

## Debate Pack

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# The definition of Islamophobia

<b>1</b>	<b>Background</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Definition of Islamophobia</b>	<b>4</b>
	Runnymede Trust Definition	4
	All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims Inquiry Definition	5
	Other definitions	7
<b>3</b>	<b>Islamophobia and the law</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1	Hate crime policy and legislation	8
	Stirring up hatred	8
	Aggravated offences	9
	Enhanced sentencing	9
3.2	Online abuse	10
<b>4</b>	<b>Religious Hate crime statistics</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Press Articles</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Parliamentary Material</b>	<b>18</b>



# 1

## Background

A debate on the definition of Islamophobia will take place in Westminster Hall on Thursday 9 September 2021 at 3pm. This debate will be led by Paul Bristow MP and Naz Shah MP.

The debate will take place on the motion that: This House has considered the definition of Islamophobia.

This debate pack contains information on definitions of Islamophobia, statutory provisions relevant to Islamophobia and statistics on Islamophobia in the UK.

## 2

# Definition of Islamophobia

In October 2017, Baroness Warsi (Conservative), in an oral question in the House of Lords, asked the Government whether it had a definition of Islamophobia. Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth, then Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Communities and Local Government, replied that the Government was committed to eradicating religious hatred and intolerance. However, regarding a definition, Lord Bourne stated:

The Government do not currently endorse a particular definition of Islamophobia. Previous attempts by others to define this term have not succeeded in attracting consensus or widespread acceptance.<sup>1</sup>

Various organisations and commentators have argued that an agreed definition would aid initiatives to tackle Islamophobia. Consequently, the Government has been urged to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia, in the same way the Government adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of antisemitism in December 2016.<sup>2</sup>

## Runnymede Trust Definition

In 1997, the race equality think tank, the [Runnymede Trust](#), published the report *Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All*, which is credited with introducing the term “Islamophobia” to public policy discourse in the UK.<sup>3</sup> The report provided the following definition of Islamophobia, along with a summary of criticisms of the term:

Islamophobia refers to unfounded hostility towards Islam. It refers also to the practical consequences of such hostility in unfair discrimination against Muslim individuals and communities, and to the exclusion of Muslims from mainstream political and social affairs. The term is not, admittedly, ideal. Critics of it consider that its use panders to what they call political correctness, that it stifles legitimate criticism of Islam, and that it demonises and stigmatises anyone who wishes to engage in such criticism.<sup>4</sup>

In November 2017, to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the report’s publication, the Runnymede Trust published an updated report, *Islamophobia: Still a Challenge for Us All*. The report claimed that in the intervening 20 years “anti-Muslim prejudice has grown further and wider”.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [HL Hansard, 17 October 2017, col 486](#)

<sup>2</sup> Prime Minister’s Office, ‘[Government Leads the Way in Tackling Anti-Semitism](#)’, 12 December 2016.

<sup>3</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, [Islamophobia Defined: The Inquiry into a Working Definition of Islamophobia](#), 2018, p 23.

<sup>4</sup> Runnymede Trust, [Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All](#), 1997, p4.

<sup>5</sup> Runnymede Trust, [Islamophobia: Still a Challenge for Us All](#), November 2017, p5.

The report offered three explanations for the increase in anti-Muslim prejudice. First, an increase in terrorist incidents domestically and internationally since 2001 had contributed to a culture in which “the fear and threat of terrorism can be inflated by Islamophobia, and that Islamophobia can increase in the wake of terrorist attacks”.<sup>6</sup> Second, compared with 20 years ago, “British Muslims are a larger, better-organized and more settled community”.<sup>7</sup> Third, there is now more data about British Muslims; “their population, distribution, attitudes and outcomes, in the labour market, education, housing and health”.<sup>8</sup>

In the foreword to the 2017 report, Baroness Warsi claimed that to challenge Islamophobia “the starting point must surely be a definition, a mechanism that leads to accountability”.<sup>9</sup> The report recommended that the Government should adopt its updated definition of Islamophobia.<sup>10</sup> The report provided both a short definition – “Islamophobia is anti-Muslim racism” – and a longer definition:

Islamophobia is any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.<sup>11</sup>

## All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims Inquiry Definition

Prompted by the Government’s reluctance to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia, the [All Party Parliamentary Group \(APPG\) on British Muslims](#) established an inquiry into a working definition of Islamophobia in April 2018.<sup>12</sup> The APPG claimed that “no amount of documentation of the evidence of discriminatory outcomes faced by Muslims [...] can satisfy our desire to reverse these results if we cannot begin from the point of an agreed definition”.<sup>13</sup>

Following a “widespread consultation with academics, lawyers [and] Muslim organisations”, it recommended the adoption of the following definition:

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p v.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p2.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., p1.

