



## DEBATE PACK

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# Contribution of the Jewish community to the UK

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## Summary

A general debate sponsored by [Christian Matheson MP](#) on the contribution of the Jewish community to the UK will take place in Westminster Hall on Thursday 13 June 2019. This Debate Pack contains information on the Jewish community in the UK, including its history and some relevant statistics.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

# 1. Background

The [World Jewish Congress](#) estimates that the United Kingdom is home to more than 260,000 Jews, “making it the fifth largest Jewish population in the world, and the second largest in Europe after France”. That population is:

Diverse in terms of religious and cultural affiliation, as well as in socioeconomic terms, the British Jewish community contributes greatly to Britain’s national sense of self and features prominently in all aspects of public life, with a presence in high offices of the state, the civil service, the judiciary, and the armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

The main body of representation for the British Jewish community is the [Board of Deputies of British Jews](#) (BOD), the UK affiliate of the World Jewish Congress. The BOD describes itself as “the voice of the British Jewish Community” and the “first port of call for Government, the media and others seeking to understand Jewish Community interests and concerns”:

The work of the Board of Deputies reaches those in positions of influence in towns and cities across the UK including those who have little exposure to the Jewish community. It is through tools such as the innovative ‘Jewish Manifesto’ series that we have been able to extend our reach further than ever across the whole of the UK.

The [BOD website](#) says the organisation also works:

to combat antisemitism from wherever it emanates, express our community’s bond with the State of Israel, defend Jewish education and educate wider society about Judaism and build bridges through interfaith relations.

## 1.1 History of the Jewish community in the UK

The Board of Deputies of British Jews believes it is likely that the first Jews arrived in England/Britain with the Romans 2,000 years ago:

Despite the 12<sup>th</sup> Century pogroms in York and Lincoln, the first recorded blood libel in Norwich and the community’s expulsion from England in 1290, this has been a comparatively tolerant home for Jews over the millennia.

From their readmission to Britain in the mid-1600s through to the present day, Jews have played an increasing role in British society, producing many of the country’s most outstanding musicians, artists, politicians, scientists and businesspeople.<sup>2</sup>

The BOD website includes a [Jews in Britain timeline](#) with more historical information.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.worldjewishcongress.org/en/about/communities/GB%20%C2%A0>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.bod.org.uk/jewish-facts-info/jews-in-britain-timeline/>

## 2. Statistics

### 2.1 Population Size

The 2011 Census stated that the Jewish population of the UK numbered around 270,000 (0.4% of the population).<sup>3</sup> The religion question in the census was voluntary and a person's religion was self-defined. Please also see the House of Commons library [dashboard on religion](#) for constituency data from the 2011 Census.

The latest population figures can be obtained from the Labour Force Survey (LFS). LFS figures for quarter 4 in 2018 estimates the Jewish population of Great Britain to be roughly 302,000 (0.5% of the population).

POPULATION BY RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN GREAT BRITAIN			
	Population number		Population Percentage
Christian	31,540,618		48.0%
No Religion	26,119,936		39.7%
Muslim	3,178,765		4.8%
Not Stated	2,002,505		3.0%
Any Other Religion	1,007,777		1.5%
Hindu	987,038		1.5%
Sikh	398,004		0.6%
Jewish	301,637		0.5%
Buddhist	227,959		0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>65,775,167</b>		<b>100%</b>

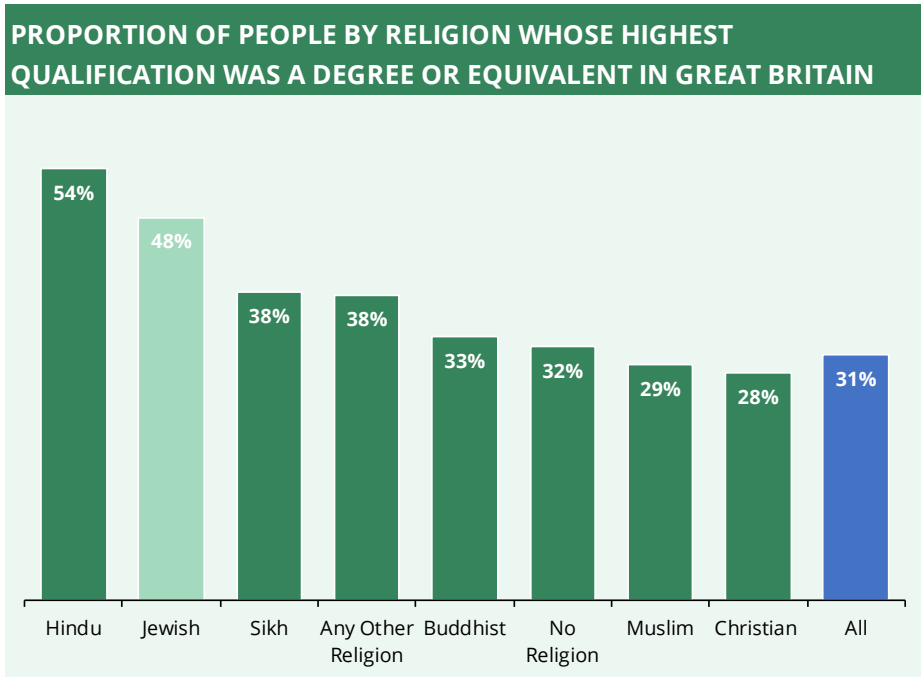
**Source:** Labour Force Survey, Q4 2018

