

The Islamophobia Definition Observatory

Policy
Exchange

Andrew Gilligan and Dr Paul Stott



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Contents

About the Authors	2
Selling Islamophobia: a new documentary record	5
The Islamophobia Definition Observatory	15
The Documentary Record	17
Appendix – support from politicians, public and other bodies for Islamophobia Awareness Month in the last two years	99

Selling Islamophobia: a new documentary record

The Government working group, chaired by Rt Hon. Dominic Grieve KC, to devise an official, state-sponsored definition of Islamophobia has submitted its proposals to ministers. The subject has been intensely controversial. Policy Exchange is therefore publishing this documentary record, intended as a reference work, to inform ministers' decision.

This introduction deals with the latest developments in the debate, and with some little-understood – but deeply serious – systemic risks posed by a definition. It also includes a section on the annual “Islamophobia Awareness Month,” which begins on 1 November.

Latest developments: the publicity campaign begins

In recent days, media reports have emerged citing members of the Grieve working group. One member, Baroness Shaista Gohir, told the *Telegraph* newspaper at the weekend that “the public – including those who criticised earlier definitions of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred – will be pleasantly surprised by the wording we’ve chosen.” The paper reported that the working group will replace the term “Islamophobia” with “anti-Muslim hate.”¹

Another newspaper reported last week that “a proposal to introduce new laws” has been dropped.² And three weeks ago the Secretary of State, Rt Hon. Steve Reed MP, said that free speech would always be protected under any definition.³

Concessions?

None of these suggested concessions is new. Each of the things which has supposedly been ditched is questionable. There never was any immediate prospect of “new laws.” From the beginning, in the Grieve working group’s own terms of reference, the Government said the definition was intended to be “non-statutory.”⁴ From the beginning, the terms of reference, along with ministers and Grieve, have always claimed that any definition “must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech.”⁵

And from the beginning, the same Government terms of reference have described it as a definition of “anti-Muslim hatred/ Islamophobia,” with anti-Muslim hatred first, but with the two concepts also clearly equated.⁶ Gohir’s quote to the *Telegraph* above also equated the two.

1. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/10/A18/labour-party-rows-back-islamophobia-definition-muslimness/>
2. <https://www.thenationalnews.com/news/uk/2025/10/16/britain-set-to-ditch-plans-for-islamophobia-law/>
3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/09/27/steve-reed-veto-islamophobia-law-free-speech-labour/>
4. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf
5. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf
6. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

There already is a definition of anti-Muslim hate

It has always been possible that the Grieve definition will avoid using, or at least foregrounding, the word “Islamophobia;” will choose instead the term “anti-Muslim hate;” and will try to market itself as a compromise. This is what now seems to be happening.

But there already is a definition of “anti-Muslim hate” – the one provided by the law, which applies equally to hatred against people of all faiths. Unless the Grieve definition literally no more than copies the exact words of the law (in which case the whole exercise is pointless) any new definition of “anti-Muslim hate” will be two things.

First, it will be an explicit act of two-tier policy, creating new protections for Muslims that do not apply to people of any other faith.

Second – and as Policy Exchange has previously argued⁷ – it will create a wedge, a slippery slope. Once the principle of special treatment and new protections exclusively for Muslims is accepted by the Government, that opens the door for the plainly-expressed ambitions of those (including, in the past, Grieve and Gohir) who support a more explicitly expansionist, and legally binding, definition – such as the one promoted by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, which openly states it should be used to restrict free speech.

These two things apply whatever initial headline term, and whatever initial form of words, is recommended by Grieve and chosen by the Government (unless it literally mirrors the existing law). These things apply, whatever legal status a definition has to begin with.

In other words, the risk is that we end up, through gradual accretion, with a statutory APPG-style definition of Islamophobia. Or that we redefine “anti-Muslim hatred” so it means the same thing.

Indeed, the use of the term “anti-Muslim hatred/ Islamophobia” in the Grieve group’s terms of reference, already imply that it is the same thing.

New evidence that activist ambitions are far wider than freedom of speech – including a systemic risk to immigration and counter-terrorism laws

Opposition to an official definition has, until now, largely focused on its risk to free speech. But there is an even more dangerous threat, much less well understood – including, we think, by ministers themselves.

It is that some supporters of an official definition want to use it to undermine Britain’s counter-terrorism laws, immigration rules, employment legislation and foreign policy. To bring about fundamental social and structural change, by the back door, without democratic consent.

Recently Mend (Muslim Engagement and Development), the Islamist group instrumental in the campaign for a definition, published on its website its submission to the Grieve working group.

In it Mend, like Policy Exchange (though obviously from the opposite direction) drew a clear distinction between “anti-Muslim hate” and the concept of Islamophobia. Grieve and Gohir would perhaps say this proves

7. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/How-Not-to-Tackle-Grooming-Gangs.pdf>

why they're right to choose anti-Muslim hate as their preferred term. But as we explain above, the clear risk is that any definition elides, or ends up eliding, the two.

Mend said that “unlike anti-Muslim hatred, Islamophobia equips policymakers with a sociological lens through which to carry out structural analyses of discriminatory policies embedded within, for example, immigration, counter-terrorism legislation, media portrayals of Muslims and employment practices.”⁸ An Islamophobia definition would, it said, be a way of stopping “structural... forms of Islamophobia” such as “state-led policies like Prevent” and the “surveillance of Muslim communities.”⁹

In a separate document published around the same time, Mend states that an official Islamophobia definition will be used to challenge “policy failures,” including “how Muslims are unfairly targeted in counter-terrorism laws.”¹⁰ Islamist terrorism is responsible for 94 per cent of all terrorist deaths in Great Britain in the last quarter-century, and 88 per cent of terrorist injuries. The proportion in the last ten years is higher.¹¹ The recent attack in Manchester, and another alleged mass murder plot currently in court,¹² underscore the continuing and overwhelming primacy of the Islamist threat.

Many people of goodwill (including, again, many MPs and ministers) do not realise that there is currently a significant difference between anti-Muslim hatred and discrimination - and the more recently-invented concept of “Islamophobia” promoted by activist bodies such as Mend and the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims.

But Mend's submission to Grieve makes that difference quite clear. Regarding counter-terrorism and immigration laws, it says: “It is important to note that none of this systemic and structural prejudice against Muslims employs any ‘hatred’ at all towards Muslims, and hence would not be captured by the narrower term ‘anti-Muslim hatred.’”¹³

In other words, for the activists, an Islamophobia definition is not, and never has been, primarily about hate. It is not, and never has been, about attacks on mosques, or women having their hijabs pulled off. It is, and always has been, about discouraging criticism of Islamism, about dismantling immigration restrictions (at least from Muslim countries), and about tying police hands in tackling the country's greatest terror threat.

It is that difference, between “Islamophobia” and the current legal definition of anti-Muslim hate, which Mend and others are trying to erode.

The Islamophobia definition, says Mend, “must be operational across both statutory and non-statutory domains, allowing it to guide public policy, legislation, equality monitoring and institutional conduct.” It “should be adopted and utilised by all public sector bodies.”¹⁴

Mend was closely involved in the APPG report which has become the centrepiece of the activist campaign for a definition of Islamophobia. The report thanked Mend's then senior policy analyst,¹⁵ Antonio Perra, for his “considerable” and “immensely valuable” support in preparing it;¹⁶ Perra's personal LinkedIn entry (from which all mention of Mend has now

8. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>
9. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>
10. https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/MEND-Islamophobia_AntiMuslim.pdf?fbclid=IwY2xjawNWFR1leHRuA2FlbQlxMA-BicmlkETFvQXVvamV1U280MVFGV0FrAR-5hH_gX9G-LTU4cBvbLK_iX3KCCLgYDGrIxe-4H6pxvQ_pZ8lkQeApczaFDCQ_aem_1UIM-9Rv20LzQvj-7mly-EQ
11. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Extremely-Confused-The-Governments-new-counter-extremism-review-revealed.pdf> - page 26-7. The table does not include the recent Islamist attack in Manchester, which caused a further two deaths and three injuries, but this does not change the 94 per cent figure.
12. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c749px-lnk44o>
13. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>
14. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>
15. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MEND-Approaching-a-definition-of-Islamophobia-More-than-words-Executive-Summary.pdf> and <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/98782/pdf/>
16. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d-2febbd1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bdf1ea3352f531a-6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>

been deleted) said he “co-edited” the report.¹⁷

But Mend is far from the only significant actor in the campaign for a definition which sees it as being not about hate, but about wider social and policy change. Professor Salman Sayyid, of Leeds University, co-devised the Islamophobia definition recommended by the APPG.¹⁸ He states: “Islamophobia... is no longer reducible simply to acts of violence on the street, it has become state-sponsored.... For example, in this country, through the anti-terror legislation.... Islamophobia has a functional purpose, that it’s linked with policies of neoliberalism, it’s linked with policies of particular kinds of advantage.”¹⁹

Professor Tahir Abbas, another influential figure in the debate, states that “resistance to immigration” constitutes Islamophobia. This quote appears in the APPG report demanding an Islamophobia definition.²⁰ The report also quotes a demand that “any definition of Islamophobia has to recognise that Islamophobia is perpetuated in...counter-terrorism, in community cohesion, in integration, in immigration debates.”²¹

The Runnymede Trust, which popularised the term Islamophobia from the late 1990s, stated in July that in respect of “state criminal justice and counter-terrorism powers... discrimination in this area is well-known.... and hence must be incorporated in the definition of Islamophobia.”²² It said that “policies in the counterterrorism space, particularly Prevent... have disproportionately impacted Muslims” and it was therefore “imperative that the definition of Islamophobia is able to detect the role of law, policy, and government actors in enabling discrimination towards Muslims and those perceived as Muslims.”²³

Even the Labour Party itself, in its official Islamophobia policy, states that “catastrophising immigration from Muslim majority countries” constitutes Islamophobia. So, it says, does “justifying the... denial of the human rights of Muslims on the basis of concerns about ‘Islamic’ terrorism, or national security.”²⁴ Note the inverted commas.

The Islamophobia definition, Iran and anti-semitism

There may, we find, be a still more pernicious agenda, with potential further national security implications, behind some of the campaigning for a definition. A London-based organisation called the Islamic Human Rights Commission (IHRC) has been closely involved in the campaign for a definition. The IHRC strongly supports the Iranian regime, a declared enemy of Britain and state sponsor of terror, and has clear links to it.²⁵

It receives very substantial funding - more than £500,000 last year, and more than £2 million over the last five years,²⁶ far more than most other organisations in this field (published accounts for the Muslim Council of Britain, for instance, show that it raised £136,000 last year). The IHRC says it is not funded by the Iranian government, but has not explained where its money comes from.

Sayyid, the co-author of the APPG Islamophobia definition, is linked with the IHRC. His quote about the link between Islamophobia and counter-terror policy above was given at an IHRC event, one of many he

17. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Defining-Islamophobia.pdf>

18. <https://results2021.ref.ac.uk/impact/7a206b05-ffe-4e5d-9888-3f3b920bb5d8/pdf>

19. <https://youtu.be/BeP3u094In4?si=tZLMA28H7tnXdWDh&t=168>

20. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea-3352f531a6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf> - page 31

21. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea-3352f531a6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf> - page 45

22. https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/6870e-be3af5932d0c3f20824_Islamophobia_Towards%20a%20working%20definition_Runnymede%20July%202025.pdf

23. https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/61488f992b58e687f1108c7c/6870e-be3af5932d0c3f20824_Islamophobia_Towards%20a%20working%20definition_Runnymede%20July%202025.pdf

24. <https://labour.org.uk/resources/labours-islamophobia-policy/>

25. <https://www.thetimes.com/article/421f9760-79ab-11ee-b861-bff63f5f7486> and <https://www.thetimes.com/article/123f222e-4a1b-11ed-8b55-aaf85c581598>

26. Accounts for the Islamic Human Rights Commission Trust, on the Charity Commission website. Some of the money was used for humanitarian relief in Gaza, Yemen and other places but much was used for campaigning.

has addressed.²⁷ Sayyid also spoke at the IHRC's annual "Islamophobia Awards," the year they gave the "Islamophobe of the Year" prize to Barack Obama.²⁸ The IHRC is also separately cited in the APPG report.

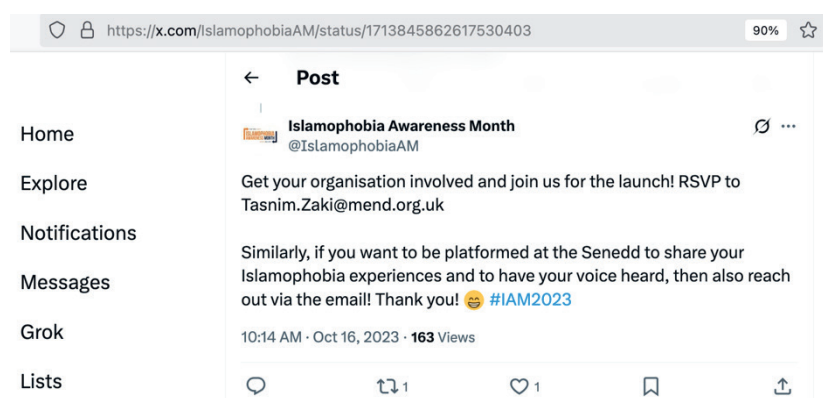
Other nominees at the IHRC Islamophobia Awards have included Louise Casey²⁹ (for her report into the Rotherham grooming scandal), Sarah Champion, Rotherham's MP³⁰ (also for her work opposing the grooming scandal), Michael Wilshaw, the then chief inspector of schools³¹ (for his report into the Trojan Horse scandal in Birmingham schools), Sadiq Khan,³² the mayor of London, a practising Muslim (for his opposition to Islamist extremism), and Charlie Hebdo magazine (five weeks after several of its staff were murdered by Islamist terrorists.)³³

The IHRC states (falsely) that "the bulk of Labour's funding since Starmer seized [sic] power has come from Zionist lobbyists.... Islamophobia is a direct consequence of the Zionisation of our politics. Zionists need Islamophobia to burnish their image as perennial victims and the targets of malevolent Muslim hordes."³⁴

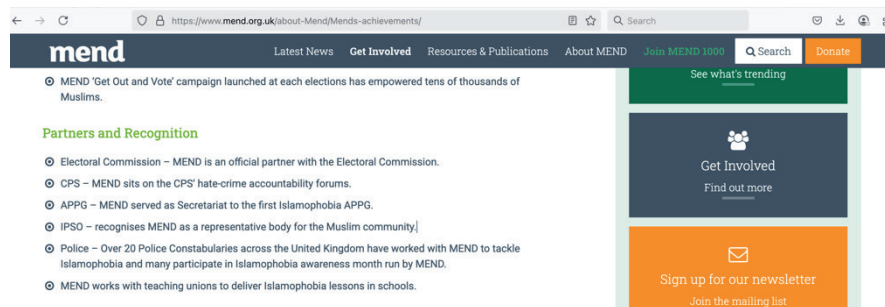
Islamophobia Awareness Month

Next month, November, is the annual Islamophobia Awareness Month (IAM), which brings together a number of Islamist and other activist groups and is likely to be used by them, as it has been in the past, to press for the adoption of an expansive Islamophobia definition.

