boys’ and Girls’ Schools in Blackburn topped the national league tables for showing the biggest improvement in GCSE results.⁴⁹

43. ‘Racist incidents in schools in North Wales.’ Muslim Engagement & Development. January 03, 2016. Accessed May 04, 2017. <https://mend.org.uk/news/racist-incidents-in-schools-in-north-wales/>.

44. ‘Majority’ of Scottish Muslim pupils suffer Islamophobic abuse.’ Muslim Engagement & Development. October 22, 2015. Accessed May 04, 2017. <https://mend.org.uk/news/majority-of-scottish-muslim-pupils-suffer-islamophobic-abuse/>.

45. ‘Islamophobia and Muslim pupils.’ Muslim Engagement & Development. November 24, 2015. Accessed May 04, 2017. <https://mend.org.uk/news/islamophobia-and-muslim-pupils/>.

46. ‘NUT on the Challenge of Islamophobia,’ Politics.co.uk, June 09, 2011, accessed May 09, 2017, <http://www.politics.co.uk/opinion-formers/national-union-of-teachers-nut/article/nut-on-the-challenge-of-islamophobia>.

47. ‘Extremism in schools: the Trojan Horse affair,’ House of Commons Education Committee, March 17, 2015. Accessed May 09, 2017. <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201415/cmselect/cmeduc/473/473.pdf>.

48. Elham Buaras, ‘Eight Muslim schools in the top 50 exam league,’ The Muslim News, March 25, 2015, <http://muslimnews.co.uk/newspaper/homenews/eight-muslim-schools-feature-in-the-top-50-examination-league-tables/>.

49. Richard Adams, ‘Two Blackburn Faith Schools Top Charts for GCSE Progress.’ The Guardian. October 13, 2016. Accessed May 04, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2016/oct/13/two-blackburn-faith-schools-top-charts-gcse-progress-tauheedul-islam>.

Providing parents with choice in education and removing the stigma attached to faith schools is necessary to cultivate a context in which faith school provision is not seen as an exemption for religious minorities but as part and parcel of the mainstream education system.

Commit to supporting faith school provisions in the state sector for Muslim pupils and parents; support ‘twinning’ of faith and non-faith schools to encourage cultural exchange between pupils of different racial, religious, ethnic and other backgrounds.

The Counter-Terrorism and Security Act of 2015 introduces a statutory duty on local authorities to prevent young people from being drawn into terrorism. Under the Channel programme, young people considered at risk of radicalisation are referred for de-radicalisation measures.

According to the Prevent Strategy 2011 report, 290 referrals were made for children under 16 and 55 referrals related to children under 12.⁵⁰ A FOI request in 2014 revealed that 153 children under 11, 690 children aged 12-15, and 554 aged 16-17 had been referred since 2007. In 2013 – 2014, the total number of young people referred was 940, an increase of just over a quarter on the 748 cases in 2012-13.

In the Extremism Task Force report published in December 2013, the Coalition outlined plans to introduce a voluntary code of practice for supplementary schools as well as non-statutory guidance, subsequently issued in December 2014, on “requirements to actively promote fundamental British values in schools”. Since the Trojan horse affair, Ofsted has introduced a regime of unannounced schools inspections.

Furthermore, statistics continue to shed light on the realities of the Prevent programme, adding to existing evidence showing that the statutory duty of Prevent needs to be repealed and replaced with a more effective and engaging system for tackling extremism. For instance, The Times reported that between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 117 of the 245 individuals offered anti-radicalisation support by the Channel programme declined it. This is combined with the National Police Chief’s Council (NPCC) admitting that 80% of referrals to Channel are redundant by stating that there is no risk of radicalisation.⁵¹ This shows the extent to which Prevent is not fit for purpose since the vast majority of referrals are subsequently found to be inappropriate, yet lead to a considerable stigmatisation of, and distress in, these children and families.

It is important that young people experience security and trust in the school environment to aid their learning and development. While interventions to protect young people are important, these must not become the prism through which young people come to be viewed, or worse, come to view themselves.

50. HM Government, ‘Prevent Strategy,’ June, 2011, accessed May 09 2017, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97976/prevent-strategy-review.pdf

51. ‘Channel - now it’s getting worse.’ Muslim Engagement & Development. August 23, 2016. Accessed May 04, 2017. <https://mend.org.uk/news/channel-now-its-getting-worse/>.

Employment and labour market participation

According to a study conducted by the London Development Agency, young British Muslims will have accounted for one quarter of the growth in the UK's working age population between 2008 and 2018.⁵² Furthermore, the growth in the size of the UK's ethnic minority population, from 8% in 2001 to 14.1% in 2011, means that the number of young British Muslims of working age accounting for growth will rise further, which will have a decidedly positive impact on the UK's future economic growth.

The young age profile of British Muslims compared to the White majority and other ethnic groups means that the number of Muslims entering the labour market in years to come will grow far beyond that of other groups. This growth brings with it the natural dynamism and innovation that comes with youth. Projections on the increase in the Muslim population of working age can be further gleaned from the proportion of Muslims aged 0-15. The Census 2011 statistics indicate that 8.5% of those aged 0-15 in England and Wales are Muslim.

Despite the potential presented by the size and demographic profile of the Muslim population, British Muslims are severely disadvantaged by a lack of employment opportunities in comparison to the White majority and all other ethnic minority groups. Indeed, in July 2016, the House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee released a report demonstrating that Muslims experience the highest levels of disadvantage in the labour market. They suffer from with the highest unemployment rate (12.8%), and the greatest pay gap in comparison to their Christian counterparts (16.5% less for men and 22.4% for women).⁵³

The disproportionately high levels of unemployment experienced by British Muslims compared to other minority groups in the UK was also previously highlighted in the 2003 Cabinet Office report which introduced the concept of an 'ethnic penalty'. The term explains discrimination faced by minorities in the labour market when other

52. Zamilia Bunglawala, Valuing Family, Valuing Work: British Muslim Women and the Labour market, report, London Development Agency, November 2008, <http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Valuing-Family-Valuing-Work-British-Muslim-Women-and-the-Labour-Market-October-2008.pdf>.

53. Employment opportunities for Muslims in the UK, report, House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, August 11, 2016, 6, <https://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/89/89.pdf>.

factors, such as qualifications, are controlled.⁵⁴ The 2003 report found the Muslims suffered a greater 'ethnic penalty' than other minority groups. This was affirmed in the report by the National Equality Panel which found that "Muslims are paid 13-21% less than their White Christian counterparts of equal qualification". It further noted that while "all minority groups suffer some form of 'penalty'...Muslim ethnic groups suffer the largest 'ethnic penalty'."⁵⁵

The National Equality Panel concluded that 60% of White British men are in full time employment compared to 35% of Pakistani and 33% of Bangladeshi men.⁵⁶ In relation to minority women, 44% of Pakistanis and 49% of Bangladeshis are economically inactive, the highest figures among minority groups.

This situation has not changed in the intervening years. The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee reported in 2016 that Muslim women face practical barriers preventing them from participating in the labour market, as well as particular issues of discrimination within the workplace relating to dress.⁵⁷ As the committee has noted, "the level of disadvantage is particularly acute for Muslim women. They are 71% more likely than White Christian women to be unemployed, even when they have the same educational level and language skills."⁵⁸

The additional obstacles that Muslim women face in comparison to their non-Muslim counterparts is well documented. Research has indicated that one quarter of employers admit to being reluctant to hire Muslim women due to concerns they will put family commitments and caring duties above their professional duties.⁵⁹ This is emphasised by statistics demonstrating that British Pakistani women are far more likely to be asked whether they have plans to get married or have children in job interviews than White women (1 in 8 and 1 in 30 respectively).⁶⁰

The high levels of discrimination faced by Muslims in the UK labour market have also been confirmed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The study found that Bangladeshi and Pakistani men and women, who tend to be Muslim, have a much reduced chance of working with only 1 in 4 Bangladeshi and Pakistani women working compared to nearly 3 in 4 White British women. For men, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis are also least likely to be employed at a rate of 66% and 62% respectively, compared to a rate of around 80% for Indian, Other White and White British men.⁶¹

The study concluded that this was a result of compounded discrimination based on skin colour, culture or religion, with Islamophobia further affecting Muslim

54. Ethnic Minorities and the Labour Market, report, Cabinet Office, March 2003, 151, <https://www.researchonline.org.uk/sds/search/download.do;jsessionid=D3CD34460FD91A4BBEDA9BE4B769DE3D?ref=T8089>.

55. John Hills et al., An anatomy of economic inequality in the UK: Report of the National Equality Panel, report, Government Equalities Office, January 2010, <https://eprints.lse.ac.uk/28344/1/CASEREport60.pdf>.

56. Ibid.

57. 'Employment opportunities for Muslims in the UK inquiry,' The House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, 6.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., 20.

60. Ibid.

61. How fair is Britain? Equality, Human Rights and Good Relations in 2010, report, Equality and Human Rights Commission, October 01, 2010, 401, https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/how_fair_is_britain_-_complete_report.pdf.

employment prospects as employers demur from offering opportunities to a minority that is perceived to be problematic.⁶²

Discrimination is also evident at the recruitment stage with 33.8% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi men reportedly experiencing job refusal while 40.9% experienced both refusal and blockage. In comparison, 20.8% of White men reportedly experienced job refusal and 27.5% disclosed that they experienced both refusal and blockage. Similarly, 33.4% of Pakistani and Bangladeshi women disclosed that they experienced job refusal and 39.1% experienced refusal and blockage. This is in comparison to 17.6% of White women who disclosed they experienced job refusal and 23.8% who experienced refusal and promotion blockage.

Discrimination against Muslims in the workplace is further apparent in case studies. Three investigations into job discrimination were conducted by the BBC, in 2004, 2010 and 2017. In the first study, 50 companies were sent fictitious applications from six different applicants, two with traditional English names and four with ethnic sounding names two of which were Muslim names. The investigation found that 25% of applications from applicants with traditional English names prompted a positive response and an interview offer while only 9% of the 'Muslim' applications resulted in the same.⁶³ In the 2017 Investigation, two candidates, 'Adam' and 'Mohamed', who had identical skills and experience, applied for 100 job opportunities. Mohamed was offered four interviews, while Adam was offered 12, three times more than Mohamed, showing that little has changed in over 10 years.⁶⁴

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Race and Community in a report on Ethnic Minority Female Unemployment found that minority women faced discrimination at all levels of recruitment.⁶⁵

While entering the labour market is a considerable obstacle for many Muslims, and disparity in salary levels further evidence of discriminatory treatment, the low representation of Muslims at the top end of professions is another symptom of lost potential and frustrated ambition. In terms of occupational distribution, the Census 2011 results indicate that Muslims make up 2.8% of the overall population who are in managerial and senior official positions and 2.9% of the population in professional jobs. On the other end of the spectrum, Muslims tend to be more concentrated in semi-skilled and low skilled jobs such as the process, plant and machine sector (5.6%), sales and customer service roles (4.9%), closely followed by elementary roles (4%).