<sup>12</sup> All Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims, [Islamophobia Defined: The Inquiry into a Working Definition of Islamophobia](#), 2018, p10.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p9.

Islamophobia is rooted in racism and is a type of racism that targets expressions of Muslimness or perceived Muslimness.<sup>14</sup>

The definition was supported by a range of Muslim organisations, including the [Muslim Council of Britain](#) (MCB). The MCB's general secretary, Harun Khan, stated:

Muslim organisations from different parts of the country and different backgrounds have come together to make a resounding call on our political leaders to adopt this definition. We hope that they all understand the importance of listening to communities, and look forward to their positive response.<sup>15</sup>

However, the APPG report has also faced criticism. Andrew Gilligan, writing in the *Spectator*, criticised the report's proposed set of tests for ascertaining whether "contentious speech is indeed reasonable criticism or Islamophobia masquerading as 'legitimate criticism'".<sup>16</sup> He claimed that some of the tests—such as whether the speaker sincerely cares about the issue in question or is simply using it to attack Muslims—were so broad that they could be difficult to police.<sup>17</sup>

The APPG report has also been criticised by the [National Secular Society](#) (NSS), one of the organisations that submitted evidence to the inquiry. In a letter to the Home Secretary, Sajid Javid, urging the Government not to adopt the definition, the NSS described it as "vague and unworkable" and that it "conflates hatred of, and discrimination against, Muslims with criticism of Islam".<sup>18</sup>

Subsequently, in December 2018, the Government was asked, in a written parliamentary question in the House of Lords, about the definition of Islamophobia and whether it:

Consider[ed] Islamophobia to be a form of racism; and if so, whether they will adopt a definition of Islamophobia comparable to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism.<sup>19</sup>

In reply, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth stressed that the Government took Islamophobia very seriously and that it was committed to tackling all hate

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p11.

<sup>15</sup> Muslim Council of Britain, '[British Muslim Organisations Rally for Proposed Definition of Islamophobia](#)', 2 December 2018.

<sup>16</sup> Andrew Gilligan, '[The Danger of the 'Islamophobia' Label](#)', *Spectator*, 8 December 2018.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> National Secular Society, '[Home Secretary Urged Not to Adopt Definition of 'Islamophobia'](#)', 9 December 2018.

<sup>19</sup> House of Lords, '[Written Question: Religious Hatred: Islam](#)', 10 December 2018, HL11998.

crime. He stated, “it is now of vital importance that we hear a range of views on the proposed definition”.<sup>20</sup>

For further information, see Lords Library Note LLN-2018-0142, [Islamophobia in the UK](#), which was published on 14 December 2018.

## Other definitions

In 2005, the [Council of Europe](#) said Islamophobia was the:

fear of or prejudiced viewpoint towards Islam, Muslims and matters pertaining to them [taking] the shape of daily forms of racism and discrimination or more violent forms, Islamophobia is a violation of human rights.<sup>21</sup>

A section of the 2016 definition offered by the [Foundation for Political, Economic and Social Research](#) stated that:

Islamophobia operates by constructing a static ‘Muslim’ identity, which is attributed in negative terms and generalized for all Muslims.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> <http://eumuslim.net/2010/05/19/political-exploitation-of-islamophobia-in-post-communist-albania/>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/call-for-reports/2016-2/>

## 3 Islamophobia and the law

There is no specific law prohibiting Islamophobia. However, anti-Islam activity might be covered by more general legislation on hate crime, online abuse, and equalities.

### 3.1 Hate crime policy and legislation

There are three different ways that legislation deals with hate crime motivated on the grounds of race or religion: offences of stirring up hatred; aggravated forms of certain “basic” criminal offences; and enhanced sentencing for offences motivated by hate.