Religious affiliation in the LFS is also self-defined in response to the question "what is your religion?" Data on religious affiliation is only available for Great Britain because the LFS question on religious affiliation is different in Northern Ireland and is therefore not comparable. The figures are also weighted from the survey data to give an estimate for the population in question. The estimates are based on a survey and are therefore subject to a margin of uncertainty.

### 2.2 Education and Employment

The LFS for Q4 in 2018 shows that 48% of Jews stated that their highest qualification was either a degree or equivalent, which was the second highest of all faith groups and compares with 31% of all people surveyed.

<sup>3</sup> ONS, 2011 Census: [Population estimates for the UK](#), Table 9



Source: Labour Force Survey, Q4 2018

[The Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) produces an annual report on the state of equality and human rights in Great Britain. The latest published report was for [2018](#) and reported regarding the Jewish population that:

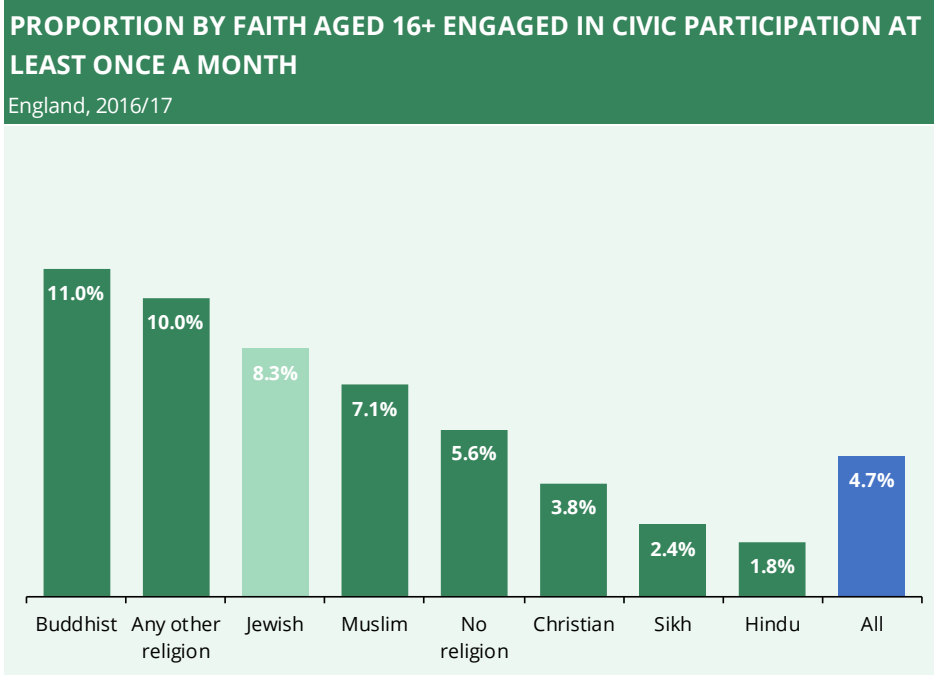
- The employment rate of Jewish people has increased from around 54% in 2010/11 to 63% in 2016/17.
- Jewish people had the highest median hourly earnings (£17.56) compared with those of no religion or any other religion.
- Jewish people (60%) were more likely to be employed in high pay occupations in 2016/17, than those of any other religion. Since 2010/11 the proportion of Jews in high pay occupations has increased from 51% in that year.

The supporting data for the report can be found [here](#).