The body of empirical evidence demonstrating the nature and impact of employment discrimination faced by Muslims is therefore well established. However, despite a large number of recommendations proposed in the seminal 2003 report by the Cabinet Office, as well as numerous reports since, remarkably little progress has been made in tackling these issues. The Equality Act introduced a 'public sector duty' requiring public bodies to have due regard for the need to:

- Remove unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- Promote equality of opportunity between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not

62. Ibid.

63. Hugh Muir, 'Muslim names harm job chances,' The Guardian, July 12, 2004, <https://www.theguardian.com/money/2004/jul/12/discriminationatwork.workandcareers>.

64. Zack Adesina and Oana Marocico, 'Is it easier to get a job if you're Adam or Mohamed?,' BBC News, February 06, 2017, accessed May 09, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-38751307>.

65. Ethnic Minority Female Unemployment: Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi Heritage Women, report, Runnymede Trust, November 2012, <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/publications/pdfs/APPFemaleunemploymentReport-2012.pdf>.

- Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.⁶⁶

As a legal obligation, the duty requires public bodies to consider how policies and delivery of services are informed by equality considerations.⁶⁷ Furthermore, the Equality and Human Rights Commission has sought to ameliorate the negative impact of faith identity by urging the “reasonable accommodation” of religion in public life to promote equality for all groups. Given the strong attachment Muslims evince for a faith based identity, this is a commendable suggestion which, from the evidence presented above on discrimination based on grounds of religion, suggests is not being fully observed.

According to their 2015 manifesto, the Labour Party sought to “establish a comprehensive race equality strategy to break down the barriers still faced by black and minority ethnic communities. Our aim is to make sure our national institutions, including Parliament, the police, judiciary, civil service, and the boardrooms of our companies, are more representative of our diverse country.”⁶⁸

The Conservative Party’s 2015 manifesto gave no mention to tackling employment equality for BME or religious minority groups. However, the party did show support for measures to tackle disability and gender discrimination in employment.⁶⁹

As was the case regarding the major parties’ 2010 manifestos, in 2015, the Liberal Democrats maintained their status as offering the most progressive promises to tackle discrimination and inequality. The party promised that in order “*to tackle the racial discrimination faced by Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) people we will:*

- *Build on the Coalition’s BAME Access to Finance report to identify ways to encourage more BAME applicants to apply for finance and set up small business. We will publish diversity data on government entrepreneurship programmes and seek to achieve fair representation of BAME communities.*
- *Encourage businesses to ensure at least one place on their board is filled by a BAME candidate.*
- *Monitor and tackle the BAME pay gap.*
- *Outlaw caste discrimination.*
- *Maintain funding for people to develop and improve their English language skills to enable them to fully participate in society and achieve their potential.*
- *Move to ‘name blank’ recruitment wherever possible in the public sector.*
- *Replicate the civil service accelerated programme for underrepresented groups across the public sector.*
- *Require diversity in Public Appointments. We will introduce a presumption that every shortlist should include a BAME candidate. We will establish an independent committee that will monitor the drive for greater diversity in public appointments and verify the independence of the appointment process to public bodies, boards and institutions.”*

From evidence compiled before and since the Conservative Government came to power in 2015, job discrimination faced by British Muslims remains a major problem impacting on poverty, equality, and socio-economic integration. The 2003 Cabinet Office report alluded to a ‘double

66. ‘Public Sector Equality Duty,’ Equality and Human Rights Commission, February 20, 2017, <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty>.

67. Ibid.

68. ‘The Labour Party Manifesto 2015,’ The Labour Party, accessed May 05, 2017, http://action.labour.org.uk/page/-/A4%20BIG%20_PRINT_ENG_LABOUR%20MANIFESTO_TEXT%20LAYOUT.pdf, 89.

69. ‘The Conservative Party Manifesto 2015,’ The Conservative Party, accessed May 05, 2017, <https://www.conservatives.com/manifesto>

dividend', where advancing opportunities for minority and Muslim employment would unleash the potential for growth while tackling the deeper problems that arise from social exclusion.

It is time to take the problem of job discrimination seriously and to implement policies to address the wasted potential of the UK's burgeoning Muslim and other minority populations.

Commit to tackling religious discrimination in the workplace and address the low level of economic activity among Muslims through targeted interventions at stages of recruitment, retention and promotion; improving access to employment for British Muslim women.

In 2015, Prime Minister David Cameron pledged to increase the BME employment rate by 20% as part of his Vision 2020. To help meet this target, the Department for Work and Pensions launched new guidance for Jobcentres and local partners to form new approaches to support BME groups in finding employment.⁷⁰ Since then however, current Prime Minister Theresa May has not been particularly vocal about achieving this goal.

Despite this, there have been some attempts to gain a greater understanding of the BME experience in employment. For example, Baroness McGregor-Smith conducted an independent review, with the report published February 2017, considering the issues affecting BME groups in the workplace.⁷¹ In the report, McGregor-Smith outlines the case for action, showing statistics for BME employment, while claiming that not only is the underemployment and underpromotion of people from BME background unfair, but research shows that diverse companies are in fact more successful. Therefore, increasing BME employment is for the benefit of the economy and the country as a whole.

The young age profile of British Muslims makes youth unemployment a particular concern. Figures from the 2011 Census show that 36% of young Muslims (those aged under 25) are students, higher than the figure for those of other backgrounds (19%). However, Census figures also show that young Muslims are more likely to suffer from unemployment than both those within their faith group, (23% for young Muslims compared to the Muslim average of 16.4%) and in comparison to the national average for young people, (17%). For those young Muslims with the least qualifications, unemployment approaches 40%.⁷²

Youth unemployment is a wider problem affecting young people of all backgrounds. Figures for 2014 show the unemployment rate for 16-24 year olds not in full-time education to be 14.4%. The young age profile of British Muslims means that youth unemployment has a larger impact on young people of Muslim background. Targeted interventions for tackling youth unemployment must address the specific problems faced by particular ethnic and religious minorities when devising policies to get young people into work.

70. Keren Lasme, 'The Government's plans for achieving the BME 2020 challenge,' The Government's plans for achieving the BME 2020 challenge | Black Training and Enterprise Group, March 21, 2016, accessed May 09, 2017, <http://www.bteg.co.uk/content/government%E2%80%99s-plans-achieving-bme-2020-challenge>.

71. Baroness Ruby McGregor-Smith, 'Race in the workplace: The McGregor-Smith review,' February 28, 2017, accessed May 09, 2017, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/594336/race-in-workplace-mcgregor-smith-review.pdf

72. David Blanchflower, 'The lost Muslim generation,' The lost Muslim generation, February 11, 2010, <http://www.newstatesman.com/economy/2010/02/young-muslims-rate-labour>.



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Integration and community cohesion

Integration and community cohesion has been a major policy area in recent years. Debates on these issues are permeated by the growing problem of far right extremism, tensions arising from expressions of religious extremism by fringe groups and the wider issue of rising trends in racial prejudice, anti-immigrant and anti-minority attitudes. The use of social media platforms as a space where hate speech festers has grown in recent years and policy developments that have failed to keep up with these growing challenges to integration and community cohesion. Political events such as Brexit and the rise of the political far right across Europe have given fresh impetus to such hostility.

A British Social Attitudes (BSA) survey in 2014 found that 1 in 3 Britons self-declares as holding racist attitudes.⁷³ BSA surveys also point to overwhelmingly negative attitudes toward immigration⁷⁴ and particular hostility towards Muslim immigrants the UK.⁷⁵

Against this context, the Coalition proposed an integration strategy in 2012 which placed an onus on five factors as contributing to successful integration: common ground, responsibility, social mobility, participation and empowerment and tackling intolerance and extremism.

In respect of common ground and tackling intolerance and extremism, the role of the media in representing Islam and Muslims is an important concern. With the decline in religious programming in sections of the media that might otherwise aid in religious literacy and interfaith understanding, media representations of Islam and Muslims play a significant role in cultivating the common ground upon which successful integration strategy rests.

Media representations of Islam and Muslims have been shown in academic studies to be overwhelmingly negative with much media coverage dominated by conflict paradigms and negative associations with the words 'Islam' and 'Muslims'.

Based on a content analysis of 974 newspaper articles about British Muslims and

73. 'Key findings: British Social Attitudes 31,' NatCen. 2014. <http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/latest-report/british-social-attitudes-31/key-findings/britain-2014.aspx>.

74. Ibid

75. 'British Social Attitudes 29, report, NatCen, 2012, http://www.bsa.natcen.ac.uk/media/38852/bsa29_full_report.pdf.



Islam in the press from 2000 to 2008 and focusing on five alternate years during this period, Moore, Mason and Lewis found that media coverage of British Muslims increased dramatically following 11 September 2001.⁷⁶ The findings indicated 'terrorism' accounted for 36% of stories and 'Muslim extremism' accounted for 11% of all stories.⁷⁷ The study consequently concluded that the coverage of British Muslims tended to focus on Muslims as a 'threat' or as 'a problem'.⁷⁸

Assessing almost 2,800 news items, of which 60% were Muslim related, 39.4% were Irish related and 0.6% were related to both, Hickman, Nickels and Silvestri found that both Muslim and Irish communities have been predominantly defined in juxtaposition to perceived 'British' values.⁷⁹ In relation to Muslims, researchers found the terms 'extremist', 'radical' or 'terrorist' are juxtaposed with the term 'moderate Muslims' and those who are 'law-abiding' composing a binary construction in which other representations of Muslims are largely absent.⁸⁰

The prevalence of negative media coverage on Islam and Muslims can be further seen in the wide-ranging study by Baker, McEnery and Gabrielatos which examined over 200,000 news articles and 150 million words over the period 1998-2009.⁸¹ To date, this body of data is the largest sample of news articles to examine media representations of Islam and Muslims. Baker et al. found that portrayals of Muslims and Islam were predominantly presented in contexts related to conflict, terrorism and extremism. For example, the terms 'extremist' or 'fanatic' occurred next to the word Muslim/Muslims in approximately 1 in 20 cases and next to the word Islamic in 1 in 6 cases. Researchers concluded that the associations were so frequent and consistent that the word Islamic was difficult to use in a neutral context because of the strong negative overtones.⁸²

The negative coverage of Muslims and Islam takes on a gendered dimension too with the high volume of news output on Muslim women and, in particular, debates surrounding the veil. Baker et al. found that Muslim women are referred to almost twice as often as Muslim men. Furthermore, the study observed that the veil was the most frequent topic under which Muslim women were represented.⁸³

Assuming that women in the UK are coerced into wearing the burqa or niqab overlooks the role of female agency, and presents these garments as obstacles to integration. The debate is used as a proxy measure to assess how far Muslims share British social mores and, within this debate, the right to freedom of religion becomes superseded by the demand that Muslims 'respect' and 'adopt' British values. It is also interesting to note that the niqab is only worn by a small minority of Muslim women yet is so often used as a symbolic test of integration.