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) guidance notes that case law has “concluded that persons associated by their religious beliefs may also be part of a racial group”, and that prosecutors should “consider on the facts of each case if the aggravating feature arises from hostility towards a religious belief or a racial group (or a combination of both)”.<sup>23</sup>

See the following CPS publications for full details of the offences described below:

- [Racist and Religious Hate Crime - Prosecution Guidance](#)
- [Public statement on prosecuting racist and religious hate crime](#)

The Law Commission is currently conducting a review of the existing legislation on hate crime. An overview can be accessed on the [Hate Crime project page](#) of the Law Commission’s website. The Law Commission is currently analysing consultation responses and developing policy recommendations. It hopes to publish a final report later this year.

#### Stirring up hatred

[Part III of the Public Order Act 1986](#) criminalises certain acts that are intended to stir up racial hatred. [Part IIIA of the 1986 Act](#) makes similar provision for certain acts intended to stir up religious hatred.<sup>24</sup>

Racial hatred is defined as “hatred against a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality (including citizenship) or ethnic or national origins”. Religious hatred is defined as “hatred against a group of persons defined by reference to religious belief or lack of religious belief”.

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<sup>23</sup> CPS, [Racist and Religious Hate Crime - Prosecution Guidance](#), last updated October 2020

<sup>24</sup> Part IIIA also covers conduct intended to stir up hatred on the grounds of sexual orientation

The acts covered by the 1986 Act include:

- the use of words or behaviour, or the display or written material;
- the publication or distribution of written material;
- the public performance of a play;
- the distribution, showing or playing of a recording of images or sounds;
- the broadcasting or a programme including images or sounds; and
- the possession of inflammatory material.

There is a “freedom of expression” defence to the religious hatred offences (but not for the racial hatred offences). The defence states that nothing in Part IIIA

shall be read or given effect in a way which prohibits or restricts discussion, criticism or expressions of antipathy, dislike, ridicule, insult or abuse of particular religions or the beliefs or practices of their adherents, or of any other belief system or the beliefs or practices of its adherents, or proselytising or urging adherents of a different religion or belief system to cease practising their religion or belief system.<sup>25</sup>

## Aggravated offences

Under the [Crime and Disorder Act 1998](#), perpetrators of specified “basic” criminal offences can be charged with an aggravated form of the offence (carrying a longer maximum sentence) if they demonstrated or were motivated by hostility on the basis of race or religion.

The specified offences covered by the 1998 Act include assault, criminal damage, public order offences, harassment and stalking. The CPS says that “monitoring had indicated that these were the most common types of crime experienced by the victims of racially and religiously aggravated violence or harassment”.<sup>26</sup>

## Enhanced sentencing

[Section 66 of the Sentencing Act 2020](#) applies when the court is sentencing an offender for an offence other than one of the aggravated offences under the 1998 Act. Section 66 requires the court to consider whether the offence was racially or religiously aggravated. If so, the court must treat that as an aggravating factor for sentencing purposes and must state in open court that the offence was so aggravated.

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<sup>25</sup> Section 29J of the 1986 Act

<sup>26</sup> CPS, [Public statement on prosecuting racist and religious hate crime](#), August 2017, p2

## 3.2

### Online abuse

There are several general criminal offences that could be used to prosecute online Islamophobia. The most relevant are the following:

- [section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988](#), which makes it an offence to send indecent, grossly offensive, threatening or false electronic communications if the purpose (or one of the purposes) of the sender is to cause the recipient distress or anxiety.
- [section 127 of the Communications Act 2003](#), which makes it an offence to use a public electronic communications network to send a message (or other matter) that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or to send a false message "for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to another".
- harassment or stalking offences under [sections 2, 2A, 4 or 4A of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997](#).

The CPS has published guidance on the use of these offences (and others) to prosecute social media communications: see [Legal guidance: Social Media: Guidelines on prosecuting cases involving communications sent via social media](#).

When sentencing for such offences in the context of Islamophobic online abuse, the courts could make use of the enhanced sentencing regime under section 66 of the Sentencing Act 2020 as set out above.

In February 2018 Theresa May's Government asked the Law Commission to "review the laws around offensive communications and assess whether they provide the right protection to victims online". The [Reform of the Communications Offences project page](#) on the Law Commission's provides full details of the project's progress to date.