IAM is run by Mend. It co-founded³⁵ IAM and used to be explicit about its leadership role.³⁶ But for the last several years, IAM has used a standalone website which does not reference Mend, except as one of a number of "supporters."³⁷ However, Mend's own website still states that IAM is "run by Mend"³⁸ and RSVPs for the 2023 launch of IAM had to be sent to a Mend email address.³⁹



27. For instance, <https://www.ihr.org.uk/recalling-the-caliphate-decolonization-and-world-order/>; <https://www.ihr.org.uk/an-evening-with-salman-sayyid/>; <https://www.ihr.org.uk/author-evening-with-salman-sayyid/>; <https://www.ihr.org.uk/author-evening-with-salman-sayyid-recalling-the-caliphate/>; <https://criticalmuslimstudies.co.uk/project/institutional-islamophobia-conference-salman-sayyid/>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MziMD2dHyU4>;
28. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/IHRC%20NEWSLETTER-2014-1435.pdf>
29. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/press-releases/press-release-uk-islamophobia-awards-2017-26-november/>
30. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/islamophobia-awards-2018-vote-now/>
31. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/press-releases/press-release-uk-nominees-announced-for-islamophobia-awards-2016/>
32. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/islamophobia-awards-2018-vote-now/>
33. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/event-report-islamophobia-awards-2015/>
34. <https://www.ihr.org.uk/politicians-fuel-islamophobia-to-conceal-zionist-agenda/>
35. <https://web.archive.org/web/20200819073211/https://www.mend.org.uk/islamophobiaawarenessmonth/>
36. <https://x.com/Islamchannel/status/1456316783430864901>
37. <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/iam-supporters/>
38. <https://www.Mend.org.uk/about-Mend/Mends-achievements/>
39. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1713845862617530403>



IAM is a key part of Mend’s work as a bad-faith actor, allowing it to platform hardline Islamist speakers, propose expansionist notions of Islamophobia and promote falsehoods about the “Islamophobic” nature of British society - while also building links with, or gaining endorsements from, official bodies and policymakers who might not want to be associated directly with Mend, or might not know of IAM’s association with Mend.

This includes the Prime Minister. In April 2024, in opposition, Labour announced that it would “not engage” with Mend.⁴⁰ However, during IAM 2024, last November, Keir Starmer promoted IAM at Prime Minister’s Questions⁴¹ and Bridget Phillipson, the minister for women and equalities, also did so.⁴² The Government’s Office for Equality and Opportunity repeatedly promoted IAM 2024 on its social media feed.⁴³ Sir Stephen Timms, a Labour minister, endorsed IAM,⁴⁴ as has Eluned Morgan, the first minister of Wales,⁴⁵ and Anas Sarwar, Labour’s leader in Scotland.⁴⁶ Dozens of backbenchers, public bodies and councils have too.⁴⁷ The Labour, now independent, MP Zarah Sultana worked for Mend before being elected to Parliament.⁴⁸

In opposition, in 2023, Starmer recorded a video message promoting IAM.⁴⁹ The then shadow equalities minister, Anneliese Dodds, spoke at an IAM meeting.⁵⁰ The current health secretary, Wes Streeting, has long-standing links with Mend, which reportedly helped him defeat the (Jewish) Tory incumbent in his marginal seat in 2015.⁵¹ Streeting spoke alongside his then party leader Jeremy Corbyn at Mend’s 2017 IAM launch in parliament, strongly defending Mend. Corbyn’s presence caused significant controversy at the time.⁵² Streeting has now deleted his speech, which said some criticism of Mend was “unfair,” but it survives in an online archive.⁵³ At the 2024 election Mend backed Streeting’s independent opponent, Leanne Mohammed, who came close to unseating him.

What does Islamophobia Awareness Month view as Islamophobic?

Prevent is Islamophobic

IAM, unsurprisingly, shares Mend’s view of the “Islamophobic” nature of counter-terrorism policy. In an official IAM video, John Holmwood, a Nottingham University academic and co-director of the “People’s Review of Prevent,”⁵⁴ said: “Not only does the Government fail to condemn [Islamophobia], it actively promotes it through its Prevent counter-

40. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2024/04/01/labour-cuts-ties-with-muslim-organisation-named-as-islamist/>

41. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2024-11-13/debates/8F67BE58-FA13-4611-9351-7840D56A2BDF/Engagements>

42. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2024-11-13/debates/10922BAE-E7B7-49C1-BAE1-7ECAD121B735/TopicalQuestions#-contribution-D3F86AC8-6228-46D9-856B-ED4D4403007F>

43. <https://x.com/oegovuk/status/1860971691360330090> and <https://x.com/oegovuk/status/1856697044989042725>

44. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/185852545554339107>

45. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1852361570765967561>

46. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1854116167721332810>

47. See the Appendix below.

48. <https://www.thejc.com/news/exclusive-labour-mp-hopeful-said-she-would-celebrate-deaths-of-blair-netanyahu-p8f4868h> and <https://web.archive.org/web/20180309162628/https://mend.org.uk/about-mend/meet-the-team/>

49. https://x.com/Keir_Starmer/status/1719643963605373328

50. <https://www.instagram.com/p/CORVwpuoHXd/>

51. <https://www.thejc.com/news/features/john-ware-the-race-row-played-out-on-streets-of-ilford-s1siegog>

52. <https://www.thetimes.com/world/us-world/article/corbyn-attends-event-held-by-muslim-extremist-group-mend-h3xk5j832>

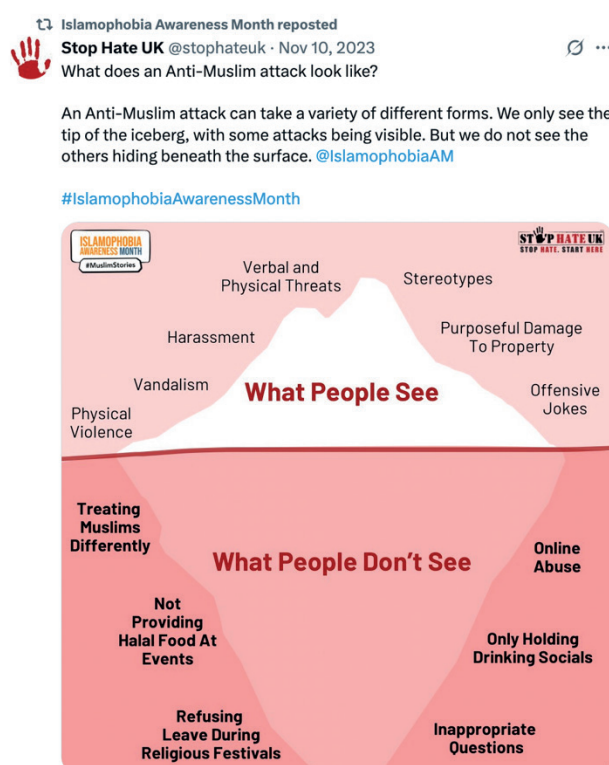
53. https://web.archive.org/web/20171217100040/https://www.wesstreeting.org/islamophobia-awareness_month_speech

54. <https://peoplesreviewofprevent.org/about/>

extremism strategy.... This is why Islamophobia needs to be challenged.”⁵⁵

Failure to provide halal food is Islamophobic

During IAM 2023, IAM’s official account reposted a tweet by the IAM partner Stop Hate UK (with the IAM logo on it) saying that “anti-Muslim attacks” included “only holding drinking socials,” “not providing halal food at events” and “refusing leave during religious festivals.”⁵⁶



According to IAM, Islamophobia also includes “marginalisation.”⁵⁷

“Blasphemy law” calls as part of IAM

Tahir Ali, the Labour MP for Birmingham Hall Green, cited IAM 2024 when he demanded in November at PMQs that Britain “commit to introducing measures to prohibit the desecration of all religious texts and the prophets of the Abrahamic religions.” Starmer did not reject this demand.⁵⁸ The MP David Davis responded: “For centuries, one of the most important features of Britain’s freedom of speech is the absolute right to criticise religion. Freedom of speech is fundamental to everything we have and everything we stand for. I regret Keir Starmer did not make that clear to Mr Ali at PMQs.”⁵⁹

The “fake moral panic” over the Batley schoolteacher forced into hiding is Islamophobic

In March 2021, a teacher at Batley Grammar School delivered a lesson on free speech and blasphemy, which included showing a caricature of the Prophet Muhammad. Soon after, demonstrators, many with no connection

55. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/172156515533378145>

56. <https://x.com/stophateuk/status/1722932662350876705>

57. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1687427889933713408>

58. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-11-27/debates/5CDC74BA-B602-4676-A97A-B678AF436F85/Engagements>

59. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/keir-starmer-blasphemy-law-pmq-b2654819.html>

to the school, gathered outside the school's gates. The teacher's name, address and picture were published online and he received death threats, forcing him into hiding, where four and a half years later he remains.

Under the heading "Islamophobia in Britain," IAM's official travelling exhibition quotes John Holmwood, professor of sociology at Nottingham University and co-chair of the "People's Review of Prevent," as saying: "We need to learn a lesson from the fake moral panic over the Batley parents."⁶⁰

The "glorification of Enlightenment philosophers" is Islamophobic

Under the heading "Islamophobia in Britain," IAM's official travelling exhibition includes a section on "decolonising education" which it says means, among other things, to "learn history from a non-colonial and unbiased view.... ceasing the glorification of Enlightenment philosophers."⁶¹ (Voltaire, Hume, Kant etc.) The exhibition was displayed at 39 places in 2024⁶² including Wembley Stadium.⁶³

The "politicisation of differences" is Islamophobia and it is Islamophobic not to "accept diversity"

IAM's official travelling exhibition quotes Ismail Patel, the founder of Friends of al-Aqsa, stating: "An anti-Islamophobia approach must include the depoliticisation of differences and the acceptance of diversity."⁶⁴

This may mean that it should be regarded as Islamophobic to disagree with the standard Islamist line on, for instance, Israel-Palestine. Friends of al-Aqsa has itself been accused of links to extremism.⁶⁵ The shadow justice secretary, Robert Jenrick, has called for FOA to be banned.⁶⁶

Accurate journalism is Islamophobic

IAM's official travelling exhibition includes in a montage of "media negativity and lies" the Sunday Telegraph headline "Islamist plot: six schools face special measures" (about the Trojan Horse plot to "Islamise" Birmingham schools.)⁶⁷ This story was true: six schools were placed into special measures.

Falsehoods, distortions and exaggerations

IAM has a track record of significant falsehoods, misleading and exaggerated claims, broadly to promote Mend and the MCB's view that British Muslims are targeted and hated by their fellow citizens. This is not, of course, merely wrong in itself, but increases fear, suspicion and social tension, particularly in Muslim communities.

In IAM 2021, MPs supporting the initiative were posed in front of a Muslim Council of Britain placard demanding the adoption of the APPG definition and claiming that in 2020/21, "45 per cent of all hate crimes offences targeted Muslims."⁶⁸ The actual figure was 2.2 per cent.⁶⁹

The MCB publicised IAM 2024 by claiming that Muslims were "the most affected faith group" by hate crime.⁷⁰ That year, Jews were 12 times more likely than Muslims to be affected by faith hate crime, and those of

60. <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=jllbLV-pasShuqV45&t=137>

61. https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=bxlfqA-CAOW_4GP4p&t=181

62. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1902743964496601425>

63. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1910345563138113781>

64. <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=jllbLV-pasShuqV45&t=137>

65. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/blogs/friends-of-al-aqsa-leader-participates-in-online-conference-including-listed-terrorist-and-islamist-figures/>

66. <https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/uk-robert-jenrick-calls-friends-al-aqsa-be-banned>

67. <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=mhkH-2GkZcNT6dZrQ&t=125>

68. <https://x.com/paulbristow79/status/1460955957312299016>

69. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2020-to-2021>

70. <https://mcb.org.uk/islamophobia-awareness-month-tackling-hatred-in-unprecedented-times/>

“other” religion were also a little more likely to be affected than Muslims.⁷¹

Mend’s official submission to the Grieve working group in July 2025 also echoed this misrepresentation, claiming that “Home Office data shows that Muslims have consistently been the most targeted group in religious hate crimes in the UK.”⁷²

IAM 2018’s official video, “This is Islamophobia,” claimed that Islamophobia was “everyday, everywhere.” It said that society “treats all Muslims as criminal” and “refuse[s] to tolerate us at all.” Interspersed with the regular refrain, “This is Islamophobia,” it claimed that Muslims’ “phone calls and homes are being watched,” that there was a “legal requirement on teachers to monitor the Muslim students that they teach,” and that a Muslim student had had his home “raided over a word googled for a worksheet.”⁷³ Mend later admitted that this was “artistic licence.”⁷⁴

IAM’s official travelling exhibition states that “one of the major factors in the rise of Islamophobia has been the increasing militancy of far right social movements and political parties, such as Britain First, the English Defence League and Pegida UK.”⁷⁵ Far from being “increasingly militant,” the EDL and Pegida UK no longer even exist.