The Leveson Inquiry into the Culture, Practice and Ethics of the Press has been the

76. Kerry Moore, Paul Mason, and Justin Lewis, *Images of Islam in the UK: The Representation of British Muslims in the National Print News Media 2000-2008*, report, Cardiff School of Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies, July 07, 2008, 9, <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/53005/1/08channel4-dispatches.pdf>.

77. *Ibid.*, 10.

78. *Ibid.*, 21.

79. Mary J. Hickman et al., 'Suspect Communities'? Counter-terrorism policy, the press, and the impact on Irish and Muslim communities in Britain, report, London Metropolitan University, July 2011, 18, https://www.city.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0005/96287/suspect-communities-report-july2011.pdf.

80. *Ibid.*, 17.

81. Paul Baker, Costas Gabrielatos, and Tony McEnery, *Discourse analysis and media attitudes: the representation of Islam in the British press* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

82. *Ibid.*, 256.

83. *Ibid.*, 203.

major conduit through which policy attention has been brought to the social impact of alarmist reporting within media representation of Muslim and other minority groups. The Leveson report noted “there are enough examples of careless or reckless reporting to conclude that discriminatory, sensational or unbalanced reporting in relation to ethnic minorities is a feature of journalistic practice in parts of the press, rather than an aberration... there has been a significant tendency within the press which leads to the publication of prejudicial or pejorative references to race [and] religion.”⁸⁴

Among recommendations proposed for the improved regulation of the press, and premised on the full independence of the regulator from the industry and politics, was the inclusion of a third party complaints mechanism in the revised Code of Practice to allow groups affected by discriminatory reporting to seek redress of grievance.⁸⁵

Despite the Leveson report being released in November 2012 and the Royal Charter adopting its main recommendations being sealed in October 2013, major newspaper publishers have shown tremendous reluctance to abide by the regulatory framework envisaged in the Charter preferring to set up a rival regulator that mimics the failed system that preceded it; the Press Complaints Commission. The Royal Charter offers a significant improvement in the production and regulation of print media output with proposals to advance a third party complaints mechanism; the power to ‘direct’ apologies; credible sanctions for breaches of the Code; and wide consultation on the Code of Practice. Given the high volume of negative media coverage on Islam and Muslims and the poor redress system operated by the press regulator to date, the impact on social attitudes and community cohesion deserves proper attention and policy intervention.

Indeed IPSO (Independent Press Standards Organisation) has been criticised for falling short of implementing the Royal Charter and the Leveson recommendations. It has been described by organisations such as Hacked Off and the Media Standards Trust as particularly lacking in matters of independence, complaints handling and arbitration. Indeed the Media Standards Trust has commented that “the most substantial failings of IPSO are with respect to its lack of independence – especially from the newspaper industry – and its failure to provide access to legal redress for ordinary people.”⁸⁶

Commit to media reform and the full implementation of the Royal Charter on a Leveson compliant regulator; support industry initiatives to promote positive, diverse representations of Muslims and minorities in the mainstream media.

According to findings from research conducted by the BBC into its own religious programming output, “a large number of non-believers know little about religion, are almost entirely indifferent to it and find it extremely difficult to understand the ‘world view’ of the believer.”⁸⁷

The research further noted that “those from a Muslim background and those of other faiths felt that they wanted a more rounded portrayal of Muslims. The BBC has provided thoughtful and compelling output on Islam but portrayal goes wider than that.”⁸⁸ Indeed how the ‘negative framing’ of Muslims within sections of the media contributes to the discourse around Muslims has been well documented.⁸⁹

84. Justice Leveson, An inquiry into the culture, practices and ethics of the press: Volume 2, report, November 2012, 673, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/270941/0780_ii.pdf.

85. Ibid.

86. ‘The Independent Press Standards Organisation (IPSO): An Assessment,’ Media Standards Trust, November 2013, accessed May 12, 2017, <https://www.mediastandardstrust.org/wp-content/uploads/.../MST-IPSO-Analysis-15-11-13.pdf>.

87. ‘Future of the BBC: Terms of reference - News from Parliament,’ UK Parliament, October 22, 2013, <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/culture-media-and-sport-committee/news/131022-future-of-the-bbc-tor/>.

88. Ibid.

89. Katy Sian, Ian Law, S. Sayyid, ‘The Media and Muslims in the UK,’ Centre for Ethnicity and Racism Studies University of Leeds, March 2012, accessed May 12 2017, <http://www.ces.uc.pt/projectos/tolerance/media/Working%20paper%205/The%20Media%20and%20Muslims%20in%20the%20UK.pdf>.

The analysis shows that “coverage of Islam was often framed by negative debate because of the stories on the news agenda”⁹⁰ concluding that “there is an onus on all media, particularly the BBC, to ensure that such coverage separates out the beliefs and acts of radicalised religious groups from others. The higher the sensitivity the more the BBC has a duty to explore these issues and ensure audiences are informed, however unpalatable the views involved.”⁹¹

The low levels of diversity in the media has been duly recognised both in the industry and by politicians. Comparisons made with other sectors, such as business, show that broadcasting remains disproportionately ‘White’ and the representation of minorities within the industry and in programming is far lower than in proportion to the overall population. The BBC’s former Head of Religion, Aaqil Ahmed, noted in relation to Muslim minorities and their representation in broadcasting output that, “what [Muslim viewers] want is more programmes that explain what they believe in and more programmes where they see themselves.”

A survey conducted in 2014 by the Centre for Law, Justice and Journalism at City University found that two broadcasters, BBC and Sky One, accurately represented the ratio of White people to ethnic minorities in England and Wales in their programming. Meanwhile, Channel 4 achieves a ratio of only 1:10 Black, Asian and visible ethnic minority (BAVEM) to White people across its programming. The BBC, in comparison, had a ratio of 4:1 White people to BAVEM overall (82% White). In contrast, ITV’s overall ratio was the poorest at 7:1 (88% White to 12% BAVEM). Although Channel 5 had a ratio of 4:1 White people to BAVEM, there was an overall negative portrayal of BAVEM contributors.⁹²

Commit to support industry initiatives to promote positive, diverse representations of Muslims and minorities in the mainstream media.

In 2014, the Director General of the BBC, Tony Hall, announced plans to address the on and off-screen under-representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) at the BBC. However, the budget set aside to tackle the low level of representation was reported to amount to only 0.12% of the BBC’s total budget, according to Simon Albury, the chair of the Campaign for Broadcasting Equality.⁹³

A qualitative study by Muir and Smith based on interviews with journalists of Muslim heritage who work or have worked on mainstream papers highlighted the benefits that minorities bring to the field, including the possibility of bringing in stories that would be otherwise absent from news pages.⁹⁴ Muir and Smith found that all interviewees in the study agreed that improved coverage of Muslim issues in the media would be helped if there were more good journalists of Muslim background employed in the media because they are more likely to approach issues about Muslims and Islam more sensitively and with a greater awareness of the inherent complexity. It is accepted that the Muslim community also needs to play a part in encouraging young people to enter into careers such as journalism and the media.

Commit to improving ethnic diversity in all sectors of business, politics and media through schemes encouraging BME recruitment, mentoring and promotion.

90. Ibid.

91. Ibid.

92. ‘New survey reveals level of ethnic minority representation on TV,’ City, University of London, August 31, 2016, <http://www.city.ac.uk/news/2014/aug/new-survey-reveals-level-of-ethnic-minority-representation-on-tv>.

93. Jason Deans and Tara Conlan, ‘BBC announces raft of new measures on diversity,’ The Guardian, June 20, 2014, <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2014/jun/20/bbc-measures-diversity-lenny-henry>.

94. Hugh Muir and Laura Smith, ‘Keeping Your Integrity – and Your Job: Voices from the Newsroom,’ Pointing The Finger, Islam and Muslims in the British Media, October 11, 2012, 227.

Minority rights

Recent years have seen a number of policy issues pertaining to minority rights and the right to freedom of religion, and religious practice particularly, dominate public debate. Whether on Muslim women's dress or animal slaughter according to religious rites, the right to religious practice and the accommodation of minority culture has been a sometimes fractious issue. The widespread condemnation of the remarks by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, in 2008 on the "unavoidable" presence of aspects of shari'ah law in the British legal landscape and the need for a "transformative accommodation" that enabled a harmonisation between the values of the Enlightenment and the freedoms of religious persons to abide by communal rules governing religious duties, continues to shape the context in which discussion about minority rights is constructed.⁹⁵

Dovetailed to this has been the more benign appreciation of the monetary and business value of exploiting the potential for shari'ah compliant financial products as the Islamic Finance industry continues to grow globally.

The potential for tapping into shari'ah compliant banking has been duly recognised across all the main political parties. The Labour Government initially fostered the development of the Islamic finance sector in Britain as early as 2003 when it commenced work addressing the tax and regulatory framework to establish fairness between the conventional and Islamic banking sectors.⁹⁶ Gordon Brown, as Chancellor in 2006, undertook to transform London into a "gateway" for Islamic finance and a leading centre of investment targeting Middle East investors by taking advantage of its "well-placed" position as a world leader in financial services.⁹⁷ In early 2008, Chancellor Alistair Darling proposed plans to approve the UK's first shari'ah compliant bonds issue.⁹⁸ However, the Government concluded in its 2008 budget that the feasibility of a sovereign sukuk, or Islamic bond, still needed to be explored.⁹⁹

The policy advanced by the previous Labour Government was continued under the Coalition. In March 2013, the Coalition launched the UK's Islamic Finance Taskforce co-chaired by Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Greg Clark, and Baroness Sayeeda Warsi. The Taskforce was launched ahead of the World Islamic Economic Forum conference in October 2013 to facilitate the development of Islamic finance in the UK. Furthermore, in June 2014, the UK became the first country outside the Islamic world to issue sovereign Sukuk of £200 million.¹⁰⁰

Due to the vast growth of the Islamic Finance sector, the UK has increased efforts to attract funds from Islamic sovereign wealth funds as foreign investment in the UK.

95. Rowan Williams, 'Civil and Religious Law in England: a religious perspective,' The Guardian, February 07, 2008, accessed May 03, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2008/feb/07/religion.world2>.

96. Joshua Rozenberg, English law reigns supreme over sharia, says Straw, October 30, 2008, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstoppers/lawreports/joshuarozenberg/3286766/English-law-reigns-supreme-over-sharia-says-Straw.html>.

97. 'UK's Brown backs Islamic finance,' BBC News, June 13, 2006, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/5074068.stm>.

98. Simon Walters, 'New sharia row over Chancellor's plans for 'Islamic bonds'', Daily Mail, February 17, 2008, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-515248/New-sharia-row-Chancellors-plans-Islamic-bonds.html>.