The Law Commission published the conclusions of its review and its recommendations on 21 July 2021:

- [Modernising Communications Offences: A final report](#)
- [Summary of Modernising Communications Offences](#)

It has recommended a new "harm-based" communications offence to replace the offences within section 127(1) of the Communications Act 2003 ("CA 2003") and the Malicious Communications Act 1988 ("MCA 1988"), and new offences of sending knowingly false communications, threatening communications, and making hoax calls to the emergency services, to replace section 127(2) of the CA 2003.

The Government has said it is “carefully considering” the Law Commission’s recommendations and “may use the [Online Safety Bill](#) to bring them into law, where it is necessary and appropriate to do so”.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> HM Government, [Tackling violence against women and girls strategy](#), July 2021, p71

## 4

## Religious Hate crime statistics

Police Recorded Crime figures on the number religious hate crimes that were Islamophobic, anti-Semitic or relate to other faiths are provided in the Home Office's [Hate Crime Statistics 2019/20](#). The recording of religious hate crime is based on the perceived religious target of the offender. In some cases, more than one religion will be targeted, and in others the actual targeted religion will differ from the intended one.

The latest data for 2019/20 shows that 50% of religious hate crimes recorded by the police were against Muslims. 19% were anti-Jewish in nature; 9% were anti-Christian with 13% of offences being recorded as "unknown".

**Around 50% of religious hate crimes recorded by police in 2019/20 were Islamophobic** <sup>a,b,c,d</sup>

	Number of offences	Percentage
Muslim	3,089	49.8%
Jewish	1,205	19.4%
Unknown	823	13.3%
Other	432	7.0%
Christian	531	8.6%
No religion	70	1.1%
Sikh	202	3.3%
Hindu	114	1.8%
Buddhist	21	0.3%
Total number of targeted religions <sup>b</sup>	6,487	
<b>Total number of offences</b>	<b>6,203</b>	

Notes:

a) Data for religious hate crimes where targeted religion has been recorded by the police

b) In some offences more than one religion has been recorded as being targeted.

c) . Nottinghamshire were unable to provide perceived religion data for 2019/20 therefore are excluded from this table.

d) Data for Greater Manchester Police (GMP) have not been included in this release because of issues with their data supply following the implementation of new force IT systems.

Source: Home Office, Hate Crime, England and Wales 2019/20 Data Tables, Table B1

The Crime Survey of England and Wales ([CSEW](#)) provides data on the proportion of adults by ethnicity and religion who have been the victims of religiously motivated hate crime. The proportion of all adults that have been victims of religiously motivated hate crime in the 2017/18 to 2019/20 combined

dataset is 0.1%. This has remained unchanged from the 2007/08 and 2008/09 combined dataset.

Muslims in the 2017/18 to 2019/20 combined dataset were most likely to be the victims of religion motivated hate crime with 0.8% of Muslims claiming to have been the victims of such attacks. Hindus formed the second most likely religion to have been victims of religiously motivated hate crime (0.3%).

Percentage <sup>a</sup> of adults aged 16 and over who victims of religion-motivated hate crime, by ethnicity and religion England and Wales					
	2007/08 & 2008/09	2009/10 to 2011/12	2012/13 to 2014/15	2015/16 to 2017/18	2017/18 to 2019/20
<b>Ethnic group<sup>b</sup></b>					
White	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	0.8	0.1	0.6	0.1	-
Asian/Asian British	0.8	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.5
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.2
Other ethnic group	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.5	0.7
<b>Religion</b>					
Christian	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Buddhist	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.4	-
Hindu	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.5	0.3
Muslim	1.0	1.2	0.8	0.8	0.8
Other	0.4	0.6	0.5	0.2	-
No religion	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>All Adults</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>

Notes:

(-) A reliable estimate cannot be produced due to small numbers in the survey

a) This percentage is calculated treating a household crime as a personal crime.

b) Ethnic group is based on the 2011 Census definition of ethnic group which now includes Chinese in the Asian/Asian British group.

Source: Home Office, [Hate Crime, England and Wales 2019/20 Appendix Tables](#), Table 16, 13 October 2020

The [Metropolitan Police](#) Service (MPS) and [MOPAC](#) produce statistics on Islamophobic, anti-Semitic and faith hate crimes in London. Further statistics are available from Freedom of Information requests or are recorded by [Tell MAMA](#) concerning Islamophobia.