IAM 2024’s factsheet on media “Islamophobia” cites a claim by the MCB’s Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM) that 59 per cent of media stories about Muslims are negative.⁷⁶ As a report by Policy Exchange found, this figure includes accurate, factual accounts of Islamist terror attacks and CfMM’s “top three offenders” are the international newswires Reuters, AP and AFP.⁷⁷

IAM’s official travelling exhibition states in big type that “90% of those stopped under schedule 7 [stop and search powers at ports or airports] were Muslim,” citing the extremist group CAGE as a source.⁷⁸ The actual figures show that the largest single group stopped, 38 per cent, were “Chinese or other,” few of whom would be Muslim. 23 per cent were white and 7 per cent black, few of whom will be Muslim. Only 27 per cent were Asian, not all of whom will be Muslim.⁷⁹ The true figures were added to the exhibition last year, but in smaller type and less prominent.

Mend claimed in IAM 2023 that a “Muslim King [had a] role in establishing the foundations of democracy in Britain,” a story about King John (of England – Britain did not exist then) supposedly sending emissaries to the emir of Morocco pleading for money to fight his rebellious barons. Mend claimed that “in return, John pledged that he would abandon the Christian faith and convert to Islam,” but that the king was rebuffed and was forced to concede Magna Carta to the barons instead.⁸⁰ Alas, wrote The Times, “many leading medieval historians believe that the story of his offer to convert to Islam must be largely or wholly a work of fiction” whose sole source was “a propagandist, intent on misrepresenting the King’s position.”⁸¹

A post from the charity EqualiTeach tagged with IAM claimed that “many” Muslim schoolgirls have their hijabs pulled off while sitting in class every day. No evidence was cited for this unlikely-sounding claim.⁸²

71. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024>

72. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>

73. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1059067744178573314>

74. <https://www.mend.org.uk/Mend-response-allegations-andrew-gilligan-saudis-fund-hardline-british-tv-station-islam-channel-published-18th-november-2018/>

75. <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=nKM1RvJ8x-G08UuBH&t=150>

76. https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Islamophobia-Media-Culture_V2.pdf

77. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Bad-Faith-Actor-A-study-of-the-Centre-for-Media-Monitoring-CfMM-1.pdf>

78. <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=6z3DNoQqBx-v98ofZ&t=186>

79. <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/operation-of-police-powers-under-tact-2000-to-december-2024/operation-of-police-powers-under-the-terrorism-act-2000-and-subsequent-legislation-arrests-outcomes-and-stop-and-search-great-britain-quarterly-u>

80. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1724097176383402423>

81. https://web.archive.org/web/20080511203812/http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/graham_stewart/article3378885.ece

82. <https://x.com/EqualiTeach/status/1861809822460477637>

Events and links with hardline speakers

IAM's factsheets, exhibition and guide repeatedly cite Mend and another of its linked operations,⁸³ the Islamophobia Response Unit (IRU), as sources.⁸⁴ IAM events are held in "collaboration" with IRU⁸⁵ and IRU "support" IAM.⁸⁶

Under its own name, Mend still overtly sponsors or takes part in many IAM events, including on 26 November 2024 sponsoring a talk by the academic David Miller on countering "Zionist Islamophobia" (a Mend email address was also given as the contact).⁸⁷ Mend delivers IAM events to schoolchildren.⁸⁸ Mend spoke at IAM's 2023 Welsh launch in the Senedd.⁸⁹ Additional 2023 and 2024 Mend-sponsored IAM events, or IAM events with Mend speakers, took place in Manchester,⁹⁰ Leeds,⁹¹ Cardiff (at least two),⁹² Aberdeen,⁹³ Wembley,⁹⁴ Derby⁹⁵ and online⁹⁶ and likely in many more places. The group states: "Mend are proud supporters of IAM. We have a variety of events planned throughout November."⁹⁷

Other speakers or representatives platformed by IAM between 2022-24 include Moazzam Begg,⁹⁸ Yusuf Chambers, Abdurraheem Green and Saqib Sattar,⁹⁹ Yasir Qadhi,¹⁰⁰ Salman Butt of the website Islam21c,¹⁰¹ and Saghir Hussain and the Muslim Brotherhood-linked FEMYSO.¹⁰² In a major report into the Muslim Brotherhood and Political Islamism in France, published earlier this year, the French Ministry of the Interior states that FEMYSO was historically close to the Muslim Brotherhood, acting as a training structure for potential movement cadres.¹⁰³ FEMYSO responded by calling the report an attack on Muslim civil society.¹⁰⁴

On 23 November 2024 IAM's website advertised an event entitled "Structural Islamophobia: the collective, sumud and reflective practice." This was, it said, "a place to learn principles of individual resistance for the Muslim."¹⁰⁵ Sumud is a concept closely related to Palestinian resistance.

The Muslim Association of Britain, the Finsbury Park Mosque which MAB controls, the Muslim Council of Britain, and the websites 5Pillars and Islam21c are named on IAM 2024's website as supporters.¹⁰⁶

IAM has also strongly promoted socially conservative Islam, with for instance a social media campaign on why women should wear the hijab, featuring statements such as "I love my hijab because I know that it pleases Allah"¹⁰⁷ and "it gives us freedom and empowerment as women."¹⁰⁸ In 2023, IAM staged a "hijab try-on" event for London sixth formers.¹⁰⁹

83. Mend set up the IRU. It now claims it is separate, but its own website still includes an "IRU zone accessible only by IRU personnel," see <https://www.mend.org.uk/report-islamophobia/>
84. https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/ISLAMOPHOBIA-MOSQUES-ISLAMIC-INSTITUTIONS_V2.pdf; <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/IAM-Guide.pdf>; <https://youtu.be/Qa85J08xA9Q?si=2lzbAq5C-qHyT41C0&t=163> and https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Islamophobia-Schools_V2.pdf
85. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1841203085072273736>
86. https://x.com/iru_uk/status/1722951147256787217
87. https://x.com/Tracking_Power/status/1860754861404410277
88. <https://x.com/NHTSchool/status/1729878431352148369>
89. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1720478444713279651>
90. <https://x.com/OyebanjiAdewumi/status/1729426448216105374>
91. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1727318045209612707>
92. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1724749034076680294> and <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1724365798498513215>
93. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1727264391102435519>
94. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1722936268051427456>
95. https://x.com/Musarrat_Yasmin/status/1853054175258493027
96. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1728473857168687611>
97. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/171965161120587449>
98. <https://web.archive.org/web/2024111114221/https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/events/>
99. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1728473857168687611>
100. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1854851412900860347>
101. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1849780223782326468>
102. https://x.com/muslim_greens/status/1856327961554694226
103. <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/sites/minint/files/medias/documents/2025-05/2025-05-02-rapport-freres-musulmans.pdf>
104. <https://femyso.org/press-release-femyso-denounces-french-reports-exclusionary-narrative-and-attack-on-muslim-civil-society/#:~:text=The%20Forum%20of%20European%20Muslim%20Youth%20and%20Student,and%20unsubstantiated%20allegations%20framed%20as%20national%20security%20concerns>
105. <https://web.archive.org/web/2024111114221/https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/events/>
106. <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/iam-supporters/>
107. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1886339046617575921>
108. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaIAM/status/1885257117994545277>
109. <https://x.com/Leyton6thForm/status/1729840766220951904>

The Islamophobia Definition Observatory

Introduction

The question of Islamophobia – what it is and what should be done about it – has become a lightning rod issue over recent years. It has stirred much debate, intersecting with a range of public policy questions. And yet, the subject is one that generates much heat but often, little light.

Despite having little to say on the topic in its 2024 manifesto,¹¹⁰ the Labour Government has chosen to spend significant amounts of its precious political capital in pursuit of a definition of Islamophobia. On 28 February 2025, the Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner, announced the creation of a working group that would be tasked with developing such a definition, under the leadership of Dominic Grieve KC.¹¹¹ The group's other members and its Terms of reference were announced just under a month later on 24 March 2025.¹¹² Its founding remit gave the group six months to fulfil its brief, and a media report on 13 October, which included an interview with working group member Baroness Gohir, stated that its recommendation had been “submitted last week.”¹¹³

At the time of writing there has been no formal confirmation of this from the Government .

The formation of the working group – and its subsequent operation -- has enlivened the already vigorous Islamophobic debate. Arguments over the purpose and likely outcome of the group's deliberations have been played out forcefully in the public domain: in parliament, in the press, and on social media. A wide range of voices have offered their views on the merits and pitfalls of the effort to define Islamophobia. Clearly, there is no consensus. But what everyone perhaps does agree on, is that this is an issue in which there is much at stake.

It is in this context that Policy Exchange is launching a new project. The *Islamophobia Definition Observatory* is designed to record significant contributions to the debate initiated by the formation of the Grieve-led working group, as well as the background to efforts to define Islamophobia. It is our intention thereby to create and maintain the most substantive archive of resources on this subject, one that be of value to users from a range of perspectives.

As a first step, the *Islamophobia Definition Observatory* has created the documentary record that follows below, charting the work of Grieve's working group; submissions to that body; and interventions **for** and

110. The manifesto makes only one reference to Islamophobia – stating that Labour would reverse the Conservatives downgrading of the monitoring of antisemitic and Islamophobic hatred. See p. 88 <https://labour.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Labour-Party-manifesto-2024.pdf>

111. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

112. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

113. <https://hyphenonline.com/2025/10/13/islamophobia-anti-muslim-hatred-working-group-definition-shaista-gohir/>

against the definition from across civil society, parliament, Government and campaign groups. A subsequent publication will go on to analyse the international support for a definition, and the work of overseas governments, NGOs and international organisations on the subject.

Policy Exchange's own stance on the subject of Islamophobia and the effort to establish a formal definition are a matter of public record. Over the course of several major interventions in the public policy debate (listed below), we have made clear our reservations about the direction of travel. Anyone wishing to understand our position can revisit those documents. In what follows, however, we seek to provide a platform to the voices of others – on all sides of the debate.

Previous Policy Exchange Reports relevant to debates over an Islamophobia Definition

- 20 June 2025 -- [How Not to Tackle Grooming Gangs The National Grooming Gang Inquiry and a Definition of Islamophobia](#) by Sir John Jenkins, Andrew Gilligan and Dr Paul Stott
- 26 February 2025 -- [The Rotherham Grooming Scandal and the Creators of the Islamophobia Definition](#) by Andrew Gilligan and Dr Paul Stott
- 22 April 2024 -- [A definition of Islamophobia? Old problems remain, as new problems emerge](#) by Khalid Mahmood MP, Sir John Jenkins and Dr Martyn Frampton.
- 8 March 2020 -- [The Trial: The strange case of Trevor Phillips: How the accusation of Islamophobia is used to stifle free speech](#) by Dr Martyn Frampton, Sir John Jenkins and Khalid Mahmood MP.
- 5 September 2019 – [Eroding the Free Press](#) by Sir John Jenkins and Will Heaven.
- 15 May 2019 -- [On Islamophobia: The Problem of Definition](#) by Trevor Phillips, Dr Martyn Frampton and Sir John Jenkins.
- 20 December 2018 -- [Defining Islamophobia](#) by Sir John Jenkins.

The Islamophobia Definition Observatory is overseen by Dr Paul Stott, Head of Security and Extremism at Policy Exchange.

To submit evidence to Policy Exchange on this issue, please contact: callforevidence@policyexchange.org.uk

The Documentary Record

In what follows, we have collated the key interventions in the public debate around the question of a prospective Islamophobia definition that followed the formation of Dominic Grieve’s working group on the subject in February 2025.

1) 28 February 2025: Angela Rayner announces a working group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition, chaired by Dominic Grieve KC.¹¹⁴

Rayner stated that the group would have six months to report, and that “The definition will provide guidance to Government and other bodies to support further action on tackling religiously motivated hate, delivering on the Plan for Change safer streets mission.”

The announcement of the working group’s existence added “It will advise Government on how to best understand, quantify and define prejudice, discrimination, and hate crime targeted against Muslims.”

Although none of the members of the group to work under Mr Grieve were named, it was stated:

Alongside drawing on their own expertise, members will engage widely to ensure the definition accounts for the variety of backgrounds and experiences of Muslim communities across the United Kingdom.

The group’s proposed definition will be non-statutory and will provide the Government and other relevant bodies with an understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities.

The group’s proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression - which includes the right to criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents.

Finally, the Government noted that incidents of hate crime and Islamophobia are at a record high for England and Wales.¹¹⁵

2) 28 February 2025: In a thread on X, the British Muslim Network (BMN) welcomes the establishment of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group stating

The BMN “welcomed the announcement of a formal Government review to define anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia - but warned that it must include the views of British Muslim communities to be legitimate”.¹¹⁶

There were also positive statements from group members Julie Siddiqi and Sal Naseem. Siddiqi said: “This announcement has been years in the making - it should simply not have taken this long. Now that it’s finally

114.<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

115.<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2024>

116.<https://x.com/BritMusNet/status/1895525961032220685>

underway - the process must actively include the views of British Muslim communities”.¹¹⁷

Naseem observed: “We also know that some people will use this process to claim Muslims are calling for a blasphemy law or for special treatment. We aren’t - we are proud British citizens and just want to be safe and treated fairly.”¹¹⁸

3) 28 February 2025: The Labour Muslim Network responded positively to Angela Rayner’s announcement stating on X:¹¹⁹

- “The rising tide of the far right, the riots over the summer and the response to Gaza has reiterated one thing: Islamophobia is treated as a badge of honour for many in our political system.
- So it’s welcome news that the Government has committed to defining Islamophobia within the next six months.
- The next steps will be crucial: we must ensure that all forms of structural, endemic and pervasive Islamophobia are tackled.”

4) 28 February 2025: The Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) welcomed the creation of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group.