99. 'Budget 2008. Stability and opportunity: building a strong, sustainable future,' HM Treasury, March 2008, accessed May 04 2017, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/250345/0388.pdf

100. 'Government issues first Islamic bond,' Government issues first Islamic bond - GOV.UK, June 25, 2014, accessed May 08, 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-issues-first-islamic-bond>.



Inward investment based upon shari'ah compliance have been used in major infrastructure projects such as:

- The Qatari 95% investment share in the Shard¹⁰¹
- Redevelopments at Chelsea Barracks - the Prime Minister acknowledged that the Qatari investment represented the largest Islamic finance deal in European history¹⁰²
- Malaysia's £400 million investment into Battersea Power Station property development¹⁰³
- Olympic Village owned by Qatari Investment Authority (QIA)¹⁰⁴
- London Gateway on the Thames - one of Europe's biggest ports being built by DP World¹⁰⁵
- Emirates investment in the new Arsenal Stadium¹⁰⁶
- Etihad Airways investment into Manchester City football club¹⁰⁷
- Canary Wharf complex bought by a consortium led by Qatari Investment Authority¹⁰⁸
- Purchase of 10% share in the company that owns British Airways by Qatari Investment Authority¹⁰⁹

Islamic investors have also financed Thames Water. The Qatari Investment Authority (QIA) is reportedly the biggest shareholder of Barclays Bank.¹¹⁰ Qatar not only owns Harrods, the London landmark, but also over a quarter of Sainsbury's and a 20% slice of Camden market. In addition, the Qataris were the largest foreign sovereign wealth buyers of real estate in London in 2013.¹¹¹ This trend has continued to this day, with Qatari investors owning more property in the capital than the Mayor of London's office and three times more than the Queen.¹¹²

Islamic Finance and sovereign wealth funds run on a shari'ah compliant basis are a major source of foreign investment in the UK. In developing this potential, the Coalition introduced a number of other initiatives in the shari'ah compliant finance sector to facilitate the availability of shari'ah compliant financial products in the domestic market from halal student loans for Muslim students¹¹³ to halal loans for Muslim entrepreneurs through Start Up Loans, a government funded scheme to provide advice, business loans and mentoring to startup businesses.¹¹⁴

101. Jon Henley, 'How much of London is owned by Qatar's royal family?', The Guardian, December 09, 2014, accessed May 04, 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/shortcuts/2014/dec/09/london-qatar-royal-family-regents-park-200m-palace-harrods>.

102. David Cameron, 'World Islamic Economic Forum: Prime Minister's speech,' Cabinet Office, October 29, 2013, accessed on May 04, 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/world-islamic-economic-forum-prime-ministers-speech>

103. Ibid.

104. Edna Fernandes, 'How Qatar bought Britain: They own the Shard. They own the Olympic Village. And they don't care if their Lamborghinis get clamped when they shop at Harrods (which is theirs, too),' Daily Mail, March 13, 2012, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2113159/Qatar-bought-Britain-They-Shard-They-Olympic-Village-And-dont-care-Lamborghinis-clamped-shop-Harrods.html>.

105. 'World Islamic Economic Forum: Prime Minister's speech.'

106. Ibid.

107. Ibid.

108. 'Canary Wharf: Qatar bid wins battle,' BBC News, January 28, 2015, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-31020364>.

109. 'Qatar buys 10% stake in British Airways owner,' BBC News, January 30, 2015, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-31063157>.

110. 'How Qatar bought Britain: They own the Shard. They own the Olympic Village. And they don't care if their Lamborghinis get clamped when they shop at Harrods (which is theirs, too).'

111. 'How much of London is owned by Qatar's royal family?'

112. Rhiannon Bury, 'Qataris own more of London than the Queen,' The Telegraph, March 17, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2017/03/17/qataris-london-queen/>.

113. 'World Islamic Economic Forum: Prime Minister's speech.'

114. 'PM announces new measures to help Muslim students and entrepreneurs,' GOV.UK, October 21, 2013, accessed May 04, 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-announces-new-measures-to-help-muslim-students-and-entrepreneurs>.

Since then, however, the Conservative Government elected in 2015 has shown less interest in Islamic finance in the UK, with fewer, if any, new initiatives set up.

Commit to supporting the growth of the shari'ah compliant financial services industry and product development.

Other areas of Islamic practice have been less well received in public debate with, at times, active hostility demonstrated towards the right of Muslim minorities to seek advice and counsel from shari'ah tribunals, compose last testament and will in accordance with shari'ah compliant inheritance rules and practice religious slaughter.

In the Arbitration Act 1996, statute introduced due recognition of the jurisdiction of religious parties to regulate certain behaviours among adherents in accordance with religious rites. Article 1(b) of the Arbitration Act provides that “parties should be free to agree how their disputes are resolved, subject only to such safeguards as are necessary in the public interest.”¹¹⁵ Article 33 of the Act enforces rules on religious tribunals to act in a fair and impartial manner between parties seeking its intervention in civil disputes and permits the use of alternative religious tribunals for arbitration in matters under civil law.¹¹⁶

The remit of religious tribunals and their rulings based upon religious law are limited in three ways. Firstly, religious rulings are invalidated where conflict arises between its rulings and the secular law. Secondly, it is restricted to civil disputes and has limited application in relation to family law. That is, while a religious tribunal can grant religious divorces, it cannot authorise legal divorces. Any mediation and dispute resolution sought through a religious court is also not binding but voluntary and based on the consent of contracting parties. Thirdly, it has no jurisdiction over criminal law.

The role of shari'ah tribunals in the UK has been vastly misrepresented with estimates as to the number of such tribunals in existence giving way to claims of a ‘parallel legal system’ being set up by minority communities. Moreover, the work of tribunals has been cast as gender biased, with claims that Muslim women are coerced into seeking its counsel against their will and are invariably discriminated against in its rulings. Such claims lie behind the Arbitration and Mediation Services (Equality) Bill introduced by Baroness Caroline Cox in the House of Lords on 11 June 2014.

A more informed and less emotive, error strewn debate on the issue of protecting the rights of minorities to adhere to religious duties is desirable to advance communal rights within the context of the national legal system.

There has been much policy investment in eradicating the evil of forced marriages and the blighting of lives that arise from a coerced marital state. The then Labour Government is to be commended for introducing the Forced Marriage Act in 2007, with accompanying Forced Marriage Protection Order powers to protect vulnerable young people. Much less has been done to address the structural problems that persist in regards to the official recording of Muslim marriages such that the present dual registration process, of an Islamic marriage (nikah) and civil marriage can be overcome and a single, streamlined process enacted. The weak legal protection of women married under Islamic rites and whose marriages are not officially recorded is just one reason why a system of registration operated by Islamic institutions is desirable. The Church of England registers a marriage at the same time as performing the religious ceremony. In the case of Jewish

115. 'Arbitration Act 1996', 1996, accessed May 04 2017, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1996/23/pdfs/ukpga_19960023_en.pdf

116. Ibid.

117. 'Marriages and civil partnerships in the UK', GOV.UK, accessed May 04, 2017, <https://www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/religious-ceremonies>.

and Quaker marriages, the authorisation is also automatic. For all other religions, however, if the official performing the ceremony is not authorised, a Registrar is required to attend the religious ceremony or partners will need to have separate religious and civic ceremonies.¹¹⁷ We would welcome a change that would allow Islamic institutions to officiate in ceremonies that were at once religious and conformed to registration rules under civil law.

Lord Justice Thorpe in 2006 referred to the provisions in the Marriage Act 1949 Section 26(1) (A) under which a religious marriage is granted immediate legal effect if it is conducted “in a registered building according to such form and ceremony as the persons married see fit to adopt”, suggesting that the provision allows for minority groups to take advantage of legal recognition of marriage conducted in religious settings on the condition that “the mosque, church or temple must be duly registered”.

With regards to Islamic wills and the disbursing of one’s personal estate in a shari’ah compliant manner, the Law Society introduced a practice note in March 2014 to assist the legal profession in the preparation of shari’ah compliant wills for clients requesting the service.¹¹⁸ Its aim was to “assist solicitors who have been instructed to prepare a valid will, which follows shari’ah succession rules.” The practice note clearly asserted that “practice notes are not legal advice” and acknowledged the purpose of providing such guidance as meeting the needs of clients desiring the service.

Despite this, the practice note was profoundly criticised for “encouraging” a “parallel legal system” for Muslim communities in Britain.¹¹⁹ The Justice Secretary, Chris Grayling, asserted that the guidance and the Law Society’s subsequent launch of a training programme in Shari’ah Law was likely to “undermine” the rule of law.¹²⁰ The practice note was subsequently retracted by the then President of the Law Society, Andrew Caplen, who apologised for the guidance having been issued. Among detractors of the practice note was the Lawyers Secular Society.

The episode further highlights the kneejerk, reactionary responses often visited upon interventions which address the “reasonable accommodation” of religion in public life. The claim that wills written in a shari’ah compliant manner discriminate against women overlooks the liberty individuals freely exercise to exclude any progeny and relatives, male or female, from a share of their estate.

It seems that the application of shari’ah in the UK is a topic of importance for the Government, as two Inquiries were announced, one ordered by Prime Minister Theresa May when she was Home Secretary, and another by the Home Affairs Select Committee, both of which began in 2016. However, with the announcement of the general election, the Inquiries have been closed, with the evidence gathered available for the future committees to conduct a report with recommendations if they wish to do so.

Perhaps the most emotive debate over the last few years in the area of minority rights and religious practice has been religious slaughter. Widespread media coverage of the preparation and distribution of halal meat in the UK has tended to emphasise the high volume of slaughter

118. ‘Sharia succession rules,’ The Law Society, March 13, 2014, accessed May 04, 2017, <https://lawyerssecularsociety.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/law-society-sharia-succession-rules-13-march-2014.pdf>

119. Antonia Molloy, ‘Islamic law to be enshrined in British law as solicitors get guidelines on ‘Sharia compliant’ wills,’ The Independent, March 23, 2014, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/islamic-law-to-be-enshrined-in-british-law-as-solicitors-get-guidelines-on-sharia-compliant-wills-9210682.html>.

120. Christopher Hope, ‘Law Society risks ‘undermining’ rule of law by promoting sharia, Chris Grayling warns,’ The Telegraph, May 10, 2014, accessed May 04, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/uknews/law-and-order/10820783/Law-Society-risks-undermining-rule-of-law-by-promoting-sharia-Chris-Grayling-warns.html>.

conducted in the halal manner, exceeding the pro rata proportion of Muslims in the British population, and the absence of food labelling to denote whether meat has been prepared using “stunned” or “unstunned” methods.