It should be noted that a substantial proportion of hate crimes described as Islamophobic are directed at non-Muslims mistaken for Muslims. For instance, an FOI request to the MPS disclosed that in 2016, 7% of victims of

Islamophobic hate crimes were non-Muslims, while 19% were of unknown faith or had not been contacted to determine their faith.<sup>28</sup>

### Islamophobia

[Tell Mama \(Measuring Anti-Muslim Attacks\)](#) records incidents of Islamophobia as well as providing support to its victims. The organisation takes and records reports from victims or witnesses of anti-Muslim incidents and crime as well as incidents of online Islamophobic abuse within and originating from the UK. As with police recorded figures there is likely to be a gap between the number of crimes reported to Tell Mama and the actual number.<sup>29</sup>

The key findings of Tell Mama's most recent [2019 interim report](#) regarding Islamophobic incidents covering the period from January to June 2019 were:

- 705 reports were reported to Tell MAMA, of which 529 were verified by Tell Mama staff.
- 20 police forces across the UK recorded 1,213 anti-Muslim incidents of which 1,028 (85%) occurred offline, 91 occurred online and in 94 cases the nature of the incident was undisclosed.
- In the week after the Christchurch terror attacks of March 2019, the number of incidents recorded by Tell MAMA increased by 692% from 12 to 95
- Of the online incidents recorded in the period in question, 35% occurred in March
- Abusive behaviour increased from 25 incidents in February to 41 in March, an increase of 64%. From February to March, incidents of threatening behaviour increased by 225% and incidents of vandalism increased by 163%. Of the 21 incidents of vandalism in March 2019, 10 targeted mosques or madrasas.
- The number on anti-Muslim incidents that took place in public areas increased from 12 in February 2019 to 35 in March 2019 a 192% increase). The number of attacks targeting mosques and Islamic institutions increased from 3 in February 2019 to 16 in March an increase of 433%. In April 2019 there were 5 such incidents, a 69% decrease on the following month.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> FOI request to MPS, [Victims of Islamophobic Hate Crime by Muslim/Non Muslim-recorded between 01/01/2016 and 31/12/2016](#)

<sup>24</sup> Tell Mama, Normalising Hatred, [2018 Annual Report](#), p.21

<sup>30</sup> Tell Mama, The Impact of the Christchurch Terror Attack, [Tell Mama Interim Report 2019](#), p.5

In 2017, based on responses from 42 of the 45 police Forces in the UK regarding the number of Islamophobic hate crimes directed at mosques, the Press Association suggests that:

- Hate crimes targeting mosques and other Islamic places of worship across the UK more than doubled between 2016 and 2017;
- 110 hate crimes targeted mosques between March and July 2017, up from just 47 over the same period in 2016
- 25 forces saw a year-on-year increase in hate crimes targeting mosques, the biggest rise reported was by Greater Manchester Police (9 crimes, up from 0) and London's MPS (17 crimes, up from 8).
- Threats, harassment or other intimidating behaviour more than tripled, from 14 crimes in 2016 to 49 in 2017.
- Violent crime against individuals more than doubled from 5 recorded crimes against worshippers at mosques in 2016 to 11 crimes in 2017.
- Crimes recorded as vandalism or criminal damage increased from 12 in 2016 to 15 in 2017.<sup>31</sup>