The group states in its press release:¹²⁰

The MCB is particularly encouraged by the appointment of Dominic Grieve KC as chair of the working group. Mr Grieve has consistently demonstrated a principled approach to engaging with Muslim communities and has been a respected voice in discussions about tackling Islamophobia. His previous involvement with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims and his contributions to dialogue between Muslim and non-Muslim communities position him well to lead this important initiative.

The MCB notes that a comprehensive definition of Islamophobia has already been developed by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, which has been widely accepted by numerous political parties and organisations. The primary opposition to this definition has come from those advancing strawman arguments and mischaracterisations, often from groups with a documented history of hostility towards British Muslims.

Dr Naomi Green, Assistant Secretary General of the MCB, stated:

“We welcome the government’s commitment to addressing the scourge of Islamophobia through this working group. While we are open to any improvements to existing definitions, we hope that the working group will remain vigilant against attempts to water down what has already been developed and widely accepted. The ultimate test of any definition will be whether it effectively protects British Muslims from the direct hatred and discrimination they may individually face in their daily lives and the more structural racism that has been identified within the justice system, media, politics and the

117.<https://x.com/BritMusNet/status/1895526198111002819>

118.<https://x.com/BritMusNet/status/1895526790980087975>

119.<https://x.com/LabourMuslims/status/1895532069574545416>

120.<https://mcb.org.uk/muslim-council-of-britain-welcomes-governments-working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatred-definition/>

workforce.”

“Record levels of anti-Muslim hate crimes demand meaningful action, not just words. We hope this process will lead to concrete measures that make our communities safer and ensure Muslims can practice their faith without fear of prejudice or violence.”

The MCB hopes that the working group will engage substantively with Muslim communities and organisations across the UK to ensure that the lived experiences of British Muslims are fully reflected in the definition. We stand ready to work constructively with the government and the working group to develop an effective framework for tackling Islamophobia in all its forms.

5) 28 February 2025: The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) responded to the establishment of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group by stating “serious questions remain.”

The MAB writes:¹²¹

Why ignore the widely accepted APPG definition? Why the shift now that Labour is in government? Will this lead to real action or just more delay?

Islamophobia isn’t just hate crime—it’s systemic. Any definition must reflect that. The process must also engage meaningfully with representative Muslim organisations like @MuslimCouncil.

6) 3 March 2025: Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP issued a statement to the House of Commons confirming the establishment of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group.¹²²

In the House of Lords a statement was made on the same subject by Lord Khan of Burnley, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Lords Minister for Faith, Communities and Resettlement).¹²³

7) 4 March 2025: Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer speaks at the APPG on British Muslims iftar held in Westminster Hall. Also pictured are Ministers Wes Streeting, Shabana Mahmood and a number of MPs.¹²⁴

The event was reportedly organised by the APPGs’ Muhbeen Hussain,¹²⁵ one of those involved in 2018 in the APPG’s development of their definition of Islamophobia.¹²⁶

8) 6 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP, the Shadow Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, tables a written question concerning the Islamophobia definition working

121. <https://x.com/MABOnline1/status/1895524060827701551>

122. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2025-03-03/hcws487#:~:text=The%20Government%20has%20established%20a%20working%20group%20to,define%20prejudice%2C%20discrimination%20and%20hate%20crimes%20against%20Muslims.>

123. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-statements/detail/2025-03-03/hlws480>

124. <https://x.com/APPGBritMuslims/status/1897321886801142058>

125. <https://hyphenonline.com/2025/04/03/ramadan-in-parliament-big-iftar-shehab-khan/>

126. On Muhbeen Hussain’s role in the 2018 definition, see <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/the-rotherham-grooming-scandal-and-the-creators-of-the-islamophobia-definition/> p. 5

group, UIN 36101:¹²⁷

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the written statement of 3 March 2025, HCWS487, on Anti-Muslim Hate/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, what the criteria was used to select (a) the chair and (b) the working group members.

Alex Norris MP replies for the Government on 14 March:¹²⁸

The Anti-Muslim Hate/Islamophobia Definition Working Group Chair and Members are technical experts, and have been selected for their ability to deliver against the group's objectives. All members must follow The Seven Principles of Public Life and the Government retains the right to end the relationship if any member does not abide by the principles. All appointments are subject to assessment of any potential or actual conflicts of interest, which must be fully disclosed to the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government. Group members will not be remunerated but will be able to claim expenses for travel and/or costs incurred whilst carrying out their role. Further detail of the group's membership and Terms of Reference will be published after the public appointment process has concluded.

9) 10 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP asks the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, UIN 36680, "for what reasons she appointed Dominic Grieve as the Chair of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia working group."¹²⁹

On 18 March Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:¹³⁰

The Anti-Muslim Hate/Islamophobia Definition Working Group has been established to provide government with a non-statutory definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia, supporting a wider stream of work to tackle the unacceptable incidents of anti-Muslim hatred. The Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC has a strong legal background and experience of working with Muslim communities. This technical expertise will be invaluable to meeting the group's objective to advise His Majesty's Government on the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims.

10) 10 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP asks the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, written question UIN 36684:¹³¹

pursuant to the Answer of 26 February 2025 to Question 24223 on Freedom of Expression, what assessment has been made of the potential impact of introducing a definition of Islamophobia on legal rights to freedom of expression relating to blasphemy.

On 19 March Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:¹³²

The Government has established a new working group to provide government

127. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-06/36101>

128. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-06/36101>

129. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-10/36680>

130. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-10/36680>

131. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-10/36684>

132. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-10/36684>

with a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia, advising government and other bodies on how to best understand, quantify and define prejudice, discrimination, and hate crime targeted against Muslims. The group's proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression. The Government has been clear that there is no blasphemy law in England, and we will not introduce one.

11) 14 March 2025: Dr Muhammad al-Issa, Secretary General of the Muslim World League praises the British Government's establishment of a working group to define anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia, in an editorial for the Daily Telegraph.¹³³

12) 14 March 2025 Archie Young, UK Ambassador to the UN General Assembly, makes a speech at the UN General Assembly meeting to mark the International Day to Combat Islamophobia.¹³⁴ Entitled "No-one should be targeted because of their faith: UK statement at the UN General Assembly", Mr Young states:

the UK unequivocally condemns incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence, wherever this occurs and we denounce hatred on the basis of religion or belief.

No-one should be targeted because of their faith.

Like many countries, we have seen an increase in Islamophobia, anti-Muslim hate crime, alongside a rise in antisemitism.

Again, we reiterate our strong position: these incidents have no place in our — or any — society.

The UK is working to address hatred and intolerance at its roots. This year we committed over £1 million to monitor Islamophobia and support victims of anti-Muslim hate crimes.

As part of our work to combat Islamophobia, last month the UK government launched a new working group to provide a definition of anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobia.

This new definition will allow us to better understand, quantify, and tackle anti-Muslim hate crime, while also ensuring that the right to freedom of expression, including the freedom to critique religions and religious beliefs, remains protected.

13) 15 March 2025: On UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia, the MCB join a global call to combat Islamophobia online.¹³⁵

Maswood Ahmed, Deputy Secretary General of the MCB, stated:

¹³³<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/03/14/muslims-should-be-proud-of-their-faith-and-proud-to-be-brit/>

¹³⁴https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/no-one-should-be-targeted-because-of-their-faith-uk-statement-at-the-un-general-assembly?utm_source=chatgpt.com&utm_medium=email

¹³⁵<https://mcb.org.uk/mcb-joins-global-call-to-combat-islamophobia-online/>

Six years since the Christchurch massacre and eight years since the Finsbury Park attack in the UK, successive governments have diminished, delayed or denied meaningful action on Islamophobia. While we welcome the current government's commission on defining Islamophobia, we need both this definition and a truly independent monitoring body that has the full confidence and reflects the lived experience of Muslim communities.

The statement pushed for the following actions from social media companies:

- develop transparent reporting systems with clear timelines for content review and removal,
- prohibit monetisation of content that promotes anti-Muslim bigotry or violence,
- create robust appeals processes for both removed and retained content,
- publish regular transparency reports specifically tracking Islamophobic content and enforcement actions, and
- engage in meaningful consultation with Muslim communities and organisations to improve detection of coded language and evolving forms of hate speech.

It was signed by the following organisations:

- Australian Muslim Advocacy Network (AMAN) (Australia)
- The Bridge Initiative (United States)
- Canadians United Against Hate/Canadiens Unis Contre la Haine (Canada)
- Center for Education and Research “Nahla” (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Collective for Countering Islamophobia in Europe (CCIE) (Europe)
- Comité Justice & Libertés Pour Tous (France)
- Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) (United States)
- Forum of European Muslim Youth and Student Organisations (FEMYSO) (Europe)
- International Islamophobia Studies Research Association (Worldwide)
- Islamic Community in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
- Islamic Council of Victoria (Australia)
- Islamic Women's Council of New Zealand (New Zealand)
- Islamophobia Studies Center (United States)
- The March 15th - Combating Islamophobia (United States)
- Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) (United Kingdom)
- Muslim Rights Watch Netherlands (Netherlands, Europa)

14) 15 March 2025: On UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia the academic Dr Tarek Younis, of Middlesex

University posts on X:¹³⁶

As a scholar of Islamophobia, on this day to “combat Islamophobia”, let me affirm:

Any theory/practice to combat

Islamophobia that is not anti-Zionist is effectively meaningless.

Anti-racist scholars worth their cents know just how related Palestine and Islamophobia are.

15) 17 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 38617 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the written statement of 3 March 2025 on Anti-Muslim Hate/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, HCWS487, to which Minister that group will report; and if the report will be laid before the House.”¹³⁷

On 25 March Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:¹³⁸

The Terms of Reference for the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group have now been published. The group will report to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, and provide advice to Ministers on appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. Once the Government has reviewed this advice, it will consider its next steps.

16) 19 March 2025: Commons Debate Ethnic Minority People: Discrimination

During the debate John Grady, Labour MP for Glasgow East informs the House of his meeting to discuss Islamophobia with Dr Muhammad Adrees, head of the Muslim Council of Scotland, where he heard about “terrible incidents of anti-Muslim hatred and crimes in Glasgow and the west of Scotland.”¹³⁹

Seema Malhotra MP, who is Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Home Office), and Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Department for Education) (Equalities) replied that:¹⁴⁰

The Government have established a new working group to provide the Government with a definition of anti-Muslim hatred and Islamophobia, and advise the Government and other bodies on how best to understand, quantify and define prejudice, discrimination and hate crime targeted against Muslims.

17) 24 March 2025: Membership of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition is announced by the

¹³⁶https://x.com/Tarek_Younis_/status/1901035910063657362

¹³⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-17/38617>

¹³⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-17/38617>

¹³⁹<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-03-19/debates/C78C6BA3-1623-4D3A-9F21-4E206090C131/EthnicMinorityPeopleDiscrimination?highlight=%22muslim%22#contribution-53E4CF6C-41FB-4A8E-ABF3-1BA281C84141>

¹⁴⁰<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-03-19/debates/C78C6BA3-1623-4D3A-9F21-4E206090C131/EthnicMinorityPeopleDiscrimination?highlight=%22muslim%22#contribution-D2D413CC-5279-4068-B18F-3030E3AC085F>

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government.¹⁴¹

The Government webpage states that:

The Working Group is made up of representatives from Muslim communities, independent experts, and academics.

- Right Honourable Dominic Grieve KC, Barrister - Chair of the group
- Professor Javed Khan OBE, Managing Director of EQUI
- Baroness Shaista Gohir OBE, CEO of Muslim Women's Network UK
- Akeela Ahmed MBE, Co-Chair of British Muslim Network
- Asha Affi, Independent Consultant

Also published is a three-page pdf giving the group's terms of reference.¹⁴² This describes the body's objective as being to "develop a working definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia which is reflective of a wide range of perspectives and priorities for British Muslims."

The background to this was detailed thus:

British Muslims, whilst united by their faith, hold a diverse range of opinions, identities, beliefs, and backgrounds. This diversity helps to enrich the fabric of British society. There are countless examples of Muslim citizens achieving excellence across society – from entrepreneurs to public servants, from sports men and women to musicians and artists. The Government's responsibility is to ensure that all British citizens receive equal treatment and can freely express their views, beliefs, and sense of identity. Sadly, this is not always the case; too many British Muslims have faced discrimination and hatred due to their religion. We recognise that anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia can also impact communities that are perceived to be Muslim. There are often cultural markers which are adopted by wider faith communities like Sikh, Hindu, Jain and Buddhists which are used to attack communities that are mistakenly identified as Muslim. This is also true of people of no faith.

In declaring the work of the group, it was explained that its advice to Ministers would be private:

The purpose of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group is to provide advice to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. This should include advice regarding the merits of Government adopting a non-statutory definition of unacceptable treatment of Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim, including what a proposed definition should be.

The Group's proposed definition will be non-statutory and will provide the Government and other relevant bodies with an understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities.

Any proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression – which includes

¹⁴¹<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition#membership>

¹⁴²https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

the right to criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents.

The Group will make evidence-based recommendations for Ministers to consider. All advice provided by the Group will be private for Ministers and will not be made public.

While the precise recruitment process for these members was not explained, it was stated that:

Members will be technical experts, selected for their ability to deliver against the Group's objectives. The members will be directly appointed by Ministers for a 6-month period, after which Ministers will review and confirm next steps.

The group's Chair, Dominic Grieve, was described as working with the Minister of Faith, Lord Khan of Burnley:

The Group will be chaired by Dominic Grieve KC, who will be responsible for ensuring it meets its aims and objectives. The Chair will agree a work and engagement plan with the Minister for Faith and Communities and will use this as the basis for the work of the Group. The Chair, like all members, will be appointed for a 6-month period.

18) 25 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 41061 "To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the terms of reference of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition for what reasons the recommendations of the Group to the Minister will not be made public."¹⁴³

On 2 April Alex Norris MP responded for the Government:¹⁴⁴

The appointment period for the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group commenced on 24 March 2025, following the publication of the Working Group Terms of Reference.