Regulations on animal slaughter state that it is an offence to cause or permit an animal to suffer “any avoidable pain, distress or suffering.”¹²¹ While animal rights activists have lobbied for the singular use of “stunning” in animal slaughter, these interests have conflicted with the exemption in law granted to religious minorities to practice animal slaughter in accordance with religious rites, halal and shechita. The right to religious slaughter has been recognised as a “religious right” though the EU regulations grant Member States the power to impose stricter rules on animal slaughter and is deemed to conform to Article 10 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU on the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Countries such as Sweden, Norway, Switzerland and Ireland have adopted “stunning” only methods in animal slaughter.

In the UK, the British Veterinarian Association and other animal welfare charities have sought to impose similar “stunning” only methods overriding the rights of religious minorities, such as Muslims and Jews, to observe religious dietary laws. Food labelling of halal and kosher meat has also been advanced as a means of singling out meat that has not been stunned at slaughter. A Private Members’ Bill was introduced by MP Philip Davies in 2012. The debate has since continued in both Houses of Parliament with some members urging clearer labelling rules on stunned or unstunned meat.

Muslim and Jewish representatives have supported the calls for clearer labelling urging that labelling be adopted with as wide a framework as possible, and avoiding discriminatory treatment or burdens on Muslim and Jewish producers, by requiring labels for electrocution, strangling and other methods used in non-religious stunned slaughter.

Policies which are seen to promote good practice in animal slaughter, such as the installation of CCTV in slaughter houses and clear labelling to offer consumer choice have been supported by Muslim and Jewish groups.

Commit to preserving the Human Rights Act and the protection of minority rights including rights to religious slaughter, circumcision and wearing of religious dress or symbols.

Muslim women’s dress has been a recurring issue with high volumes of news coverage especially devoted to the wearing of the face veil (niqab). The Prime Minister Theresa May has helpfully stated in Parliament that “what a woman wears is a woman’s choice”.¹²² Though the UK has not introduced the restrictions imposed in other EU Member States, which have enacted policies on the wearing of face veils in public spaces and bans on the wearing of “conspicuous religious symbols” in state schools, political and media debate has agitated in its favour. The consequent debate has, according to research, contributed to a climate in which Muslim women are more

121. ‘Home slaughter of livestock: A guide to the law in England and Wales,’ Food Standards Agency, May 10 2013, accessed May 04 2017, <https://www.food.gov.uk/sites/default/files/home-killguide.pdf>.

122. Jon Stone, ‘Theresa May backs Muslim women’s right to wear a hijab,’ The Independent, February 01, 2017, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/theresa-may-muslim-hijab-ban-pmqqs-a7557126.html>.

The background image shows a museum gallery with a green tint. In the foreground, there are several black stanchions with circular bases on a grey tiled floor. In the background, there are display cases containing various items, including portraits and documents. A person is partially visible on the left side of the frame.

vulnerable to abuse and hate crime.

A further area of Muslim life in Britain that has attracted widespread hostility and physical restrictions to the freedom to practice religion have been organisations and campaigns which have sought to frustrate planning applications for the building or extension of mosques and other religious buildings in towns and cities across the UK. British Muslims are geographically dispersed throughout the country with small and large communities living in many different parts of the UK. Far right organisations and self-styled 'mosquebusters' have made no secret of their efforts to oppose applications submitted by local Muslim communities even providing training programmes on how to block mosque applications. There are examples of sites for proposed mosques being vandalised, of inflammatory leaflets being distributed and further examples of applications being withdrawn by Muslim communities on the back of hostile anti-mosque campaigns.

It is vital that public debate on subjects such as minority rights, including the role of mosques in Britain, do not inadvertently promote hostility or prejudice towards the UK's religious and ethnic minorities.

Counter terrorism and civil liberties

The brutal assassination of Jo Cox MP, days before the EU referendum in June 2016, provided a stark reminder of the dangers of violent extremism and the chilling impact of narratives that espouse violence and hatred. Subsequent atrocities in Nice and Berlin, in which almost a hundred people died, and the recent attack in Westminster, have reinforced the scale of the threat we face. Muslim communities in the UK and Europe, which have acutely suffered from policies dealing with violent extremism, continue to harbour fears of stigmatisation due to poor policy development and its inadvertent contribution to anti-Muslim prejudice. While countering violent extremism is a policy priority, it should not be pursued at the expense of civil liberties that define our society and culture or in a manner that provokes a landscape in which Muslims are simultaneously blamed for the violent actions of others and demonised as contributing to the problem.

The 2013 'Tackling Extremism in the UK' report from the Prime Minister's Extremism Task Force reiterated the need to distinguish between Islam as a religion and 'Islamism' as a distinct ideology. The report defined 'Islamist' ideology as:

*"An ideology which is based on a distorted interpretation of Islam, which betrays Islam's peaceful principles, and draws on the teachings of the likes of Sayyid Qutb. Islamist extremists deem Western intervention in Muslim-majority countries as a 'war on Islam', creating a narrative of 'them' and 'us'. They seek to impose a global Islamic state governed by their interpretation of Shari'ah as state law, rejecting liberal values such as democracy, the rule of law and equality. Their ideology also includes the uncompromising belief that people cannot be Muslim and British, and insists that those who do not agree with them are not true Muslims."*¹²³

The business of defining 'Islamist' extremism has been fraught with tensions between distinguishing moral agency exercised by Muslims, including in the sphere of politics, and the narrative of violent extremists who cloak their actions in the garb of legitimacy emanating from Islamic texts.

The revised Prevent strategy of 2011, defined Islamism as: *"a philosophy which, in the broadest sense, promotes the application of Islamic values to modern government. There are no commonly agreed definitions of 'Islamism' and 'Islamist', and groups or individuals described as Islamist often have very different aims and views about how*



those aims might be realised.”¹²⁴

“Some militant Islamists would endorse violence or terrorism to achieve their aims. Many Islamists do not.”¹²⁵

The distinction is a vital component to creating a space in which Muslims are able to engage in society and politics drawing on their religion, as many do, to inform their moral choices and decisions. It is important to remember that Muslim majorities around the world reject ISIS’s violent and binary worldview¹²⁶ preferring to integrate in society and seek accommodation of minority or majority rights within the context of the nation-state, parliamentary democracy and constitutional rule.¹²⁷

There have been many criticisms levelled at the way in which counter-radicalisation and counter-extremism policy has been developed and implemented in recent years with many of these focused on the excessive attention paid to religion and theology over more relevant, influential factors such as socio-economic background, political disaffection, personal and familial relations and in-group membership and dynamics. One of the biggest problems in counter-terrorism policy has been the extent to which it is devoid of empirical evidence to justify its orientation. The lack of evidence-based analysis in contemporary approaches have been highlighted by researchers who have pointed to the flawed premise on which much policy has been erroneously based with dangerous consequences.

Numerous reports have highlighted these policy failures and the consequences of approaching counter-terrorism in a way that marginalises Muslim communities, creates widespread distrust within Muslim communities and between Muslim communities and the wider society, and which privileges certain expressions of Islamic belief over others. It is not the business of government to legislate on religious belief, much less disburse public funds to socially engineer “acceptable” expressions of Islamic belief and practice. In the past, this has taken the form of privileging Sufi or secular expressions of Islamic belief. In the present, it takes the shape of labelling Muslims as “Islamists” to cast them beyond the pale and extinguish their involvement in partnership approaches to tackling the vulnerability of individuals to violent extremism.

But by the Government’s own definition of “Islamist”, many Islamists do not endorse violence or terrorism to achieve their aims. Hence it is necessary avoid conflating forms of religious practice to an innate disposition to violent extremism.

A further criticism of the approach to date has been the near exclusion of far right extremism from policy concern in the area of counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation.

While references to the brutal murder of Muslim pensioner Mohammed Saleem Khan in Birmingham in 2013, a month before the murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby, have been raised in consideration of further counter-terrorism measures deemed necessary to tackle the threat to security, there is proportionately less regard for far right extremism and violence despite evidence suggesting that ‘Islamist’ extremism is

124. ‘Prevent Strategy.’

125. Ibid.

126. Jacob Poushter, ‘In nations with significant Muslim populations, much disdain for ISIS,’ Pew Research Center, November 17, 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/11/17/in-nations-with-significant-muslim-populations-much-disdain-for-isis/>.

127. The World’s Muslims: Religion, Politics and Society, report, Pew Research Center, April 30, 2013, <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2013/04/worlds-muslims-religion-politics-society-full-report.pdf>.

not the most pervasive form of violent extremism experienced in Europe.¹²⁸ Figures suggest that deaths resulting from ISIS inspired terrorism are greater in number than those resulting from other forms of violent extremism, but the examples of Anders Behring Breivik, Pavlo Lapshyn and a selection of other far right extremists who have committed terrorism related offences caution against neglecting far right extremism as a clear and present danger.¹²⁹

Commit to fostering social cohesion and community resilience to all forms of extremism; support de-radicalisation programmes that work with Muslim communities not against them.

The Prevent strategy was strengthened by the Government through the implementation of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Prevent duty came into force as a statutory requirement for public sector bodies in July 2015, requiring relevant organisations to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

The enactment of the duty, mandated in local authorities, schools, colleges, universities, health bodies, prisons, probation services and police forces, has exacerbated problems identified in earlier iterations of the Prevent approach. The suspicion placed around Muslim children and students has led to thousands of young Muslims being referred to counter-extremism authorities, including hundreds of primary-school aged children.¹³⁰

Numerous Muslim children and students have suffered as inadequate training and hasty interpretation of Muslim practices have resulted in a host of erroneous referrals. Cases of pupils being referred for drawing pictures, wearing wrongly-interpreted T-shirts or campaigning on humanitarian issues have been widely publicised and critiqued. The effectiveness of the Prevent strategy must also be called into question given Home Office figures indicating over 80% of Prevent referrals are deemed to show no risk of radicalisation.¹³¹

The failure of the Government to accept the flawed nature of Prevent, along with its harmful impact on the social and educational development of many of those referred, has led to a long list of outspoken critics. Despite this, a Government internal review of the strategy concluded in 2016 that the programme “should be strengthened, not undermined”.

Another aspect of the Government’s counter-extremism strategy, the Channel programme, seeks to ‘de-radicalise’ individuals assessed to be vulnerable to extremism. The Extremism Risk Guidelines, a set of 22 risk factors used as the basis for establishing risk of extremism in Channel referrals, was claimed in 2016 to be based on research gravely lacking in scientific rigour and scrutiny.¹³² A precursor study, known as the Strategic Risk Guidance (SRG), was formed via psychological observations of just 20 convicted prisoners with some affiliation to Islam. The convictions of these 20 prisoners are not known.¹³³

It is of grave concern that research based on a small number of convicted prisoners has been used as a basis for identifying ‘extremist’ traits and behaviours within the general Muslim and wider community. In addition, the data underpinning this research has not been published, thus it has not been subject to the usual rigorous processes of peer review and critique. Indeed the Royal College of Psychiatrists published a position statement on the research underpinning Prevent, commenting that “public policy cannot be based on either no evidence or a lack of transparency

128. European Union Terrorism Situation and Trend Report 2016, report, Europol, July 20, 2016, https://www.europol.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/europol_tesat_2016.pdf.

