



# Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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## Home Affairs

### House of Commons Written Answer

#### **Antisemitism: Higher Education**

**Lisa Cameron (SNP)** [69123] To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what policies the Government has in place to tackle antisemitism (a) on university campuses and (b) in the broader education system; and what steps the Government is taking with academic institutions to improve the safety of British Jewish students.

**Michelle Donelan:** There is no place in our society, including within our education system, for antisemitism. The government has acted over a number of years to send a clear message that antisemitism will not be tolerated in our schools, colleges, and higher education (HE) institutions.

The government's action on antisemitism in HE has included working closely with Universities UK (UUK), and the Office for Students (OfS) as sector regulator. UUK recently published a briefing on tackling antisemitism in HE, which includes recommending adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism. Adopting the widely recognised definition sends a strong signal that HE providers take these issues seriously and is an important tool in tackling antisemitism.

The former Secretary of State for Education wrote to the sector in October 2020, calling upon leaders to adopt the IHRA definition. He repeated this message in May 2021, reinforcing the government's expectation that providers adopt the IHRA definition, stressing the even greater importance of doing so in light of an increased number of antisemitic incidents recorded as a result of the conflict in the Middle East.

In addition, in his February 2021 strategic guidance letter, the former Secretary of State for Education asked the OfS to undertake a scoping exercise, to identify providers which are reluctant to adopt the definition. In response to this, on 10 November 2021 the OfS published a list of providers who have adopted the definition. I am pleased to report good progress in the last year: an increase from around 30 to over 200 providers having adopted the IHRA definition. This includes the vast majority of universities. The list is available [here](#):

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-wellbeing-and-protection/prevent-and-address-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/tackling-antisemitism/>

The decision on adoption of the definition rests with individual providers, but the government will continue to urge them to adopt the definition and ensure that HE is a genuinely fulfilling and welcoming experience for everyone.

The government is also committed to stamping out antisemitism in schools. On 28 May, the former Secretary of State for Education wrote to all schools to reiterate that pupils and staff must be kept safe, and there is absolutely no place for hate and prejudice. This intervention was a clear message that this government will not tolerate antisemitism in our schools and will act where necessary to tackle it.

The government has also continued to take action to support schools in this area, including providing over £3.5 million of funding to anti-bullying organisations like the Anne Frank Trust, between 2016 and 2021. We are currently running a procurement exercise to fund activity in 2021-22, to make sure that schools have the right support in place to prevent bullying.

Any form of antisemitism is abhorrent, and I will continue to work tirelessly to ensure it is eradicated from our world-leading education system.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-11-03/69123>

*The Briefing referred to above can be read at*

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/sites/default/files/field/downloads/2021-08/tackling-antisemitism-practical-guide.pdf>

*The Secretary of State's letters referred to above can be read at*

<https://twitter.com/GavinWilliamson/status/1314506646115278848>

and

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/48277145-4cf3-497f-b9b7-b13fdf16f46b/ofs-strategic-guidance-20210208.pdf>

and

<https://twitter.com/gavinwilliamson/status/1398374786871537664>

## Police Service of Northern Ireland

**Trends in Hate Motivated Incidents and Crimes Recorded by the Police in Northern Ireland 2004/05 to 2020/21**

<https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/2020-21/hate-motivated-incidents-and-crimes-in-northern-ireland-2004-05-to-2020-21.pdf>

**Data: Hate Motivations by month**

<https://www.psni.police.uk/inside-psni/Statistics/hate-motivation-statistics/>

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## Holocaust

### Claims Conference

**New Study Reveals U.K. Respondents Believe Two Million or Fewer Jews Were Killed in the Holocaust**

... The majority (52%) of all respondents did not know that six million Jews were murdered and 22% thought that two million or fewer Jews were killed during the Holocaust. Further, a majority of U.K. respondents (57%) believe that fewer people seem to care about the

Holocaust today than they used to, and 56% believe that something like the Holocaust could happen again today. ...

"We are very concerned to see the profound gaps in knowledge of the Holocaust in this and in previous studies including about events connected to the U.K. Yet, it is very powerful to see the overwhelming majority of U.K. respondents say the Holocaust should be taught in schools," said Gideon Taylor [President of the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany]. "Eighty-eight percent believe that it is important to continue to teach the Holocaust, in part, so it does not happen again. This is where we need to focus our energy. Education will not only fill the gaps in Holocaust knowledge, but it will also make for better, more empathetic citizens." ...

U.K. respondents were largely unaware of their government's willingness to accept Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Europe during the war. Sixty-seven percent of respondents wrongly believe that their government allowed all or some Jewish immigration, when in fact the British government shut the door to Jewish immigration at the outbreak of the war. ...