It is important that government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred, however any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

The advice the group produces will be private initially, giving the Government the time and space to consider recommendations, including what a proposed definition/s should be and the merits for adopting a definition. Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

19) 27 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question

143. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-25/41061>

144. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-25/41061>

UIN 41858 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 14 March 2025 to Question 36103 on Islamophobia, what the public appointment process will be.”¹⁴⁵

Alex Norris MP answered on behalf of the government on 8 April.¹⁴⁶

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia working group has been established to provide government with a working definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred which is reflective of a wide range of perspectives and priorities of British Muslims. The Working Group is made up of representatives from Muslim communities, independent experts, and academics.

Full membership details of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group have been published¹⁴⁷ on GOV.UK. The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. Further details of the Government’s public appointments¹⁴⁸ process and the Governance Code of Public Appointments¹⁴⁹ can be found on GOV.UK.

20) 28 March 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 42249 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the members of the working group on the definition of Islamophobia will be remunerated; and what is the process by which they have been selected.”¹⁵⁰

On 8 April Alex Norris MP replies for the Government.¹⁵¹

Members of the Anti-Muslim Hate/Islamophobia Definition Working Group will not be remunerated but will be able to claim expenses for travel and/or costs incurred whilst carrying out their role. Members are technical experts and have been selected for their ability to deliver against the group’s objectives. All members must follow The Seven Principles of Public Life and the Government retains the right to end the relationship if any member does not abide by the principles. All appointments are subject to assessment of any potential or actual conflicts of interest, which must be fully disclosed to the Ministry of Housing, Communities, and Local Government. Further details are provided in the Group’s Terms of Reference which have been published on GOV.UK.

21) 28 March 2025: Lord Pearson of Rannoch tables written question UIN HL6312: “To ask His Majesty’s Government whether they will require the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group to meet adherents of religions other than Islam”.¹⁵²

Lord Khan responded for the Government on 11 April.¹⁵³

All forms of racial and religious discrimination are completely unacceptable and have no place in our communities.

In the most recently published Home Office statistics the number of religious hate crimes targeting Muslims accounted for 38% of all religious hate crimes. The number of religious hate crimes targeting Jews accounted for 33%. These

145. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-27/41858>

146. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-27/41858>

147. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

148. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-appointments>

149. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-code-for-public-appointments>

150. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/42249>

151. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/42249>

152. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/hl6312>

153. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/hl6312>

together make up 71%, and show Government action here is urgently needed. Whilst the Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition for antisemitism, it does not have an equivalent definition to aid its work in tackling hate directed towards Muslims.

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group's objective is to develop a working definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia which is reflective of a wide range of perspectives and priorities for British Muslims. Full terms of reference for the Working Group have been published on GOV.UK.¹⁵⁴

It is important that Government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred, however any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

22) 28 March 2025: Lord Pearson of Rannoch tables written question UIN HL6314 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government:¹⁵⁵

To ask His Majesty's Government on what grounds they determined that the work of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group should not be made public.

On 11 April 2025 Lord Khan of Burnley replies for the Government:¹⁵⁶

All forms of racial and religious discrimination are completely unacceptable and have no place in our communities.

In the most recently published Home Office statistics the number of religious hate crimes targeting Muslims accounted for 38% of all religious hate crimes. The number of religious hate crimes targeting Jews accounted for 33%. These together make up 71%, and show Government action here is urgently needed. Whilst the Government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition for antisemitism, it does not have an equivalent definition to aid its work in tackling hate directed towards Muslims.

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group's objective is to develop a working definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia which is reflective of a wide range of perspectives and priorities for British Muslims. Full terms of reference for the Working Group have been published on GOV.UK.

154.<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

155.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/hl6314>

156.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-28/hl6314>

It is important that Government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred, however any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

23) 31 March 2025: Lord Godson submitted written parliamentary question UIN HL6343 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government concerning the Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition Working Group:¹⁵⁷

To ask His Majesty's Government whether they plan to place in the Library of the House a summary of (1) each meeting between the Minister for Faith, Communities and Resettlement the chair of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition Working Group, and (2) any advice received from the working group; and if they do not plan to do so, why not.

Lord Khan answered for the Government on 11 April 2025:¹⁵⁸

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Working Group's terms of reference have been published on GOV.UK.

The Terms of Reference note that the advice the Group produces will be private initially, giving the Government the time and space to consider recommendations, including what a proposed definition/s should be and the merits for adopting a definition.

It is important that Government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred, however any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

24) 31 March 2025: Lord Godson submits written question UIN HL6344 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government concerning the Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition Working Group:¹⁵⁹

157. <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4903/writtenquestions#expand-1790878>

158. <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4903/writtenquestions#expand-1790878>

159. <https://members.parliament.uk/member/4903/writtenquestions#expand-1790879>

To ask His Majesty's Government "What steps they are taking to ensure advice provided to ministers by the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group is open to scrutiny by Parliament."

Lord Khan of Burnley responded for the Government on 11 April 2025:¹⁶⁰

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Working Group's terms of reference have been published on GOV.UK.¹⁶¹

The Terms of Reference note that the advice the Group produces will be private initially, giving the Government the time and space to consider recommendations, including what a proposed definition/s should be and the merits for adopting a definition.

It is important that Government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred, however any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

25) 2 April 2025: Minister for Faith, Lord Khan, announces the new "Combatting Hatred Against Muslims Fund"¹⁶²

This will provide organisations with grants to monitor and record incidents of anti-Muslim hatred. Those funded will be required to share blind data with MHCLG, and were given until 18 May to apply, with funding awarded from July.¹⁶³

This initiative is described as part of Labour's Plan for Change. That document however, presented to parliament on 5 December 2024, makes no direct mention of anti-Muslim hatred, Islamophobia or any related issues.¹⁶⁴

26) 2 April 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 43565 concerning the Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund:¹⁶⁵

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to her Department's publication entitled Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund: prospectus, published on 2 April 2025, whether (a) Tell MAMA and (b) Faith Matters will receive any funding from her Department in 2025-26; and whether they will be required to bid for this funding.

Alex Norris MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary (Housing, Communities and Local Government) replied on 11 April:¹⁶⁶

160. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-03-31/HL6344/>

161. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

162. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-fund-to-tackle-hatred-against-muslims>

163. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus>

164. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/plan-for-change>

165. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-02/43565>

166. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-02/43565>

We are committed to providing a comprehensive service to monitor Anti-Muslim Hatred and provide support for victims.

Applications to the Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund are now open. With cases of anti-Muslim hatred on the rise, up-to-date and detailed information on incidents and drivers of this hatred will play a fundamental part in supporting the Government to combat Islamophobia and ensure Muslim communities feel safe and supported. We welcome an application from Faith Matters.

In addition to announcing the new Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund, the Government made available £500,000 for funding Tell MAMA in 2025/26 to support their work for Q1 and Q2 of 2025/26, subject to signing of a Grant Funding Agreement. This funding offer has now been rejected by Faith Matters. We are disappointed Faith Matters have chosen to decline our offer of a funding extension – but thank them for their many years of work in monitoring anti-Muslim hatred and supporting victims.

27) 3 April 2025: Baroness Verma of Leicester submits written question UIN HL6595 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government:¹⁶⁷

To ask His Majesty's Government why they have created the new Combatting Hatred Against Muslims Fund and not one that commits to combating hatred against people of all faiths.

Lord Khan of Burnley replied for the Government on 16 April 2025:¹⁶⁸

All forms of hate crime are completely unacceptable, and this Government is committed to tackling this wherever it manifests. Our efforts to build a country of tolerance and inclusion apply to people of all faiths and none.

The recent hate crime statistics showed almost 2 in 5 religious hate crimes were targeted against Muslims, which is why the Government announced this funding to provide a comprehensive service to monitor anti-Muslim hate and support victims. With cases on the rise, up-to-date and detailed information on incidents and drivers of this form of hatred will play a fundamental part in supporting the Government to combat anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobia and ensure Muslim communities feel safe and supported.

No one should ever be a victim of hatred because of their race or religion and the Government continues to work with police and community partners to monitor and combat this.

The Government has worked with the police to fund True Vision, an online hate crime reporting portal, designed so that victims of all forms of hate crime do not have to visit a police station to report.

We are committed to protecting the right of individuals to freely practise their religion and we will not tolerate religious hatred in any form.

¹⁶⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/hl6595>

¹⁶⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/hl6595>

28) 3 April 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 43901.¹⁶⁹

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to her Department's publication entitled *Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund: prospectus*, published on 2 April 2025, whether groups that disagree with the Government's new working definition on Islamophobia will be eligible to receive funding.

Alex Norris MP replied for the Government on 11 April:¹⁷⁰

The Government has announced a new fund to provide a comprehensive service to monitor anti-Muslim hate and support victims. With cases on the rise, up-to-date and detailed information on incidents and drivers of this form of hatred will play a fundamental part in supporting the Government to combat anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobia and ensure Muslim communities feel safe and supported.

Non-profit distributing incorporated organisations such as: companies limited by guarantee (including community interest companies), charitable incorporated organisations, and community benefit societies are eligible to apply for funding. Applicants will need to demonstrate their ability to understand and work with Muslim communities.

The prospectus for the fund makes clear that applicants must be aligned with Government values concerning hate crime, extremism, community cohesion, and the value of inter-faith work. They must also be willing to record and monitor instances of anti-Muslim hate crime in such a way that is consistent with the Government's working definition of anti-Muslim hate or Islamophobia, should the Government choose to adopt a definition in future.

Further information can be found in the fund's prospectus, published on GOV.UK.¹⁷¹

29) 3 April 2025: Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer hosts an Eid al Fitr celebration at 10 Downing Street.¹⁷²

Among those invited to attend is Anisa Mahmood of the Anti-Islamophobia Working Group (AIWG). In its report of the event on its website, the AIWG states:¹⁷³

The Government has pledged to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia and engage with the community to tackle this awful form of hatred. The Working Group looks forward to working with the Government going forward and creating a more inclusive society for all.

30) 3 April 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written parliamentary question UIN 43897.¹⁷⁴

169.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/43901>

170.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/43901>

171.<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus>

172.https://x.com/Keir_Starmer/status/1908102856026009640

173.<https://www.aiwg.co.uk/post/celebrating-eid-with-the-prime-minister>

174.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/43897>

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether any Muslim organisations are not eligible to submit bids to the Combatting Hate Against Muslims fund:

Alex Norris MP replied for the Government on 11 April:¹⁷⁵

The Government has announced a new fund to provide a comprehensive service to monitor anti-Muslim hate and support victims. With cases on the rise, up-to-date and detailed information on incidents and drivers of this form of hatred will play a fundamental part in supporting the Government to combat anti-Muslim hate and Islamophobia and ensure Muslim communities feel safe and supported.

Non-profit distributing incorporated organisations such as: companies limited by guarantee (including community interest companies), charitable incorporated organisations, and community benefit societies are eligible to apply for funding. Applicants will need to demonstrate their ability to understand and work with Muslim communities.

The prospectus for the fund makes clear that applicants must be aligned with Government values concerning hate crime, extremism, community cohesion, and the value of inter-faith work. They must also be willing to record and monitor instances of anti-Muslim hate crime in such a way that is consistent with the Government's working definition of anti-Muslim hate or Islamophobia, should the Government choose to adopt a definition in future

Further information can be found in the fund's prospectus, published on GOV.UK.¹⁷⁶

31) 22 April 2025: Crossebencher Lord Singh of Wimbledon tables written question UIN HL6750:¹⁷⁷

To ask His Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of failing to include other faiths, including Sikhs, in the terms of reference for the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition.

Lord Khan of Burnley replies for the Government on 7 May:¹⁷⁸

All forms of racial and religious discrimination are completely unacceptable, including that directed at Sikhs. Hate crime has no place in our communities. Our efforts to build a country of tolerance and inclusion apply to people of all faiths and none.

The Government recognises that the common misidentification of Sikhs as Muslims can compound the burden of religious hatred and discrimination faced by Sikhs. The terms of reference for the group recognise that anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia can also impact communities that are perceived to be Muslim, and that cultural markers adopted by wider faith communities like Sikh, Hindu, Jain and Buddhists are often used to attack communities that are mistakenly identified as Muslim.

175. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-03/43897>

176. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus>

177. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-22/hl6750>

178. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-22/hl6750>

The group will consult with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard and considered.

Though the work of the Group will be independent, Ministers and officials will meet regularly to ensure the work is developing in line with the objective set out in the Terms of Reference. The Government retains the right to not accept the recommendations made by the Working Group.

32) 25 April 2025: Lord Pearson of Rannoch tables written question UIN HL6892:¹⁷⁹

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Khan of Burnley on 11 April (HL6311), whether they will answer the question put, namely whether they will require the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group to take into consideration the views of adherents of religions other than Islam.

Lord Khan of Burnley replies for the Government on 7 May:¹⁸⁰

All forms of discrimination and hate crime are completely unacceptable, and the Government is committed to tackling this wherever it manifests. Our efforts to build a country of tolerance and inclusion apply to people of all faiths and none.

The most recent police-recorded hate crime statistics showed that almost 2 in 5 religious hate crimes target Muslims, which is why we have established a working group to provide rapid advice to the Government. Working group members have been selected for their technical expertise, experience and ability to work to deliver the group's objectives. The group will consult with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard and considered.

The proposed definition will advise the Government and other bodies on the appropriate language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. It must also be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression. The initial advice the working group produces will be private however once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

33) 25 April 2025: Lord Pearson of Rannoch tables written question UIN HL6894:¹⁸¹

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Khan of Burnley on 11 April (HL6313), whether they will answer the question put, namely whether the planned definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia will allow for ridicule or abuse of Islamic beliefs and practices.

On 7 May Lord Khan of Burnley replies for the Government:¹⁸²

179. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6892>

180. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6892>

181. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6894>

182. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6894>

All forms of discrimination and hate crime are completely unacceptable, and the Government is committed to tackling this wherever it manifests. Our efforts to build a country of tolerance and inclusion apply to people of all faiths and none.