129. Ibid.

130. ‘Sixty kids a week referred to extremism body,’ Sky News, December 27, 2016, <http://news.sky.com/story/anti-extremism-prevent-scheme-referrals-reach-7500-a-year-10709045>.

131. Alan Travis, ‘Prevent strategy to be ramped up despite ‘big brother’ concerns,’ The Guardian, November 11, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/nov/11/prevent-strategy-uk-counter-radicalisation-widened-despite-criticism-concerns>.

132. ‘The ‘science’ of pre-crime: The secret ‘radicalisation’ study underpinning PREVENT,’ Cage, September 29, 2016, accessed May 12, 2017, <https://cage.ngo/publication/the-science-of-pre-crime/>.

133. Alice Ross, ‘Academics criticise anti-radicalisation strategy in open letter,’ The Guardian, September 29, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/sep/29/academics-criticise-prevent-anti-radicalisation-strategy-open-letter>.

about evidence”, and called for the all the data underpinning the ERG22+ to be published.¹³⁴

Commit to repealing the statutory Prevent duty, and engaging with Muslim communities to form an effective, evidence-based and non-discriminatory counter-terrorism strategy.

The charity sector has been singled out via the Charities (Protection and Social Investment) Act 2016, which expanded the powers of the Charity Commission to remove trustees from charities and shut down charities found to breach the regulator’s code of practice. Furthermore, the Charity Commission was granted £8 million funding to tackle the abuse of charities for terrorism purposes. In September 2015, the Commission reminded charities of their obligations under the Terrorism Act to report knowledge of terrorist financing to authorities.¹³⁵

The Charity Commission’s chairman, William Shawcross, previously claimed that the “deadliest threat” faced by charities comes from ‘Islamist extremism’, despite not providing any evidence for his statement. Leaders from across the charitable sector, such as Steven Bubb, former chief executive of Acevo, and Baroness Warsi, have criticised the Commission’s “disproportionate focus” on the work of Muslim charities.¹³⁶

The implementation of counter-terrorism powers has been an area of human rights concerns given their disproportionate use against Black and ethnic minority groups. The former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation cautioned against the “excessive enthusiasm” with which the powers are used.

A number of policy reviews introduced welcome revisions to counter-terrorism powers, such as the consultation on the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 and on Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000. Some amendments to Schedule 7 powers were passed in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. The abrogation of section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000 was passed in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012, bringing in section 47a on stop and search and removing the dispensation to stop and search without “reasonable suspicion”.

While these legislative changes have contributed to a long awaited recalibration of counterterrorism policy in favour of civil liberties, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 raises huge concerns over regression.

Powers to seize passports for up to 14 days without legal redress, temporary exclusion orders which could see British nationals exiled for up to 2 years (possibly more), authority to carry schemes widened beyond individual passengers to include “groups of passengers” including those defined by “nationality” and the statutory duty introduced in the operation of the Prevent strategy evoke major concerns over the steady and cumulative erosion of civil liberties and Muslim civil liberties in particular.

Further erosion of civil liberties occurred with the passing of the ‘Snooper’s Charter’, officially known as the Investigatory Powers Act, in November 2016. The legislation provides security services with the power to hack into computers and devices, as well as requiring companies to assist with operations by bypassing encryption where possible. Internet providers are required by the legislation to store records of websites visited by every citizen for 12 months, allowing access by police, security services and other public bodies following issue of a warrant.¹³⁷

Commit to curbing the encroachment of counter-terrorism policies on civil liberties by reviewing all counter-terrorism legislation enacted since 2000.

134. ‘Counter-terrorism and psychiatry,’ Royal College of Psychiatrists, September, 2016, accessed May 09, 2017, https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/pdf/PS04_16.pdf.

135. Rebecca Cooney, ‘Charity Commission reminds sector that suspected financing of terrorism must be reported,’ Third Sector, September 30, 2015, <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/charity-commission-reminds-sector-suspected-financing-terrorism-reported/governance/article/1366503>.

136. Rebecca Cooney, ‘Sir Stephen Bubb says Charity Commission has ‘disproportionate focus’ on Islamic extremism,’ Third Sector, November 20, 2015, <http://www.thirdsector.co.uk/sir-stephen-bubb-says-charity-commission-disproportionate-focus-islamic-extremism/governance/article/1373704>.

137. Alan Travis, ‘Snooper’s charter’ bill becomes law, extending UK state surveillance,’ The Guardian, November 29, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/nov/29/snoopers-charter-bill-becomes-law-extending-uk-state-surveillance>.

Crime and policing

The subject of race and policing has been a salient one with 2017 marking almost a quarter-century since the murder of black teenager Stephen Lawrence. The MacPherson Inquiry, which was established to scrutinise the Metropolitan Police Service's investigation into Lawrence's murder, produced a critical report in 1999 accusing the MPS of "institutional racism" and advanced 49 recommendations to improve policing and its impact on racial minorities.

The MacPherson report found that ethnic minorities were "over policed . . . and under protected" with encounters between race groups and police forces influenced by the high incidence of stop and search. The MacPherson report proposed as a priority measures to "increase trust and confidence in policing among minority ethnic communities" through policy directives regulating the use of stop and search procedures and improvements in the recruitment and retention of ethnic minority officers in the police force.¹³⁸

Stop and search powers have been a recurring factor in analyses of race and policing and the effects of police powers on ethnic minority experiences of the criminal justice system. Stop and search is mandated under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 (PACE), Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, and Section 47A of the Terrorism Act 2000, which replaced the repealed Section 44 powers. Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000 also permits the use of stop and search powers, although in a varying manner from Section 47A by allowing the exercise of the power without requiring "reasonable suspicion".

Ethnic minorities are now more likely to be disproportionately stopped and searched than at the time of the MacPherson report with the ratio of Black to White stops increasing from 5 to 1 in 1999 to 8 to 1 in 2002.¹³⁹ Figures published by the Equalities and Human Rights Commission in separate reports in 2010 and 2013 found that the ratios steadily increased demonstrating a growth in the degree of disproportionality. In its 2010 'Stop and Think!' report, the EHRC found that Black people were at least six times as likely to be stopped and searched as a White person and an Asian almost twice as likely to be stopped and searched.¹⁴⁰ In 2013, the EHRC concluded that during 2010/11 and 2011/12 Black people were 29 times more likely to be stopped and searched in some areas when stops and search were assessed by police force area and the respective size of the BME population.

Similar findings were seen in 2015/16, with Black people over six times more likely to

138. William MacPherson, The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry, report, February 24, 1999, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf.

139. Ben Bowling, Alpa Parmar, and Coretta Phillips, 'Policing ethnic minority communities,' Handbook of Policing, 2003, <http://thinkethnic.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Policing%20ethnic%20minority%20communities.pdf>.

140. Stop and think: A critical review of the use of stop and search powers in England and Wales, report, Equality and Human Rights Commission, March 2010, https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/ehrc_stop_and_search_report.pdf.





be stopped than White people. Overall, those from BME groups were three times more likely to be stopped and searched than those who are White. Figures showed that just 16% of stops led to an arrest, with 76% of stops resulting in “no further action”.¹⁴¹

The detrimental impact of the stop and search powers were to be observed in their effect on Muslim males which the EHRC noted in a report in 2011: *“For many young Muslim men on the streets, stop and search under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act (s44) has become their most frequent and regular contact with the police... Such measures were seen to add to perceptions of racial and religious profiling and discrimination.”*¹⁴²

Following the repeal of Section 44 and its replacement with Section 47A, Home Office statistics, including the latest annual statistics to March 2016, indicate there have been no Section 47A stops and searches recorded across England and Wales.¹⁴³ This suggests that the higher threshold introduced in 2012 has caused a moderating effect on the decision to exercise the power.

A review into police stop and search powers by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) in 2013 found that over a quarter (27%) of stops and searches were unlawfully conducted with insufficient grounds to justify its use. HMIC further found that over half (30) of the 43 police forces in England and Wales had not developed an understanding of how to use stop and search powers effectively, while half of forces did nothing to understand the impact of stop and search on local communities.¹⁴⁴ HMIC’s follow-up report in 2015 found that police forces had made “disappointingly slow progress” in improving their use of stop and search, with forces failing to gather information on the fairness of searches or providing the necessary levels of transparency and accountability for highly intrusive searches.¹⁴⁵

The findings are significant when assessed against the impact of stop and search on ethnic minorities with BME respondents being less likely to feel safer as a result of police stop and searches (40%) compared to White counterparts (53%). BME respondents who have previously been stopped and searched also reported not being told of the reason for the search (42%) more often than the overall level (34%).¹⁴⁶

The Home Office and College of Policing launched the Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme in 2015, introducing a number of measures designed to achieve greater transparency and community involvement in the use of stop and search. This included raising the threshold required for section 60 ‘no-suspicion’ stops and searches, the introduction of a ‘community trigger’ on complaints, and more detailed data collection requirements on the outcomes of searches.

13 police forces were suspended from the BUSS scheme in February 2016 for failing to comply with multiple elements of the scheme, although all 13 forces were re-admitted to the scheme in September 2016 following further HMIC inspections.¹⁴⁷

141. Home Office, Police powers and procedures England and Wales year ending 31 March 2016, October 27, 2016, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/562977/police-powers-procedures-hosb1516.pdf.

142. Tufyal Choudhury and Helen Fenwick, The impact of counter-terrorism measures on Muslim communities, report, Equality and Human Rights Commission, May 12, 2011, <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-72-the-impact-of-counter-terrorism-measures-on-muslim-communities.pdf>.

143. Home Office, Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000, financial year ending March 2016, June 30, 2016, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/operation-of-police-powers-under-the-terrorism-act-2000-financial-year-ending-march-2016>.

144. Stop and Search Powers: Are the police using them effectively and fairly?, report, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, July 09, 2013, <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/media/stop-and-search-powers-20130709.pdf>.

145. Stop and search powers 2: are the police using them effectively and fairly?, report, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, March 24, 2015, <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/stop-and-search-powers-2.pdf>.

146. Stop and Search Report, report, YouGov, April 2013, <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/media/stop-and-search-survey-summary.pdf>.

147. Best Use of Stop and Search (BUSS) scheme, report, Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary, September 22, 2016, <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/best-use-of-stop-and-search-scheme.pdf>.

The welcome move to introduce greater accountability in stop and search has led to forces disseminating information on individual stops and searches on the crime map portal www.police.uk. The data provided, which includes demographic information on both the person and officer involved in the stop, along with the outcome, allows for greater public scrutiny and builds confidence in the accountability of local police forces.

Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act and the powers to stop and search at ports and airports without “reasonable suspicion” has been another major source of antagonism in minority communities with the issues of disproportionality resurfacing in studies assessing the impact of the powers on Muslims.