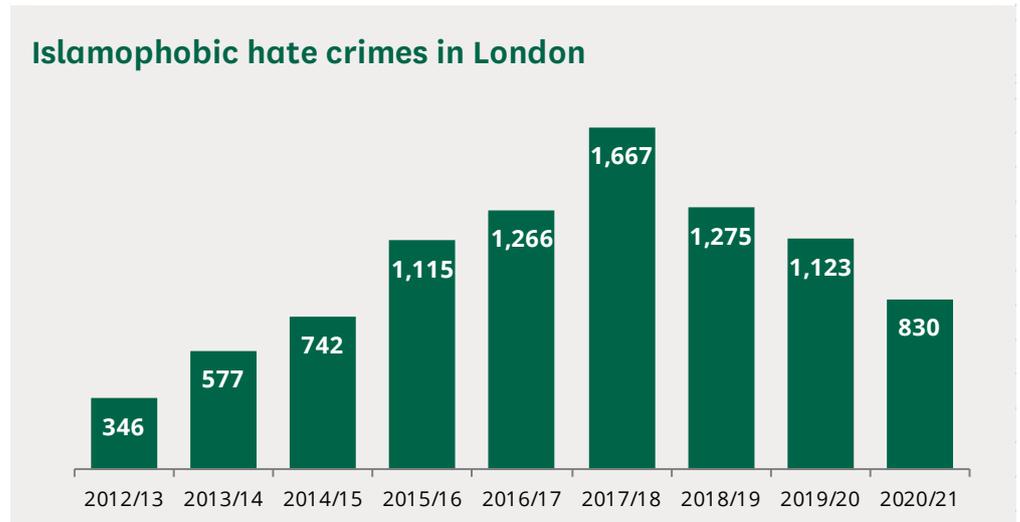
### Islamophobia in London

According to Labour Force Survey figures, at the end of 2019, around 36% of the Muslim population in Great Britain lived in London.<sup>32</sup> Data from the MPS shows that the number of Islamophobic hate crime incidents in London has increased by 140% since 2012/13. The increase in police recorded figures in London can be partly attributed to improved recording by the police. However, since the highest number of Islamophobic hate crimes recorded in London occurred in 2017/18 (1,667) coinciding with terrorist attacks in London and Manchester in that year, there has been a year on year decline in the number of Islamophobic hate crime incidents recorded which have fallen by 50%. In 2020/21, there was a 26% decrease on the previous year in the number of Islamophobic hate crimes recorded by the police in London.

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<sup>31</sup> Huffington Post, [Hate Crimes targeting Mosques in UK More than Double in A Year](#), 9 October 2017. The figures are likely to be incomplete and polices forces differ in how they record their statistics.

<sup>32</sup> Quarterly Labour Force Survey, October-December 2019



Source: MPS, [Hate Crime or Special Crime Dashboard](#) Accessed 8 September 2021

Commons Library Briefing paper CBP-8537, [Hate Crime Statistics](#), 10 December 2020, includes more context and data.

## 5

# Press Articles

[UK should recognise Islamophobia as a crime: Victim's daughter](#)

**Aljazeera | 6 April 2021**

On the night of April 29, 2013, Mohammed Saleem, a retired grandfather, was walking home from prayers at his local mosque in Small Heath, a Birmingham suburb.

[Defining Islamophobia: Comprehensive report amplifies what it is, what it isn't and why it matters](#)

**Muslim Council of Britain | 02 March 2021**

A new report by the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) provides the most comprehensive analysis yet of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia.

First put forward in 2019, the proposed definition has since become the preeminent reference point for Islamophobia in the UK today.

[Defining Islamophobia Is the First Step Toward Addressing It](#)

**Foreign Policy | 29 January 2021**

Over the last few years, the United Kingdom has seen Islamophobia rise at a disturbing rate. In 2011, Sayeeda Warsi, a former chairman of the Conservative Party and one of the country's leading Muslim politicians, raised alarm bells when she claimed that anti-Muslim racism had become so normalized that it had "passed the dinner table test." Unfortunately for her and the wider British Muslim community, things have gone from bad to worse.

[London Met becomes first UK University to adopt APPG working definition of Islamophobia](#)

**London Metropolitan University | 26 November 2020**

London Met has become the first UK university to adopt the working definition of Islamophobia as developed by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims.

Professor Lynn Dobbs, Vice Chancellor of London Met, said, "I am very proud that the University has today voted to adopt this definition. By doing so we are making a commitment to tackling Islamophobia and creating conditions within our community that deliver equity for all."

## 6

# Parliamentary Material

### [Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

10 June 2021 | 11572

**Asked by:** Reed, Steve

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether his Department holds data on how many and what proportion of local authorities in England have adopted the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims' definition of Islamophobia.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The definition proposed by the APPG on British Muslims is not in line with the Equality Act 2010 and would have severe consequences for freedom of speech, which is why the Government does not accept it or hold data on its adoption.

Government does not, and will not, tolerate anti-Muslim hatred in any form and will continue to combat such discrimination and intolerance wherever it occurs.

### [Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

05 Nov 2020 | 110240

**Asked by:** Khan, Afzal

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 2 November 2020 to Question 107103 on Religious Hatred: Islam, what steps the Government has taken to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia to help tackle that issue.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

This Government is committed to fighting any discrimination and intolerance faced by Muslim communities and we are working to develop a definition of anti-Muslim hatred.

[Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

02 Mar 2020 | HL2044

**Asked by:** Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made in respect of their commitment to publish a definition of Islamophobia.

**Answering member:** The Earl of Courtown | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

This Government remains committed to stamping out anti-Muslim hatred and all forms of hate crime. It is unacceptable for anyone to feel unsafe while practicing their religion and we continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to Islamophobia.

The definition proposed by the APPG is not in line with the Equality Act 2010 and could have consequences for freedom of speech. We recognise the importance of this matter and will interrogate the issue in further detail.

[Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

02 Mar 2020 | 20509

**Asked by:** Shah, Naz

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to his Department's press release of 23 July 2019, when the additional independent adviser on Islamophobia will be appointed; and whether terms of reference will be provided for those advisers.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

This Government remains committed to stamping out anti-Muslim hatred and all forms of hate crime. It is unacceptable for anyone to feel unsafe while practising their religion and we continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to Islamophobia.

The definition of Islamophobia proposed by the APPG is not in line with the Equality Act 2010 and could have consequences for freedom of speech. We recognise the importance of this matter and will interrogate it in further detail.

### Religious Hatred

13 Feb 2020 | 14833

**Asked by:** Shah, Naz

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what funding his Department allocates to the Government adviser on (a) Antisemitism and (b) Islamophobia; and how many members of staff does each adviser have to support their work.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

John Mann was appointed as an independent adviser on Antisemitism by the Prime Minister in July 2019. The Department has not allocated staff or funding to John Mann.

We continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to anti-Muslim hatred and recognise the importance of this matter. We will continue to explore and interrogate the issue of publishing a definition of Islamophobia in further detail.

### Religious Hatred: Islam

06 Feb 2020 | HL840

**Asked by:** Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect to publish their definition of Islamophobia.

**Answering member:** Viscount Younger of Leckie | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

It is unacceptable for anyone to feel unsafe while practising their religion, and this government will never allow prejudice and discrimination of any kind against the Muslim community.

We will continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to anti-Muslim hatred and recognise the importance of this matter. We will continue to explore and interrogate the issue of publishing a definition of Islamophobia in further detail.

[Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

24 Jan 2020 | 3768

**Asked by:** Coyle, Neil

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what progress he has made on adopting the APPG for Muslims definition of Islamophobia.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

It is unacceptable for anyone to feel unsafe while practicing their religion, and this Government will never allow prejudice and discrimination of any kind against the Muslim community. We will continue to take a zero-tolerance approach to Anti-Muslim hatred.

The definition proposed by the APPG is problematic as it is not in line with the Equality Act of 2010 and could also have consequences for freedom of speech. We recognise the importance of this matter and will explore and interrogate the issue in further detail.

[Religious Hatred: Islam](#)

07 Jan 2020 | 286

**Asked by:** Baker, Mr Steve

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, when he plans to establish a working definition of Islamophobia; and if he will make a statement.

**Answering member:** Luke Hall | **Department:** Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

The Government agrees that there needs to be a formal definition of Islamophobia to give the issue a stronger focus. We have committed to appointing independent advisers to provide expert advice on a definition. The first of these advisers, Imam Qari Asim MBE, was appointed in July 2019. We are taking steps to appoint individuals with the right combination of skills and experience to drive the work. We endeavour to move at pace on these appointments; good progress is balanced by the necessity for careful consideration of due process.

### [Business of the House](#)

06 Feb 2020 | House of Commons | 671 c475

**Member:** Ruth Jones (Newport West) (Lab)

I am very proud of the vibrant Muslim community in Newport West and the fantastic interfaith community work they do to support local people of all faiths and none, so can the Leader of the House tell us when the Government plan to adopt the all-party group on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia, and can we have a debate in Government time on the contribution of the Muslim community to public life in the UK?

**Mr Rees-Mogg**

I was absolutely delighted earlier this week to be able to go to the Muslims for Britain party celebrating the role the Muslim community played in the debate relating to the referendum in 2016. It is important that we recognise the commitment and the contribution made to our society by all communities and all religions. As regards a debate in Government time, I am not sure that that is going to be easy to arrange.

### [Islamophobia](#)

Oral Question | House of Lords | 801 cc 2337-39

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress they have made towards the adoption of a formal definition of Islamophobia.

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