## 2.3 The Community Life Survey

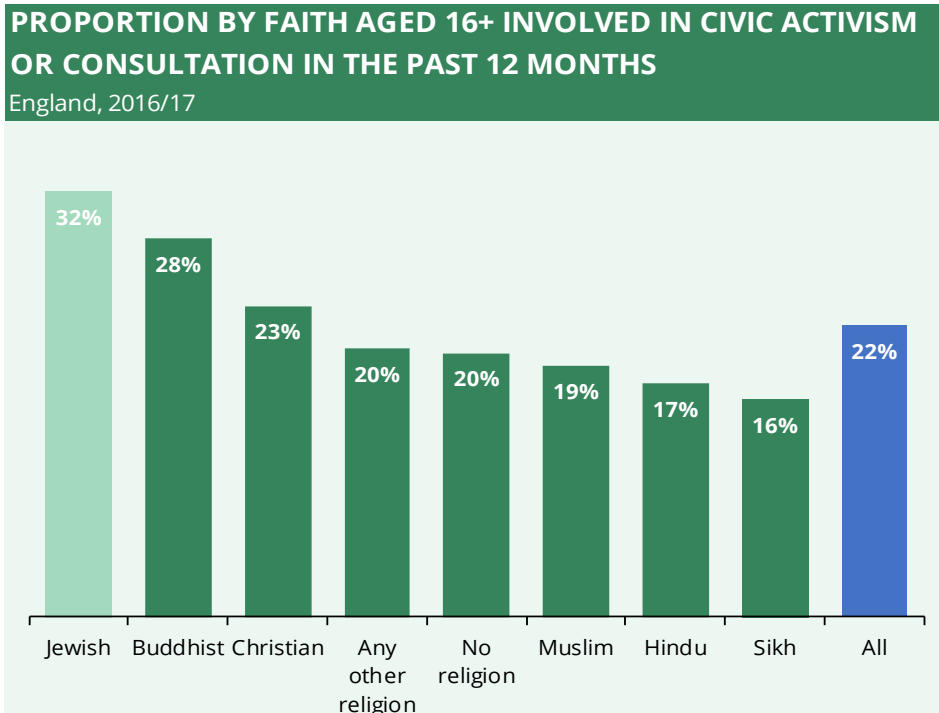
The [Community Life Survey](#) is a source for understanding community engagement, volunteering and social cohesion for adults aged 16 and over in England. The latest survey covers 2017-18. Figures by religion are available from the [UK Data Service](#) with the latest survey available with these figures being for 2016-17.

The survey provides figures on civic participation, that is to say – engagement in democratic processes, both in person and online, including signing a petition or attending a public rally but not including voting. The 2016/17 survey suggests that 8.3% of Jews engaged in such activities at least once a month in the year of the survey. This was the third highest figure for all faiths.



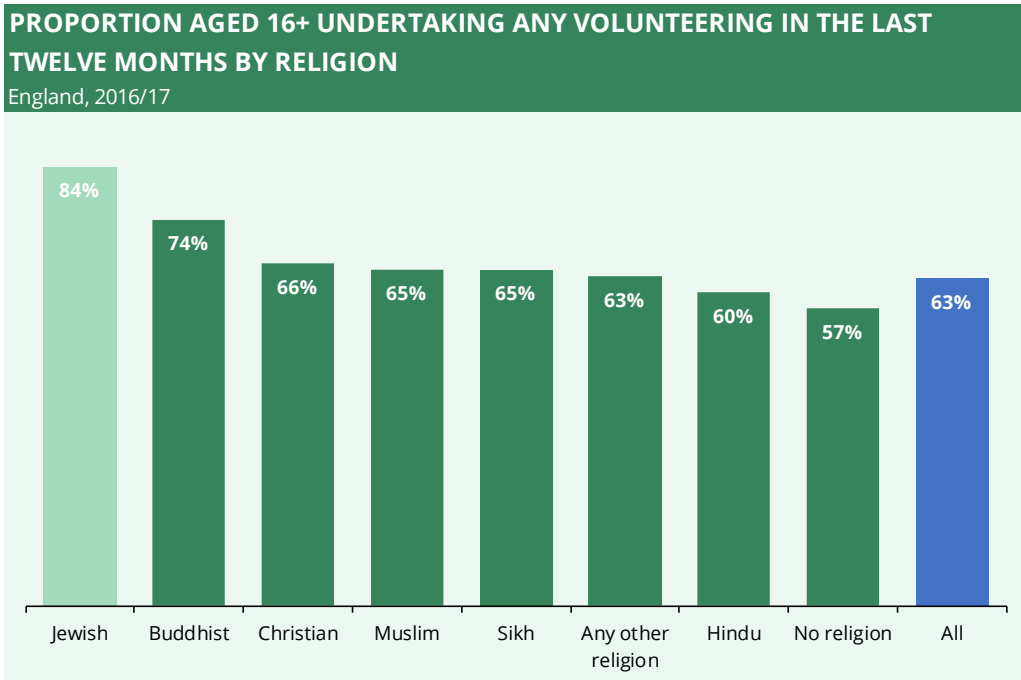
**Source:** Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2017). *Community Life Survey, 2016-2017*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8294, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8294-1>