An experimental analysis conducted by the EHRC on Schedule 7 powers assessing the prevalence of race disproportionality in stops and examinations under Schedule 7 found that Asians and individuals of ‘other’ ethnic groups were 11.3 times more likely than White people to be stopped and questioned. Comparatively, Black people were 6.3 times more likely and those of mixed ethnicity were 3.6 times more likely to be stopped and searched.¹⁴⁸

The study further concluded that although the total proportion of examinations of Asians or ‘other’ ethnic minorities at all ports and airports was 46.6% in 2010/11, an analysis of airports indicated that 63.5% of total examinations were of Asians and ‘other’ ethnic minorities. In addition, 65.2% of examinations and detentions with a duration of over an hour at all ports and airports also were of Asians or other ethnic minorities.

The level of disproportionality in Schedule 7 stops has continued to grow over recent years. While the overall number of Schedule 7 examinations has fallen since 2011/12, the proportion of those stopped who are from Asian or other ethnic backgrounds continues to grow. 2015/16 marked the first year where those stopped of Asian ethnicity (30%) outnumbered those stopped of White ethnicity (27%), despite Asians comprising just 8% of the overall population. Asians were also more likely to be detained under Schedule 7 powers, with over a third of people detained under Schedule 7 legislation being of Asian or Asian British ethnicity.¹⁴⁹

The former Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, David Anderson QC previously said that the use of Schedule 7 powers had “given rise to resentment among some Muslim groups who feel they are being singled out” by authorities.¹⁵⁰

The former Independent Reviewer also noted that Schedule 7 detentions and examinations were imposed upon members of ethnic minority groups to a greater extent than “their presence in the travelling population would seem to warrant”¹⁵¹ suggesting evidence of disproportionate use. In his December 2016 report however, Anderson concluded that as Schedule 7 is not supposed to be a randomly-exercised power, the continuing disproportions of Asians being stopped “do not constitute evidence that Schedule 7 powers are being used in a racially discriminatory manner”.¹⁵²

Following consultation, Schedule 7 powers were amended in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. Changes included reducing the maximum examination period in detention from 9 to 6 hours; granting individuals detained access to legal counsel; and repealing powers

148. Karen Hurrell, An Experimental Analysis of Examinations and Detentions under Schedule 7 of the Terrorism Act 2000, report, Equality and Human Rights Commission, Winter 2013, <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/briefing-paper-8-an-experimental-analysis-of-examinations-and-detentions-under-s7-of-the-terrorism-act-2000.pdf>.

149. Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000, financial year ending March 2016.

150. Rowena Mason, ‘UK terror law watchdog calls for end to detention at borders without suspicion,’ The Guardian, December 01, 2013, <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2013/dec/01/uk-terror-law-watchdog-detention-borders-schedule-7>.

151. David Anderson, QC, The Terrorism Acts in 2011, June 27, 2012, <https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/report-terrorism-acts-2011.pdf>

152. David Anderson, QC, The Terrorism Acts in 2015, December 1, 2016, <https://terrorismlegislationreviewer.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/TERRORISM-ACTS-REPORT-1-Dec-2016-1.pdf>.

to take ‘intimate samples’ of biometric data. The Independent Reviewer further called for the introduction of a “suspicion threshold” in the exercise of the powers, along with a statutory bar rendering answers given under Schedule 7 questioning inadmissible in criminal trials.

While changes introduced in the 2014 Act are a positive step towards addressing the encroachment on civil liberties enjoyed by minority communities, the changes do not go far enough with, for example, recommendations by the Joint Committee on Human Rights to collate data on the self-declared religious identity of individuals stopped not adopted. With the broadening of powers at the disposal of border officials, including passport seizure powers, collecting data that enables evaluation of compliance with equalities legislation is of paramount importance as is the proper training of officers to ensure racial and religious stereotyping is avoided at all cost.

An area that has attracted less attention in policing and race relations despite being addressed in the MacPherson report is BME recruitment and promotion in the police force.

According to figures to 31 March 2016 there were 7,218 Black and Minority Ethnic police officers in the 43 forces of England and Wales, accounting for 5.9% of all officers. This figure is a gradual increase from 5.6% at March 2015, continuing a steady rise from 5% at March 2012. The Metropolitan Police had the largest proportion of BME officers (12.6%), followed by West Midlands (9%) and Leicestershire (7.7%). BME officers in the 43 police forces of England and Wales are underrepresented at senior ranks, accounting for 3.6% of officers at the rank of chief inspector or above at March 2016.¹⁵³

Although the figures remain woefully unrepresentative of the BME proportion (14.1%) in the population at large, data on new police entrants indicates a positive trend towards increasing diversity within forces. 12.1% of new police officers in 2015/16 were BME, with a quarter of the Metropolitan Police’s new entrants of BME background. The country’s largest force, which has a BME population of over 40%, recently introduced residency requirements and piloted a language requirement scheme in order to meet its target of having 40% BME entrants.¹⁵⁴

Commit to improving BME recruitment to the police service including with affirmative action measures.

Among some of the most troubling figures emerging in recent years is the number of Muslims serving prison sentences. The 2011 Census put the figure at 13% with more recent data showing that Muslims prisoners number over 12,800, making up over 15% of the total prison population.¹⁵⁵

The figures, which are greater than the figure for Muslims as a proportion of the UK population, show that more needs to be done to understand the factors that lead to criminal conduct and lifestyles and to find ways in which minorities can be supported to embrace a life away from crime and its devastating effect on families, communities and society.

Commit to tackling the high number of Muslim prisoners through schemes to facilitate rehabilitation, cut re-offending and develop pathways for social inclusion.

153. Home Office, Police Workforce, England and Wales, 31 March 2016, July 21, 2016, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/544849/hosb0516-police-workforce.pdf.

154. ‘Budding police constables must speak second language in Met pilot scheme,’ The Guardian, July 20, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/jul/20/police-constables-second-language-metropolitan-pilot-scheme>.

155. House of Commons Library, UK Prison Population Statistics, by Grahame Allen and Christopher Watson, April 20, 2017, <http://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN04334/SN04334.pdf>.

International affairs and human rights promotion abroad

British foreign policy is an area which tends to attract significant interest among British Muslims, both on account of the community being the most ethnically diverse faith group in the UK and because 53% of British Muslims were born outside the UK.

From the events of the Iraq and Afghan wars of 2001 and 2003 to the Arab Spring of 2010, to the unresolved conflict in the Middle East to the emergence of a deadly transnational force straddling Iraq and Syria (ISIS), events in recent years have brought Muslim-majority countries to the fore of British foreign policy.

Security and trade have been the major focus of foreign policy with attracting foreign investment and increasing British exports taking priority alongside a commitment to dispense a fixed amount of GDP in annual foreign aid and democracy promotion abroad. Tackling failed states and the threat they pose to national security has been an overriding factor in foreign policy concerns. Military adventures in Iraq and Afghanistan and the withdrawal of combat troops from these regions have raised new questions about the purpose and outcome of British involvement in the US- led wars in 2001 and 2003.

Several Inquiries into misconduct by HM Armed Forces have resulted in large payouts to Iraqi civilians and their families. Wider Inquiries into professional misconduct have been commissioned with the creation of the Al Sweady Inquiry, investigating circumstances around a gun battle between British troops and Iraqi insurgents in May 2004. Allegations of torture were dismissed, but the Inquiry found that the conduct of British soldiers had fallen below the required standard and resulted in “actual or possible ill-treatment”. The Inquiry also found evidence that Iraqi witnesses had falsified claims of torture, which led to the conviction and striking off of solicitor Phil Shiner.¹⁵⁶

156. Ben Farmer, ‘Disgraced Iraq human rights lawyer Phil Shiner struck off over false abuse claims against British troops,’ The Telegraph, February 02, 2017, accessed May 09, 2017, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/02/02/disgraced-iraq-human-rights-lawyer-phil-shiner-accused-witch/>.



The Baha Mousa Inquiry into the death of the Iraqi civilian in September 2003 led to calls for a wider Inquiry into torture and misconduct by British forces in Iraq, after the Inquiry concluded that forces had subjected Mousa and a group of nine other International affairs and human rights promotion abroad 38 men to painful and inhumane interrogation techniques that had been banned for more than 30 years. In 2008, the Ministry of Defence agreed to pay Baha Mousa and the families of a further nine victims £2.83 million in compensation.

The Gibson Inquiry into the use of torture and rendition, or complicity in its exercise by others, was stalled after allegations brought by two Libyan men whose cases were being investigated by the Inquiry began criminal proceedings against the former head of MI6, Sir Mark Allen, and former foreign secretary, MP Jack Straw. One of the cases, that of Sami al-Saadi, was settled out of court in 2012 when the victim accepted £2.2 million in damages from the British Government. The case of Abdel Hakim Belhadj is ongoing, though further allegations against law came to light recently with disclosure of the intercept of confidential communications between Belhadj and his lawyers by the security agencies.¹⁵⁷

The Chilcot Inquiry, established in 2009 to “consider the period from the summer of 2001 to the end of July 2009, embracing the run-up to the conflict in Iraq, the military action and its aftermath” has been the most eagerly awaited Inquiry report. The Inquiry stopped taking evidence in 2011 and was published in 2016. The report’s verdict was damning, stating that not enough had been done to exhaust all non-military options prior to the invasion, and that intelligence about the country’s weapons programme was deeply flawed. The result was the Government failing to meet its stated objectives and the deaths of at least 150,000 Iraqis and 200 British nationals, combined with the displacement of 1 million people.¹⁵⁸

A report by Human Rights Watch, *Cruel Britannia*, has shed further light on a shameful episode in recent history documenting allegations of torture, rendition and mistreatment by British officials in contravention of human rights law.

The Justice and Security Act 2014 introducing ‘closed material procedures’ in cases involving national security is understood to have been prompted by legal challenges mounted by individuals alleging misconduct by state officials and human rights violations.

In light of all this, Britain’s links with US foreign policy arguably need to be re-assessed. The House of Lords International Relations Committee published a report in May 2017 claiming that Britain needs to rely less on the US President, and re-think its approach to the Middle East in light of the “mercurial and unpredictable” leadership of Donald Trump. The report also criticised Britain’s “muddled” policy of supporting authoritarian regimes in some countries while backing revolutionary movements in others.¹⁵⁹

157. Alan Travis and Owen Bowcott, ‘UK admits unlawfully monitoring legally privileged communications,’ *The Guardian*, February 18, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/feb/18/uk-admits-unlawfully-monitoring-legally-privileged-communications>.

158. ‘Chilcot report: Findings at-a-glance,’ *BBC News*, July 06, 2016. Accessed May 05, 2017. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-36721645>.

159. Wintour, Patrick. ‘UK warned it needs new Middle East policy that does not rely on Trump,’ *The Guardian*, May 02, 2017. Accessed May 05, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/may/02/uk-warned-needs-new-middle-east-policy-not-rely-donald-trump>.