The most recent police-recorded hate crime statistics showed that almost 2 in 5 religious hate crimes target Muslims, which is why we have established a working group to provide rapid advice to the Government. Working group members have been selected for their technical expertise, experience and ability to work to deliver the group's objectives. The group will consult with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard and considered.

The proposed definition will advise the Government and other bodies on the appropriate language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. It must also be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression. The initial advice the working group produces will be private however once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

34) 25 April 2025: Lord Pearson of Rannoch tables written question UIN HL6896:¹⁸³

To ask His Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Khan of Burnley on 11 April (HL6315), whether they will answer the question put, namely whether they will invite the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, in formulating its definition, to protect freedom of expression in similar terms to the saving provision in section 29J of the Public Order Act 1986, so that the definition does not, for example, restrict criticism of Islam or prevent individuals from urging Muslims to cease practising Islam.

Lord Khan of Burnley replied for the Government on 7 May:¹⁸⁴

All forms of discrimination and hate crime are completely unacceptable, and the Government is committed to tackling this wherever it manifests. Our efforts to build a country of tolerance and inclusion apply to people of all faiths and none.

The most recent police-recorded hate crime statistics showed that almost 2 in 5 religious hate crimes target Muslims, which is why we have established a working group to provide rapid advice to the Government. Working group members have been selected for their technical expertise, experience and ability to work to deliver the group's objectives. The group will consult with a wide variety of stakeholders to ensure that the voices of all relevant stakeholders are heard and considered.

The proposed definition will advise the Government and other bodies on the appropriate language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment,

183. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6896>

184. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-25/hl6896>

prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. It must also be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression. The initial advice the working group produces will be private however once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

35) 29 April 2025: The Anti-Islamophobia Working Group submits evidence to the Gendered Islamophobia inquiry conducted by the Women and Equalities Committee.¹⁸⁵

They state:

This inquiry is a welcome step in understanding how Muslim women specifically are impacted by Islamophobia.

Our report highlights the triple penalty Muslim women face: race, faith and gender. This intersectionality is important in understanding the experiences of Muslim women and how their identity can create vulnerabilities.

Those that observe hijab are also the first to become victim to hate crime and abuse due to their visible Muslim identity.

The first of the AIWGs recommendations is that there be a definition of Islamophobia. They argue:¹⁸⁶

In order to confront and counter any form of Islamophobia, Britons must recognise and understand it. Far too many do not. Without awareness of Islamophobia and education about the threat it poses, British citizens across society cannot identify and address Islamophobia. If we cannot name, identify, and admit a problem, we cannot begin to solve it.

The effect of this would be far-reaching:¹⁸⁷

Adopting a definition will strengthen the legislative framework empowering regulatory bodies such as Ofcom, and law enforcement agencies, to confront and counter Islamophobia. This will also help capture better data collection on this subject, especially in the form of hate crimes.

36) 29 April 2025: The Aziz Foundation and the University of Bradford publish a jointly funded report entitled “Countering Islamophobia on Campus,” part of the Aziz Foundation’s Muslim Friendly Universities Programme.¹⁸⁸

Written by Dr Yunis Alam and Dr Izram Chaudry, the text:

adds to a growing evidence base that acknowledges Islamophobia as a reality for many students – operating through microaggressions, gaps in accommodation for religious practices, and institutional responses to geo-political events. Crucially, it reminds us that even ethnically diverse campuses are not automatically immune from Islamophobia.

The report contains an institutional response from Professor Udy

185. <https://www.aiwg.co.uk/post/inquiry-into-gendered-islamophobia-official-submission>

186. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/139892/pdf/>

187. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/139892/pdf/>

188. <https://www.azizfoundation.org.uk/aziz-foundation-and-university-of-bradford-publish-co-funded-report-on-countering-islamophobia-on-campus/>

Archibong, under the title Bradford University Equality Diversity and Inclusion. This declares that:¹⁸⁹

As we strive to deliver our ambition to become an anti-racist university, including tackling Islamophobia in all its forms, the report will help facilitate a deeper understanding of the challenges that must be addressed to achieve our goal. This includes confronting Islamophobia wherever and however it manifests – in our culture, attitudes and behaviours, and systems and processes.

Among the recommendations are that the University of Bradford establish an Islamophobia Working Group, that staff should not have to take leave for Muslim religious festivals out of their annual leave allowance, and that it appoint a funded Muslim faith support worker, as opposed to the current unfunded advisors.¹⁹⁰

37) 7 May 2025: Lord Pearson submits to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, written question UIN HL7257: ¹⁹¹

whether they intend to make anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia, as defined by the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group or otherwise, a criminal offence, and if so what penalty the offence will carry.

When this question was answered on 19 May by Lord Khan of Burnley, he simply referred Lord Pearson to the terms of reference for the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group.¹⁹²

These state of the group's work:¹⁹³

This should include advice regarding the merits of Government adopting a non-statutory definition of unacceptable treatment of Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim, including what a proposed definition should be.

The Group's proposed definition will be non-statutory and will provide the Government and other relevant bodies with an understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities.

Any proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression - which includes the right to criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents.

[Emphasis in original].

38) 8 May 2025: Rupert Lowe MP submits written question UIN 51020: ¹⁹⁴

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if she will ensure that blasphemy laws are not reintroduced.

On 16 May, Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:¹⁹⁵

189. <https://www.azizfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Alam-and-Chaudry-2025-Islamophobia-on-Campus.pdf> p. 7

190. <https://www.azizfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Alam-and-Chaudry-2025-Islamophobia-on-Campus.pdf> p. 53-58

191. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-07/hl7257>

192. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-07/hl7257>

193. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

194. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-08/51020/>

195. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-08/51020/>

The government has been clear that there is no blasphemy law in England, and we will not introduce one. Everyone has a fundamental right to freedom of speech. All language adopted by government must be accurate and acknowledge British citizens' unchanging right to freedom of speech and expression.

39) 13 May 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 51878:¹⁹⁶

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether her Department plans to make a submission to the Women and Equalities Committee's inquiry on gendered Islamophobia.

On 28 May Alex Norris MP replies for the Government:¹⁹⁷

We welcome the Committee's inquiry on this topic and ministers will take a keen interest in its findings.

The Government recognises that religious hatred is not specific to one place and can manifest in varying areas, such as online spaces and in public and educational settings. Certain characteristics, for example gender, sexuality and race, can often compound individual's experiences of religious hatred.

British Muslim women are pivotal to our wider communities. They are often the driving force behind interfaith and community initiatives, yet they face specific challenges, with discrimination and intolerance often directed at them.

The Government has established a new working group to provide government with a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia. This work will consider views from a cross-section of society, including those of Muslim women, to improve understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities, supporting wider and ongoing government-led efforts to tackle religiously motivated hate crime and foster cohesion.

40) 13 May 2025: In written evidence to parliament in response to the Crime and Policing Bill, the Muslim Association of Britain denounces the bill as a distraction and calls for proper action against Islamophobia. This includes adopting the APPG on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia.¹⁹⁸

In its evidence the MAB describes itself as:¹⁹⁹

a founding member of the Islamophobia Action Group, which brought together over 80 Muslim organisations to demand urgent action from the government to tackle the alarming rise of Islamophobia, particularly following the spate of far-right riots in the summer of 2024.

The MAB goes on to condemn the Government's response to the

¹⁹⁶<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-13/51878>

¹⁹⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-13/51878>

¹⁹⁸<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5901/cm-public/CrimePolicing/memo/CPB130.htm>

¹⁹⁹<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5901/cm-public/CrimePolicing/memo/CPB130.htm>

riots, stating:

the government, to date, still refuses to meet and engage with the Muslim Council of Britain—the UK’s largest and most representative Muslim umbrella body. It continues to ignore repeated calls to adopt the APPG definition of Islamophobia, denying the very existence of the problem.

41) 14 May 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 52267:²⁰⁰

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, whether the Anti-Islamophobia Working Group provided a training and awareness session in his Department in November 2024.

On 22 May 2025, Michael Shanks MP replied for the Government:²⁰¹

DESNZ is committed to supporting our colleagues in line with our DESNZ Values and the Civil Service Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Expenditure Guidance. The Anti-Islamophobia Working Group provided a one-hour training and awareness session in this Department in November 2024.

The Anti-Islamophobia Working Group describes itself as “an apolitical coalition of civil society organisations and experts coming together to raise awareness and urge change to tackle Islamophobia in the UK.”²⁰² Its website lists three individuals and six groups as members:²⁰³

- Anisa Mahmood, Founder and Director of the AIWG
- Yasmine Ahmed, UK Director of Human Rights Watch
- Professor Ahmed Shaheed, Former UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief
- Aziz Foundation, a family charitable foundation supporting Muslim students
- Fawcett Society, a charity campaigning for gender equality and women’s rights
- The Muslim Cultural Heritage Centre, which provides services to communities in and around North Kensington
- Show Racism the Red Card, an anti-racism, anti-discrimination education charity
- Islamic Relief, a faith-inspired humanitarian and development agency
- HOPE not hate, an advocacy group taking action against mistrust, extremism, and racism

42) 15 May 2025: The National Education Union (NEU) publishes a toolkit for primary schools entitled “Magnifying Magnificent Muslims: Celebrating their impact and legacy.”²⁰⁴

Developed with the charity Education Against Islamophobia,²⁰⁵ “This toolkit aims to support primary school educators to facilitate conversations around Islamophobia and Muslim contributions within the classroom and

²⁰⁰.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-14/52267>

²⁰¹.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-14/52267>

²⁰².<https://www.aiwg.co.uk/about-7>

²⁰³.<https://www.aiwg.co.uk/members>

²⁰⁴.<https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/magnifying-magnificent-muslims-celebrating-their-impact-and-legacy>

²⁰⁵.<https://eai.org.uk/>

wider school community.”²⁰⁶

The toolkit utilises the APPG on British Muslims definition of Islamophobia, and “Dominant Islamophobic narratives as identified by Professor Ian Law et al” – a 2018 “Counter-Islamophobia Kit” developed by Prof Ian Law, Dr Amina Easat-Daas and Prof Salman Sayyid.²⁰⁷

From this intellectual basis, the NEU toolkit goes on to argue:²⁰⁸

Islamophobia is not merely a hate crime. Islamophobia manifests in many ways and permeates various spheres of public life including education, media, politics, policing and healthcare. By conceptualising Islamophobia as a form of racism, we are also taking into account the discrimination, prejudice, tropes, exclusions and marginalisation experienced by victims of Islamophobia.

It then poses a list of questions to potentially use in the classroom:

Encourage pupils to think about:

- *Who experiences Islamophobia?*
- *Where does Islamophobia take place?*
- *Is Islamophobia a recent phenomenon?*
- *What does Islamophobia look like?*
- *What are the causes of Islamophobia?*
- *What must we do if we witness or experience Islamophobia?*
- *Why is Islamophobia wrong?*

The full NEU/Educate Against Islamophobia toolkit teaches children historical firsts such as “Abbas Ibn Firnas, a mathematician, engineer and poet, invented and tested the first human flying machine 1,000 years before motorised aeroplanes were invented.”²⁰⁹ It also proposes suggestions for Islamophobia Awareness Month, and school assemblies to coincide with it.²¹⁰

43) 16 May 2025: In an investigation for UnHerd, journalist David Rose details the engagement between Downing Street and Muslim representatives since Sir Kir Starmer was elected in July 2024, raising the concern that sectarianism is now affecting policymaking.²¹¹

The article points to the political difficulty Labour finds itself in – losing votes to Reform on one side, but vulnerable to The Muslim Vote campaign and candidates allied to it on the other. Rose also quotes the former Labour MP Khalid Mahmood, who is worried that a definition of Islamophobia will encourage Islamists, who will see:

a way of extending their control over the young in schools and universities.

206. <https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/magnifying-magnificent-muslims-celebrating-their-impact-and-legacy>

207. <https://equineteurope.org/counter-islamophobia-kit/> The link to the follow report appears to have been removed from the Equinet site, but the report is available via the IHRC website <https://www.ihrc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/2018.09.17-Job-44240.01-ClK-Final-Booklet.pdf>

208. <https://neu.org.uk/latest/library/magnifying-magnificent-muslims-celebrating-their-impact-and-legacy>

209. <https://neu.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/NEU3833%20Magnifying%20magnificent%20muslims%20HQP%20%282%29.pdf> p. 13

210. <https://neu.org.uk/sites/default/files/2025-05/NEU3833%20Magnifying%20magnificent%20muslims%20HQP%20%282%29.pdf> p. 15

211. <https://unherd.com/2025/05/how-islamism-infiltrated-downing-street/>

If they start to blame every mishap on Islamophobia, it will induce a victim mentality, and isolate them from the mainstream — so making them more vulnerable to Islamist influence.

44) 19 May 2025: Peterborough City Council agrees an “Islamophobia statement”. They declare:²¹²

At a meeting of the authority’s annual council on 19 May 2025, members unanimously agreed to support a statement which has been drawn up following work with partners.

The statement outlines that the council stands ‘firmly against Islamophobia in all its forms and manifestations’. It also states that Islamophobia has ‘no place in Peterborough and fundamentally erodes British values of respect, tolerance and liberty’.

Peterborough City Council defines Islamophobia as:

Fear of and/or prejudice against Muslims or perceived Muslimness whether be it due to expression or otherwise of their religion.

Direct or indirect act(s) of discrimination against Muslims either on individual basis or as a community due to their religion.

Their statement closes with the following words:

We must collectively challenge Islamophobia by promoting education, fostering interfaith dialogue, and advocating for inclusive policies that uphold the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their religious beliefs. Together, we must strive to build a world where Islamophobia has no place, and where diversity is celebrated and respected.

In a press release published the next day, Peterborough City Council explained how the statement had come about:²¹³

In June 2022, the council approved a motion to develop an Islamophobia statement. Officers formed a working group with the Joint Mosque Committee and partners representing the Police, Health and local schools.