Concerning civic activism or consultation, that is to say taking part in consultations and involvement in decision-making about local services, both in person and online, the Jewish population had the highest proportion (32%) to have done so of any faith in the 12 months prior to the survey.



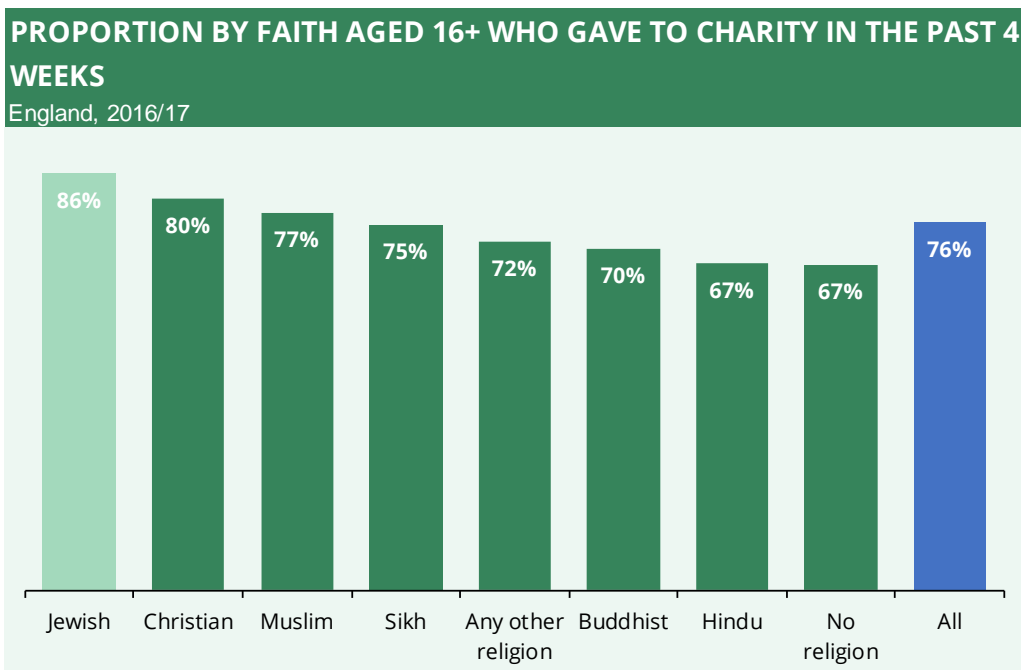
**Source:** Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2017). *Community Life Survey, 2016-2017*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8294, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8294-1>

Regarding volunteering, 84% of Jews stated that they had undertaken some form of volunteering in the past 12 months prior to the survey. This was the highest proportion of any faith.



**Source:** Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2017). *Community Life Survey, 2016-2017*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8294, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8294-1>

In terms of charitable donations, 86% of Jews stated that they had given to charity in the 4 weeks prior to the survey. This was also the highest proportion of any religion.



**Source:** Department for Culture, Media and Sport. (2017). *Community Life Survey, 2016-2017*. [data collection]. UK Data Service. SN: 8294, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8294-1>.

## 2.4 Jewish Charities

A 2016 [report](#) by New Philanthropy Capital on registered faith-based charities indicated that of 43,352 faith-based charities, 2,147 (5%) were Jewish. Faith-based charities had a combined income of £16.3 billion of which Jewish charities accounted for around 6% (£1 billion).

<b>INCOME AND NUMBER OF FAITH-BASED CHARITIES</b>				
By religion, England, YE 31 March 2012/13-2014/15				
Religion	Income (£million)		Number	
Christian	68.6%	11,209	63.5%	27,535
Generally faith-based	20.0%	3,270	23.8%	10,310
Jewish	6.2%	1,012	5.0%	2,147
Muslim	3.3%	542	4.7%	2,054
Quaker	0.6%	104	0.4%	158
Hindu	0.5%	83	1.1%	459
Sikh	0.4%	61	0.7%	320
Buddhist	0.3%	48	0.7%	312
Multi-faith	0.0%	8	0.1%	57
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>16,337</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43,352</b>

\* The total number of faith-based charities excludes 1,633 'inactive' faith-based charities, bringing the total from 44,985 to 43,352

\*\* Income based on the most recent figures available. These figures cover the last three full tax years from 31 March 2013.