Professor Stuart Foster, Executive Director, UCL Centre for Holocaust Education and Taskforce member said, "The illuminating findings of the most recent Claims Conference study which focuses on Holocaust knowledge and awareness in the UK offer cause for concern and hope. It is troubling that knowledge levels among the British public on important issues such as Britain's response to the Holocaust are so low and the findings which relate to the rise of antisemitism, neo-Nazism and Holocaust denial and distortion are deeply disturbing. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that 88% of respondents agree the Holocaust should be taught in schools and 71% believe the government should support the development of educational resources to teach about the Holocaust. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://www.claimscon.org/uk-study/>

**UK Holocaust Awareness Survey**

<https://www.claimscon.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/UK-Exec-Summary-final.pdf>

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## Israel

### House of Lords Written Answer

#### Israel: Palestinians

**The Marquess of Lothian (Conservative)** [HL3531] To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Israel regarding settler violence against Palestinians and their property in October.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We condemn any incidence of violence by settlers against Palestinians. The UK regularly raises the issue of settler violence with the Government of Israel, most recently with Israel's Ministry of Defense on 19 October. We welcome the efforts of Israeli authorities to address settler violence, and urge them to investigate thoroughly every instance to bring those responsible to justice. We also continue to stress the importance of the Israeli security forces providing appropriate protection to the Palestinian civilian population, in particular the need to protect children, and urge restraint in the use of live fire.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-10-28/hl3531>

### Roadmap to peace in Palestine

<https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CDP-2021-0187/CDP-2021-0187.pdf>

## UN Office of the Special Co-ordinator for the Middle East Peace Process

### **UN report calls for coordinated response to address rapid deterioration in Palestinian economic and fiscal situation**

A newly published United Nations report highlights the urgency to address the continuing economic and fiscal crisis faced by the Palestinian Authority and Palestinian people. It urges a coordinated and integrated response to resolve this increasingly precarious situation. ...

The report describes the economic and fiscal situation in the OPT as dire. It notes a sharp decline in GDP per capita in 2020 that followed years of economic stagnation in the West Bank. In the Gaza Strip, the economy continues its multi-decade decline and there is persistently high unemployment, particularly among women.

Along with other longstanding fiscal leakages that are contributing to the crisis, Israel continues to deduct and hold a portion of the clearance revenues that Israel states is equivalent to the amount paid by the Palestinians to Palestinian prisoners, their families, or the families of those killed or injured in the context of attacks.

United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Tor Wennesland, stated that "It is increasingly difficult for the PA to cover its minimum expenditures, let alone make critical investments in the economy and the Palestinian people."

Given the severity of the crises endured so far in 2021, the report calls on the Government of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and the international community to work in concert on an integrated response in the coming months.

First, address the immediate economic and fiscal situation facing the PA ...

Second, solidify the cessation of hostilities that began on 21 May 2021 between Israel and militant groups in Gaza and support economic development in the Strip.

Third, to promote a sustainable and inclusive economic recovery ...

Special Coordinator Wennesland stressed that "short-term fixes, focused on stabilizing and managing recent crises are necessary, but not sufficient". He added that in order to move forward on key political questions and for progress on each of these tracks to be sustainable, policy changes from the parties are needed and governance and socioeconomic reforms should be undertaken. ...

**To read the full press release see**

<https://unsco.unmissions.org/un-report-calls-coordinated-response-address-rapid-deterioration-palestinian-economic-and-fiscal-0>

### **Report to the Ad-Hoc Liaison Committee: 17 November 2021**

[https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unsco\\_report\\_to\\_the\\_ahlc\\_-\\_17\\_november\\_2021.pdf](https://unsco.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unsco_report_to_the_ahlc_-_17_november_2021.pdf)

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## Relevant Legislation \*\* new or updated today

### UK Parliament

#### **\*\* Animal Welfare (Sentience) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2867>

Notice of Amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/43503/documents/905>

#### **\*\* Assisted Dying Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2875>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/43507/documents/951>

#### **\*\* Charities Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2877>

Notice of amendments

<https://bills.parliament.uk/publications/42273/documents/934>

#### **Education (Assemblies) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2878>

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

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

#### **Israel Arms Trade (Prohibition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3025>

#### **Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3017>

#### **Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2900>

#### **\*\* Nationality and Borders Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3023>

Notice of amendments

[https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0187/amend/natbord\\_rm\\_rep\\_1115.pdf](https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-02/0187/amend/natbord_rm_rep_1115.pdf)

#### **\*\* Online Safety Bill (Draft)**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/draft-online-safety-bill>

Evidence session, Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Sub-committee on Online Harms and Disinformation

<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/2983/html/>

#### **Palestine Statehood (Recognition) Bill**

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2942>

## Northern Ireland Assembly

### Organ and Tissue Donation (Deemed Consent) Bill

<http://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/2017-2022-mandate/primary-legislation---bills-2017---2022-mandate/organ-and-tissue-donation-deemed-consent-bill/>

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## Consultations

\*\* new or updated today

### Labelling for Animal Welfare (closing date 6 December 2021)

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/animal-welfare-market-interventions-and-labelling/labelling-for-animal-welfare/>

### Proposed Assisted Dying for Terminally ill Adults (Scotland) Bill (closing date 22 December 2021)

<https://www.parliament.scot/bills-and-laws/bills/proposals-for-bills/proposed-assisted-dying-for-terminally-ill-adults-scotland-bill>

### Animal Welfare – revision of EU legislation (Food Safety) (closing date 21 January 2022)

[https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation/public-consultation\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12950-Animal-welfare-revision-of-EU-legislation/public-consultation_en)

### Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Strategic Plan 2022-2025

(closing date not stated)

<https://nihrc.org/news/detail/we-want-to-hear-from-you-about-our-strategic-planning-2022-2025>

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