45) 21 May 2025: Written evidence is submitted to the Women and Equalities Committee (WEC) investigation into Gendered Islamophobia, by the Community Policy Forum (CPF).²¹⁴

This sees “Islamophobia through the lens of human rights and recognise that Muslim women face disproportionately higher rates of Islamophobia, as reflected in hate crime data.”²¹⁵

The CPF text brings written submissions to the WEC to a total of 34, from both individual academics and organisations including Project Resist, Rights and Security International, Muslim Council of Britain, Runnymede Trust, Anti-Islamophobia Working Group, Maslaha, Muslim Women’s Network UK, MEND, The Three Hijabis, MLegal, National Secular Society

212.<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/council/strategies-policies-and-plans/communities-strategies/islamophobia-statement#:~:text=The%20statement%20outlines%20that%20the%20council%20stands%20%E2%80%98firmly,erodes%20British%20values%20of%20respect%2C%20tolerance%20and%20liberty%E2%80%99.>

213.<https://www.peterborough.gov.uk/engagement-hub/councillors-support-islamophobia-statement>

214.<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8758/gendered-islamophobia/publications/written-evidence/?page=1>

215.<https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/139970/pdf/> p. 3

and Southall Black Sisters.²¹⁶

46) 5 June 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 57653:²¹⁷

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, pursuant to the Answer of 22 May 2025 to Question 52267 on DESNZ: Islamophobia, what definition of Islamophobia was used in the training session.

On 10 June Michael Shanks MP replied for the Government:²¹⁸

The training and awareness session was delivered by the Anti-Islamophobia Working Group as an external provider. The material from the session is owned by the provider and therefore we cannot share the content due to commercial sensitivity.

47) 5 June 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 57654:²¹⁹

To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, pursuant to the Answer of 22 May 2025, to Question 52267, on DESNZ: Islamophobia, if he will publish the training material and handouts produced for the training and awareness session.

On 13 June Michael Shanks MP replied for the Government:²²⁰

The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero does not publish training materials as these resources are intended for internal use only. All training events are run in accordance with the Civil Service code.

48) 10 June 2025: Nick Timothy, Conservative MP for West Suffolk introduces a Freedom of Expression (Religion or Belief System) Bill.²²¹

During his speech, Timothy spoke of the changes to this society since the Satanic Verses controversy:²²²

Since that year, and the protests and fatwa against Sir Salman Rushdie, our public conversation about Islam has been limited through a mixture of self-censorship and more official restrictions, such as the definition of Islamophobia accepted by many public bodies. These restrictions are motivated not by a desire to avoid offence—consider the criticism and mockery made of other religions—but by fear of a violent response by those who are offended.

49) 12 June 2025: Sarah Owen MP, Chair of the Women and Equalities Committee states that the committee cannot do its work properly without a definition of Islamophobia.²²³

In an article on the Muslim news site Hyphen, Ms Owen was quoted as stating:

216.<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8758/gendered-islamophobia/publications/written-evidence/?page=1> and <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/8758/gendered-islamophobia/publications/written-evidence/?page=2>

217.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-05/57653/>

218.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-05/57653/>

219.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-05/57654/>

220.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-05/57654/>

221.[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-10/debates/49A1BE3A-99FE-4F94-82E7-8EB7841787F9/FreedomOfExpression\(ReligionOrBeliefSystem\)#contribution-FA02822F-909B-4178-B3DC-33DB-F2B1CF39](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-10/debates/49A1BE3A-99FE-4F94-82E7-8EB7841787F9/FreedomOfExpression(ReligionOrBeliefSystem)#contribution-FA02822F-909B-4178-B3DC-33DB-F2B1CF39)

222.[https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-10/debates/49A1BE3A-99FE-4F94-82E7-8EB7841787F9/FreedomOfExpression\(ReligionOrBeliefSystem\)#contribution-FA02822F-909B-4178-B3DC-33DB-F2B1CF39](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-10/debates/49A1BE3A-99FE-4F94-82E7-8EB7841787F9/FreedomOfExpression(ReligionOrBeliefSystem)#contribution-FA02822F-909B-4178-B3DC-33DB-F2B1CF39)

223.<https://hyphenonline.com/2025/06/12/islamophobia-definition-sarah-owen-women-equalities-committee/>

It's impossible to tackle something you cannot define. It's like trying to nail down jelly — you can't do it. We need that definition. It's really difficult because different organisations like regional police forces, healthcare organisations and businesses don't have a standard definition to work from. So people will adopt their own, or not adopt one at all, and we can't then target resources because the data just isn't there.

50) 16 June 2025: Dominic Cummings posts on social media that the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group has put out a call for evidence running for four weeks until 13 July.²²⁴

At the time this was not listed on the working group's own section of the HM Government website and so appears to have been sent to selected groups, and from there, leaked. At the time of writing the webpage states:²²⁵

Call for evidence

The Working Group sought to hear from a range of organisations and individuals relevant to its work. This call for evidence ran from 12:01am on 16 June 2025 to 11:59pm on 20 July 2025.

Dear colleagues,

As you may be aware, the UK Government recently [announced](#) the formation of a working group to advise Government on a new definition of anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia. Further information on the group can found in its [terms of reference](#).

We are writing to you because the Working Group is launching a call for evidence to help it make evidenced-based recommendations for Ministers to consider. It would like to hear from you as one of a wide range of organisations and individuals relevant to its work.

The [call for evidence](#) will run for 4 weeks, closing on Sunday 13 July. All responses from individuals will be anonymous unless respondents choose to disclose information about themselves.

The Working Group looks forward to receiving your views.

²²⁴<https://x.com/Dominic2306/status/1934698864188985563>

²²⁵<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition> Correct at 6 October 2025.

The text of the working group's call for evidence follows below.²²⁶

Note that the heading used in this instance is for the Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred Definition Working Group, a slight reordering of the group's name, which on 28 February was announced on the Government website as the working group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition.²²⁷

Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred Definition Working Group - call for evidence

The UK Government's independent working group on an Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition is seeking views from organisations and individuals on the Government adopting a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia.

British Muslims hold a diverse range of opinions, identities, beliefs, and backgrounds. This diversity helps to enrich the fabric of UK society. There are countless examples of Muslim citizens achieving excellence across society – from entrepreneurs to public servants, from sports men and women to musicians and artists.

The UK Government has a responsibility to ensure that people of the UK receive equal treatment and can freely express their views, beliefs, and sense of identity. Sadly, this is not always the case; too many British Muslims have faced discrimination and hatred due to their religion.

Anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia can also impact communities that are perceived to be Muslim. There are often cultural markers which are adopted by wider faith communities like Sikh, Hindu, Jain and Buddhists which are used to attack communities that are mistakenly identified as Muslim. This is also true of people of no faith. The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group will provide advice to the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government on appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. This should include advice regarding the merits of Government adopting a non-statutory definition of unacceptable treatment of Muslims and anyone perceived to be Muslim, including what a proposed definition should be.

The Group's proposed definition will be non-statutory and will provide the Government and other relevant bodies with an understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities. Any proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of the UK's people to exercise freedom of speech and expression – which includes the right to criticise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents.

Any advice that the group gives to Government will be private and will not be made public. Further information on the group can be found in its terms of reference: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred

226. <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=EGg0v32c3kOociSi7zmVql6tlfR9NoR-Ni6VcrK9V665UQTdRVzRMM014UTA0R0ZCNzB-JQ0s4TVNYMS4u>

227. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-launches-working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

[Islamophobia Definition Working Group Terms of Reference March 2025.pdf](#)

When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

Further information

This call for evidence will help the Group to make evidence-based recommendations for Ministers to consider. This call for evidence seeks views on the following topics:

1. What terminology to use
2. The need for a definition
3. Whether racism should be a component of any new definition
4. What should be included within a definition
5. Examples of anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia.

This call for evidence will run for 4 weeks and it will close on 13 July. All responses will be anonymous unless you choose to disclose information about you or your organisation.

If you are unable to access the response form, for example due to a disability, please contact definitionsecretariat@communities.gov.uk for an alternative response form.

51) 17 June 2025: Minister for Faith Lord Khan of Burnley is among the speakers at a parliamentary launch hosted by Afzal Khan MP, of the 2023 European Islamophobia report.²²⁸

The report was co-edited by Prof Dr Enes Bayrakti of the Turkish-German University in Istanbul and Farid Hafez of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia, who is also a senior scholar at Georgetown University's The Bridge Initiative in Washington D.C.

Lord Khan was quoted as stating: "It's difficult to define Islamophobia. But that doesn't mean we can ignore it." He added "A definition alone won't solve it — we need action across schools, universities, the NHS (National Health Service) and the police."²²⁹

In its report of the event on X, Turkish channel TRT World quotes co-author Prof Dr Enes Bayrakti "One of our main observations is that Islamophobia is being legalised in Europe. Many countries are adopting legislation or discussing legislation to limit or to ban the religious rights of Muslims in Europe."²³⁰

228. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/surge-of-islam-ophobia-in-europe-uk-discussed-in-british-parliament/3602394#:~:text=Labour%20MP%20Afzal%20Khan%2C%20vice%20chair%20of%20the,UK%20surged%20by%2073%25%20in%202024%2C%E2%80%9D%20Khan%20said.>

229. <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/surge-of-islam-ophobia-in-europe-uk-discussed-in-british-parliament/3602394#:~:text=Labour%20MP%20Afzal%20Khan%2C%20vice%20chair%20of%20the,UK%20surged%20by%2073%25%20in%202024%2C%E2%80%9D%20Khan%20said.>

230. <https://x.com/trtworld/status/1935036270171824432/photo/2>

52) 18 June 2025: In a Parliamentary debate on the Crime and Policing Bill, Nick Timothy MP puts forward a clause to protect freedom of expression. He told the House of Commons.²³¹

That is urgently needed, because existing legislation has been manipulated to create a blasphemy law for the protection of Islam from criticism and protest. As I said in my speech last week, I am not a Muslim, and I reject any attempt to tell me that I cannot say what I think about any religion. No ideas or beliefs should be above criticism or scrutiny.

The transformation of the Public Order Act 1986, which has become Britain's de facto blasphemy law, needs to be reversed. Sections 4 and 5 of the Act are now used to prosecute individuals for expressing legitimate opinions. The law is being twisted, making the protester responsible for the potentially violent reaction of those who cannot deal with criticism of their beliefs.

The introduction of offences for religious hatred back in 2006 raised enough concerns about free speech from parliamentarians across the spectrum to lead to section 29J of the Public Order Act. The legislation protecting freedom of expression states clearly:

"Nothing in this Part 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".

That was very welcome, but it applies only to part 3 of the Act. That is why my amendment would extend section 29J to the whole of the Public Order Act, to section 1 of the Malicious Communications Act 1988 and to section 127 of the Communications Act 2003.

People from across the country have written to me expressing their support for my new clause, as I introduced it in a similar form in a ten-minute rule Bill last week. I thank in particular Fiyaz Mughal from Tell MAMA for his support. Some have expressed concern for my safety in making this case; in so doing, they reinforce just how grave the crisis of our freedom of expression has become.

It has been encouraging to receive cross-party support for my new clause, but I am disappointed, although not terribly surprised, that not one Member from the Liberal Democrats has supported it or voiced their opposition to the revival in this debate and recently of blasphemy laws. That is not very liberal, not very democratic and not very appropriate for the party of Gladstone.

This Government and political leaders in general must be much braver and more honest about how we deal with the threat to free speech from the threat of violence, but we see the opposite. When I have asked questions about this issue, Ministers have stuck to their lines to take, insisting that we do not have a blasphemy law in this country, when everyone knows that actually, in effect, we do. Even worse, the Government plan to impose a definition of Islamophobia

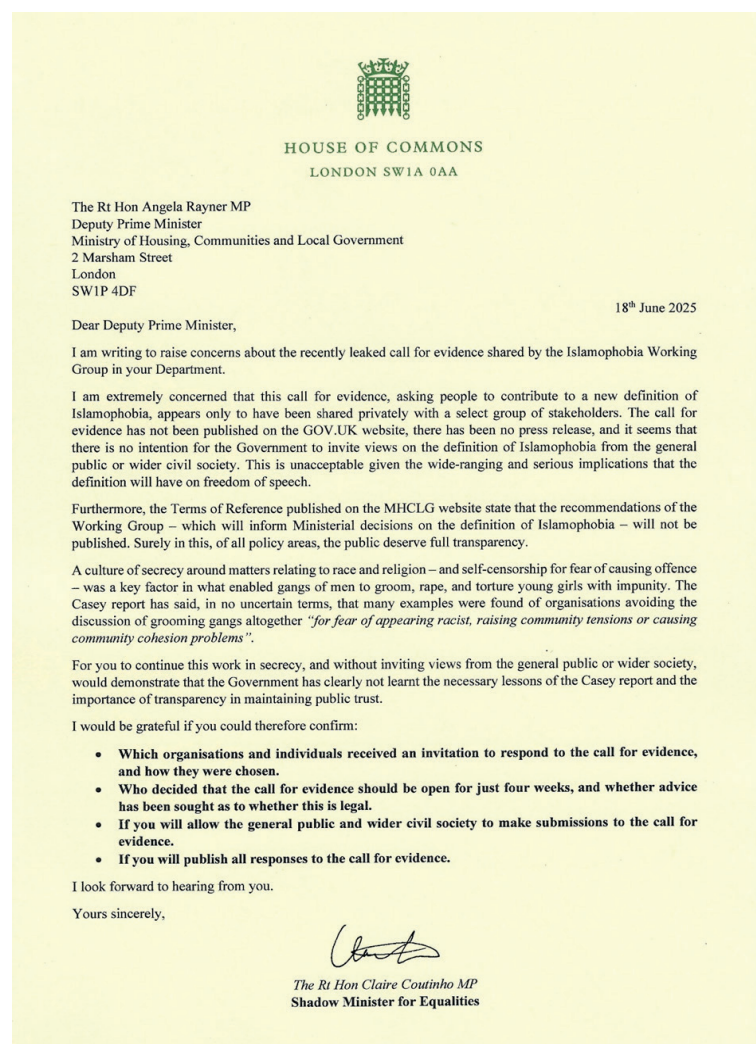
²³¹<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-06-18/debates/2E14CC2E-E19E-469A-A183-A3E7EEBC06B9/CrimeAndPolicing-Bill#contribution-0044C07F-9CBA-4F9D-A408-CAF86EF4E06>

on us that would stop criticism of Islam and Islamic practices, clamp down even more firmly on free speech and empower extremists while letting down the pluralists and moderates in the British Muslim population.