**Source:** NPC, [Faith Matters](#), June 2016, p 4

## 3. Parliamentary material

### 3.1 Written question

#### Antisemitism

**The Marquess of Lothian:** To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report by the Community Security Trust *Antisemitic Incidents* which reported an increase in antisemitic incidents in 2016, what action they are taking (1) to protect the UK Jewish community, and (2) to promote a culture of tolerance and inclusion.

**Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth | Department for Communities and Local Government:** The Government takes the security of the Jewish community in the United Kingdom very seriously and recently announced a £13.4 million contribution for 2017/18 to the Community Security Trust. The Trust provides security guards and protection to independent and state Jewish schools, nurseries, synagogues and community sites.

Our cross-government working group to tackle anti-Semitism ensures that we are alive to any new issues and concerns the Jewish community might have and that we can respond quickly and effectively. In December 2016, the United Kingdom became the first European Union country to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism. We recently published a progress report on our efforts to tackle anti-Semitism (attached) which can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anti-semitism-update> The Government's Hate Crime Action Plan and integration programme set out our actions to prevent hate crime and promote cohesion more broadly.

13 Mar 2017 | Written questions | Answered | House of Lords | HL5760

### 3.2 Oral statement

#### Places of Worship: Security Funding

**HC Deb 7 May 2019 cc468-478**

#### **The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sajid**

**Javid):** Mr Speaker, allow me to update the House on some of the work that is under way to protect our religious freedom. First, I have increased the places of worship protective security fund to £1.6 million for 2019-20—double the amount awarded last year. Expressions of interest are now open for the next round of the fund, which will open in July. Since the scheme launched in 2016, more than £1.5 million has been awarded, with 63 grants to churches, 49 to mosques, five to Hindu temples and 16 to gurdwaras. They have paid for security equipment such as CCTV, security lighting, new locks or fences. Many more places of worship will now benefit after we made it even easier to apply this year, by removing the need to find multiple quotes and contractors. A separate £14 million grant also provides security for Jewish schools and synagogues against terror attacks. [Extract]



### 3.3 Written statement

#### Race and Faith Policy

**HCWS345**

**Sajid Javid (Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government):**

Today, I am pleased to inform the House that the UK Government is the first European Union country to formally adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance working definition of anti-Semitism. The Government believes that the definition, although legally non-binding, is an important tool for criminal justice agencies, and other public bodies to understand how anti-Semitism manifests itself in the 21st century, as it gives examples of the kind of behaviours which depending on the circumstances could constitute anti-Semitism. It will be for public bodies and agencies to implement the definition and embed it within operational guidance as relevant.

In addition, the Government has published its response to the Home Affairs Select Committee's report on anti-Semitism, and provided a progress update to the All-Party Parliamentary Group against Anti-Semitism Inquiry into the rise in the number of anti-Semitic incidents following the Gaza conflict in 2014.

Our response to both reports demonstrates the significant progress we have made in combating anti-Semitism which has been acknowledged by the Home Affairs Select Committee and the All-Party Parliamentary Group against Anti-Semitism. Our approach has also been cited as best practice across Europe and the Americas.

However, we cannot be complacent. Anti-Semitism continues to be a problem in this country and it is right that, as a Government, we are able to demonstrate the seriousness with which we take it, as we do for other forms of hate crime. Anti-Semitism must be understood for what it is – an attack on the identity of people who live, contribute and are valued in our society. Our relationship with the Jewish community has been built on the solid work of the cross-Government working group on tackling anti-Semitism, which ensures that we are alive to any issues and concerns of the Jewish community and can respond quickly.

The adoption of the definition and our positive response to both reports underlines how the Government have done much to establish Britain as a safer place for Jewish people.

## 4. Further reading

Commons Library Briefing paper, [\*Preparing for the 2021 census \(England and Wales\)\*](#), 10 May 2019

Jewish News, [D-Day: The Jewish contribution to the largest seaborne invasion in history](#), 5 June 2019

While many know D-Day was an intelligence triumph, experts say few appreciate the Jewish community's input to the key turning point in the Second World War

Jewish Medical Association, [\*Review of Jewish Contribution to Medicine in the UK: 350th Anniversary\*](#)

Article by Prof. David Katz for the 350th Anniversary of the Resettlement of Jews booklet.

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