Although the Lords' report was a positive step, there is no denying the election of Donald Trump to the position of US President in November 2016 will be challenging for Britain's foreign policy. The US Government's attempt to ban people from a number of Muslim countries from entering the USA was widely condemned within and outside the US.

The Palestine-Israeli conflict has made little progress towards peace in recent years, despite stated commitments by all three main parties in their 2010 manifestos to support the Middle East peace process and the creation of two states living alongside each other, an independent Palestine and a secure Israel.

A backbench motion in October 2014 on recognising Palestinian statehood was overwhelming supported by MPs with a resounding vote in favour; 274-12. The vote did little to sway the position of the Government, which chose to abstain in a UN vote in December 2014 calling for a peace settlement with Israel within a year and an end to Israel's military occupation of the Palestinian Territories by 2017.

The failure of the UK's role in the Middle East peace process was scathingly framed by former International Development Minister, Sir Alan Duncan, in a speech at the Royal United Services Institute in October 2014, days after the backbench motion was debated in Parliament, in which he criticised the Government's failure to do more to halt the growth in illegal settlement building in the Occupied Palestinian Territories, calling the actions by the State of Israel "theft", "annexation" and "a land grab". Duncan criticised the cumulative failures of successive British Governments to put greater pressure on Israel to reach a peace settlement, saying the Government had an obligation to challenge "settlement endorsement" with the same zeal with which it has approached racism, sexism, homophobia and antisemitism.

Despite the heavy involvement of the UK in Muslim-majority countries around the world, in conflict zones and in terms of strong bilateral relations, the number of British Muslims who serve in HM Armed Forces remains significantly low and far lower than the proportion of Muslims in the wider population. Muslims in the British Army number 480 out of 88,500, or 0.54%. The Army has announced plans to try and recruit more Muslims and individuals from BME backgrounds by targeting regions where Muslim population density is high, such as Bradford and Birmingham.¹⁶⁰

Commit to support for the creation of an independent state of Palestine and the end to Israeli occupation of the Palestinian Territories by December 2017.

The UK's relations with Europe continues to energise sections of the political spectrum. Muslim communities across Europe total around 13 million with larger populations found in Germany, France and the UK and smaller populations in Spain, Italy, Netherlands, Belgium and the Scandinavian countries. The major political event of 2016 was undoubtedly the referendum on Britain's membership of the EU in June, resulting in a majority voting to leave. The exact implications of this are yet to be recognised, as the legal outcomes of Britain's withdrawal will most likely take years to finalise.¹⁶¹ There is little empirical evidence available on whether Muslims are pro- or anti-European. In the UK context, where Euroscepticism is prevalent in the print media, it would be useful to understand better Muslim perceptions on the UK's membership of the EU.

However, what is apparent is the contribution of EU directives on legislation for protection against

160. Ewen MacAskill, 'British army aims to recruit more Muslims after worries over low numbers,' The Guardian, February 05, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2015/feb/06/british-army-recruit-muslims-low-number-iraq-afghanistan>.

161. Hunt, Alex, and Brian Wheeler. 'Brexit: All you need to know about the UK leaving the EU.' BBC News. April 25, 2017. Accessed May 05, 2017. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-32810887>.

discrimination on grounds of race and religion. The Racial Equality Directive 2000/43/EC protects individuals against discrimination on racial grounds in employment, education, social security and healthcare, membership and involvement in organisations of workers and employers, and in access to goods and services, including housing. The Employment Equality Framework Directive 2000/78/EC protects individuals against discrimination in the workplace on grounds of religion. Both Directives were adopted in 2000 and came into force in January 2003.

While the Racial Equality Directive is far-reaching in its scope, covering a range of goods and services, the Employment Equality Framework Directive covers discrimination on grounds of religion in the workplace only.

The EU Commission's proposed Equal Treatment Directive would extend protection against discrimination on grounds of religion beyond the workplace. Similar to the Racial Equality Directive, the Equal Treatment Directive would advance equal treatment on grounds of age, disability, sexual orientation and religion or belief to social protection, including social security and health care, education, and in access to and supply of goods and services, including housing. The Equal Treatment Directive was proposed in 2009. The UK Government must do its utmost to ensure that any rights enjoyed by Muslims and other ethnic minorities as a result of EU law must still form a part of Britain's legal system post-Brexit.

Commit to support the principles of the EU Equal Treatment Directive to advance protection against discrimination on the grounds of religion to education, healthcare, housing, access to goods and services and social protection, into UK law post-Brexit.

Consideration of Muslim minorities abroad has been a consistent feature of foreign policy concerns in recent months, with frequent reports of restrictions to religious belief and practice imposed by foreign governments. Violence perpetrated against Muslim minorities in the Central African Republic, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and in others parts of the world has raised concerns about the UK's speaking up for the rights of religious minorities in its bilateral and multilateral relations with other countries.

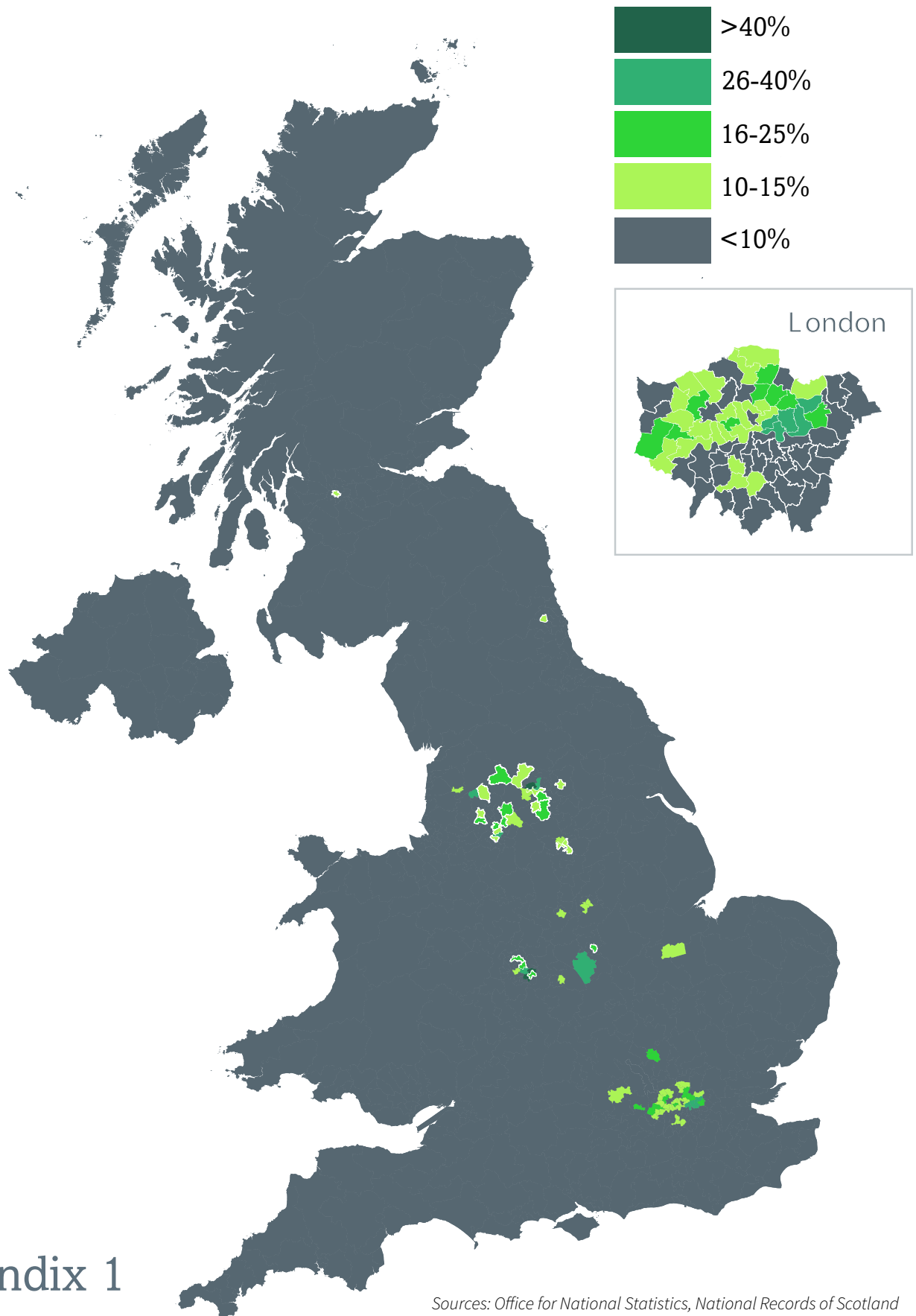
The UK's role as a force for good in the world is evident in the many policy interventions that have improved life chances and quality of life for people in other countries. The commitment to maintain 0.7% of GDP in foreign aid is an admirable contribution to alleviating poverty and need among the world's poorest peoples.

Commit to democracy and human rights promotion abroad, including the rights of religious minorities.

The rise of ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant) in the region covering Iraq and Syria is likely to continue to present a major threat to the UK for the foreseeable future. Figures on the numbers of young British and European Muslims lured to the area by means of social media and internet forums is a great concern, with Muslim parents seeking the help of law enforcement agencies to prevent their children from escaping on flights abroad.

The situation abroad and counter-terrorism efforts at home will again focus attention on British Muslims. In defeating those who, like ISIS, construct Muslims and the West as entities that are diametrically opposed, it is important to remember that the vast majority of law-abiding British Muslims are a vital asset in the struggle against terror.

Muslim population density by parliamentary constituency



Appendix 1

Sources: Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland

Top 20 parliamentary constituencies by Muslim population density

Constituency	Population	Muslim population	Muslim population density
Bradford West	116,556	58,872	50.5%
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	127,751	63,417	49.6%
Birmingham, Hall Green	118,546	53,990	49.6%
Blackburn	107,221	38,887	36.3%
Bradford East	116,943	42,056	36.0%
East Ham	158,283	56,008	35.4%
Ilford South	141,102	45,757	32.4%
Birmingham, Ladywood	138,025	44,626	32.3%
Bethnal Green and Bow	141,267	44,409	31.4%
Poplar and Limehouse	153,969	43,287	28.1%
Manchester, Gorton	116,889	32,010	27.4%
Leicester South	122,724	33,152	27.0%
Walthamstow	115,849	28,207	24.3%
West Ham	174,534	42,448	24.3%
Oldham West and Royton	105,833	25,220	23.8%
Luton South	118,448	27,874	23.5%
Rochdale	109,009	25,429	23.3%
Edmonton	118,834	27,488	23.1%
Slough	139,210	31,942	22.9%
Birmingham, Perry Barr	109,312	24,268	22.2%

Sources: Office for National Statistics, National Records of Scotland

1. Constituency population data is based on Office for National Statistics' Parliamentary Constituency Mid-Year Population Estimates for 2015
2. Muslim population figures are based on data from Office for National Statistics' Census 2011 outputs

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