53) 18 June 2025: The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP writes to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner about the “recently leaked call for evidence shared by the Islamophobia Working Group in your Department.”²³²

The letter goes on to ask four specific questions:

- Which organisations and individuals received an invitation to respond to the call for evidence and how were they chosen.
- Who decided that the call for evidence should be open for just four weeks, and whether advice has been sought on whether this is legal.
- If you will allow the general public and wider civil society to make submissions to the call for evidence.
- If you will publish all responses to the call for evidence.



²³²<https://x.com/ClaireCoutinho/status/1935739261258694995>

54) 19 June 2025: In written question UIN 61355 Nick Timothy MP asks “the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if she will publish a list of the organisations that were invited to provide evidence to the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition.”²³³

On 24 June 2025 Alex Norris MP responded for the Government:²³⁴

The work to provide a definition of anti-Muslim hatred is being undertaken by an independent working group. They will provide advice to Ministers as per the established terms of reference and the Government will provide a response in due course.

55) 20 June 2025: Policy Exchange publishes a report entitled “How Not to Tackle Grooming Gangs The National Grooming Gang Inquiry and a Definition of Islamophobia.”

The report calls for the suspension of Dominic Grieve’s Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, at least until the end of the national inquiry into grooming gangs.²³⁵ The report contains a written response by Sir John Jenkins, who had been invited to give evidence to the definition working group:

Dear Dominic,

I received an email on 27 May from the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government, inviting me to meet with the Working Group on Anti Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition. It is kind of you to seek my views, and those of Policy Exchange more generally, on “whether a definition [of Islamophobia] would be helpful”. As it happens, I could not have made any of the times suggested: the notice was simply too short and I was in any case in Saudi Arabia at the time.

More importantly, I have some fundamental reservations about both the process you are overseeing and its likely trajectory. I owe you the courtesy of explaining what these are. I remain unconvinced that anything I might say would make a difference to the Group’s deliberations. But I am always open to being persuaded otherwise.

First, with regard to process: the creation of the Working Group was announced by the Deputy Prime Minister on 28 February and given a six-month timeframe in which to deliver a report. We are now over half-way through that period and very little information about the work of the Group has entered the public domain. I note that the Terms of Reference (TORs) specify that all discussions will be strictly confidential. On a matter of such public policy significance, this is highly unusual. As matters stand, the absence of transparency is bound to raise serious questions about accountability. This must surely damage the credibility of its conclusions.

Second, the precise nature of the Working Group is unclear to me. The TORs

233. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-19/61355>

234. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-19/61355>

235. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/how-not-to-tackle-grooming-gangs/>

talk about “technical experts”. But the question of “Islamophobia” is both heavily contested and subjective. In every definition I have seen — including that of the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims, to whose 2019 report you contributed an introduction — it is treated as a matter of “lived experience”. You described it as such yourself in February. I do not understand how anyone can be a “technical expert” on such experiential matters. What is needed instead is surely expertise in European law and jurisprudence (which must be the operational framework for such issues), Islamic jurisprudence (which is highly complex and varied but provides a context for some of the more extravagant claims in this area), the philosophy of liberty and the history of both western and Islamic political thought — plus a healthily sceptical attitude to critical theory and an intellectually rigorous approach to both social constructivism and what Marxists used to call “reification”.

I should also have thought that the membership of such a group would need to be diverse, representing different viewpoints, normative commitments and experiences. After all, if the government were to adopt a definition of Islamophobia, it would affect everyone in the country, of whatever ethnicity, faith or political persuasion. The Group’s TORs go some way to recognising this — as indeed did the APPG Report. Yet every single member — apart from you — appears to be Muslim. Muslims, of course, have an entirely understandable interest in the matter: but so does everyone else.

Against that background, I am concerned that the Working Group may have begun its work with its conclusions pre-determined. The TORs make clear that its objective is “to develop a working definition”²³⁶ not to decide whether to have one or not. As you will know from my own publicly stated position on this issue, I believe that the case for accepting this — as a first principle — is far from proven. This is, of course, a commonly held view not just in this country but across Europe and across political divides. Yet it seems that the Working Group has, without argument, decided otherwise.

That it has done so would seem to be in keeping with what I understand to be your own public position. The 2019 APPG Report claimed a definition of Islamophobia was needed to prevent “negative attitudes that would not be classed as crimes by police” and to set “appropriate limits to free speech” when talking about Muslims.²³⁷ Throughout the report there are frequent suggestions that this would need to be “legally-binding”. Akeela Ahmed, a member of the current Working Group, is actually quoted as saying that “a definition with legal power is required, one that could be implemented by the government and the police.” Even if the definition were not legally binding, it would still probably operate in much the same way. In the supportive foreword which you wrote, you “greatly welcome[d]” the report and added, “that action is needed I have no doubt.”²³⁸

Then there is the question of how you believe my own views would help shape the current debate. As you will remember, when I and my colleagues at Policy Exchange contested the conclusions of the APPG at the time,²³⁹ you publicly

236. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

237. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d-2feb1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a-6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>

238. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d-2feb1a90cfffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a-6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>

239. <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/A-definition-of-Islamophobia.pdf>

described our report as in large part “total, unadulterated rubbish.”²⁴⁰ I have not changed my views on this matter. I daresay the same is true of you.

Against that backdrop, it is hard not to wonder whether the real purpose of the Group’s approach to me is not so much because they welcome challenge but instead to help legitimise a pre-ordained conclusion by claiming that they consulted those on all sides of the debate – before proposing a definition which they then seek to present as a compromise.

As I have said, my position is a matter of public record²⁴¹, but I am happy to restate it here. Hatred of and discrimination against Muslims are emphatically wrong – but are already illegal. It therefore remains unclear to me exactly what the definitional, policy or legal problem might be that a new, government sponsored definition of Islamophobia is trying to address. What then is its purpose? HMG has periodically insisted that it will be “non-statutory” and will maintain freedom of speech. The current TORs for your Working Group make the same claim. But they also explicitly talk about determining the “appropriate and sensitive language” for discussing issues in this space. And the aim of many of the activists who seek such a definition is clearly to achieve legal enforceability.

Whether a definition is legally binding or not, of course, the impact is clear. You will recall that Sir Trevor Phillips (whom I note you have also invited to speak to the Working Group) was suspended from the Labour Party in 2020 for “Islamophobia”. The suspension was both absurd and later lifted. But it illustrates the problem.

Whatever form of words is chosen, and whatever legal status it has to start with, any definition will have serious consequences. It will almost certainly turbocharge ‘cancel culture’. Indeed, I have heard it described as potentially the most retrograde step in this country since Sir Robert Walpole’s government in 1737 granted the Lord Chamberlain’s office powers to licence theatrical scripts. And it will inevitably reduce social trust and heighten social tensions. In this regard, the debate over whether a definition would be legally binding is something of a red herring. Its effect would inevitably be to shrink even further the space for open debate.

Moreover, this initiative comes at a time when the government is at pains to rebut the charge – not just in this country but from the Trump administration – that it operates a “two-tier” policy in various areas. But unless it literally restates the existing legal protections covering all faiths, any official Islamophobia definition will be an undeniable act of two-tier policy, creating special status and protection for members of one faith alone.

The charge of special treatment may in fact increase hostility towards Muslims, not reduce it. It will certainly strengthen divisive extremism on all sides – not just from the populist right, but also the growing Islamist challenge to mainstream parties. That, too, is likely to harm both community cohesion and Muslims more generally.

240.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2019-05-16/debates/CF834846-65CA-46CD-B955-CDEF42BAFB26/DefinitionOfIslamophobia#contribution-03E5CD9E-711F-4BA6-B342-77EB-121CB1C5>

241.<https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/On-Islamophobia.pdf>

It is unlikely to alleviate Islamist discontent — it will stoke it, creating new opportunities for grievance politics, challenge and attack in every institution and workplace. Even without the force of an official definition, claims of Islamophobia are already used to close down legitimate debate and deter investigation of alleged wrongdoing, as in Rotherham or Batley, with disastrous results all round, including for the wider Muslim community itself.

I have little confidence that the Working Group will approach these questions with an open mind. As I said at the beginning of this letter, I should be happy to be proved wrong on both points.

Yours sincerely,

Sir John Jenkins

Senior Fellow, Policy Exchange

56) 20 June 2025: Dominic Grieve replies to Sir John Jenkins' statement, where the latter declined to meet with the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group. Mr Grieve stated:²⁴²

Dear John,

Thank you for your email. I apologise for my delay in responding but I have been walking in Knoydart where communication is difficult and there is usually no internet.

I may not in one email be able to do full justice to the numerous points you raise. But I can, I hope, deal with a number of them.

Firstly, the terms of reference of the Commission mean what they say. We are there to advise the Government on whether we think a definition of Islamophobia/Anti Muslim hatred would be helpful or not in dealing with a problem which you acknowledge exists and if we do, to recommend what might be in it. The definition is not intended to be legally binding or to alter the existing civil or criminal law, but could be a useful benchmark for public authorities and employers in identifying issues of unacceptable behaviour towards Muslims in the public space that ought to be addressed. The TOR makes clear that there is no question of restricting the right to criticise, insult or abuse Islam or any of its religious practices or beliefs. It is also not going to revive some law of blasphemy. When I was an MP I played a leading role as a front bencher, in both the abolition of the law of Blasphemy and in successfully amending the Racial and Religious Hatred bill, to remove the words “abusive or insulting”. My position on this has not changed since. I was pleased to write a foreword to the APPG report in 2019 as it contained, in my view, much of value, beyond its suggested definition, to a needed debate and to defend it against what I considered to be unreasonable criticisms. But I have never endorsed its suggested definition or argued that it should be adopted and I was not involved

²⁴²Copy in the author's possession.

when it took its evidence and came to its conclusions. My experience of the problems Muslims are facing in terms of abuse and discrimination has come over many years and principally through chairing the Citizens UK inquiry that led to the publication of *The Missing Muslims* in 2018 and other voluntary work which I do.

I do not think that there is anything wrong in the government seeking advice in the way it has from this commission. If it were to choose to adopt something that we recommend it will have to justify it and be held accountable for it and there will doubtless be much public debate on the subject.

But I would much value your input and that of Policy Exchange to our deliberations for precisely the reasons you set out in your email. The matters you raise on the possible effect of any definition are all legitimate concerns that we need to take into account. I have seen no closed minds in the manner to which the commission is approaching its work.

We meet once a week and it would be a pleasure to hear from you in person or by audiovisual link up if possible. But if this is not possible we would value such further input that you might wish to provide in writing.

With best wishes

Dominic

Rt Hon Dominic Grieve KC

57) 24 June 2025: The House of Commons Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee takes oral evidence on the issue of Community Cohesion.²⁴³

During the hearing, Sarah Owen MP, Women and Equalities Committee Chair, had the following exchange with witness Crossbencher Baroness Gohir, representing the Muslim Women's Network UK, concerning both a definition of Islamophobia and how and where that may then be used:

I have two questions. The first, Baroness, comes back to what you said at the beginning about the Facebook comments. What you described there was clearly anti-Muslim racism or Islamophobia. We have talked about how there is not enough necessarily in terms of strengthening the laws and the processes that should go to support tackling this. It is hard to tackle something that is not defined, and to do that in a standardised way. How is the definition work going around the Government's call for a standardised definition of Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism?

Baroness Gohir replied:

I am one of the commissioners on the group to try to come up with a definition. The work is ongoing and we are supposed to conclude that in the next couple of months, so I cannot say anymore. The terms of reference are clear. I think

²⁴³<https://committees.parliament.uk/oralevidence/16186/pdf/>

there is some disinformation about that, which I do want to challenge, that it is blasphemy law through the back door—it is not that—or that it will prevent talking about grooming gangs—it is not that. I think that, if we come up with a definition that is accepted by Government that will help to challenge anti-Muslim prejudice and that will hopefully have a knockon effect.

Sarah Owen MP then asked:

Do you think it will help with the targeting of support as well and the targeting of where more work needs to go? Because as much as we have heard that most of the hate crimes are not reported or recorded, even fewer are recorded accurately, particularly given there is no standard definition.

Baroness Gohir replied:

Yes, 80% of hate crimes are not reported, but this is not just about hate crime. There are lots of micro-aggressions that are being reported when you are accessing services or when you are in the workplace. I try to get data from Acas and the EASS helpline and I got written responses, which is on my written questions profile in Hansard. Only a small number of Muslims, by the looks of things, contact those organisations. If you go to an employment tribunal with a faithbased case and you are a Muslim, the chances of success are very low. I think what a definition could potentially help is in these other settings, not just for hate crime.

58) 24 June 2025: During a House of Commons debate on the National Security Strategy, Nick Timothy MP raises the issue of a definition of Islamophobia.²⁴⁴

I note what the Minister said about social resilience. There is little point in strategising to defend our security and power in the world if we surrender our freedoms and culture without a whimper at home. Therefore, what will the Government do, for example, to stop the misuse of sections 4 and 5 of the Public Order Act 1986, not to mention the decisions of the likes of Bristol university and the Government with their proposed Islamophobia definition, to create a de facto Islamic blasphemy law in Britain?

59) 25 June 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 62594.²⁴⁵

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps the Islamophobia Working Group is taking to consult with stakeholders in (a) private and (b) public.

On 3 July Alex Norris MP answered for the Government:²⁴⁶

I refer the hon. Member to the answer to Question UIN 61355 on 24 June 2025.

This stated:²⁴⁷

²⁴⁴<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-06-24/debates/3E222FED-6C44-400C-8ABD-112BDCDAE98B/NationalSecurityStrategy?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-664C06BD-FD12-457F-B524-AEAF-012673CD>

²⁴⁵<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-25/62594/>

²⁴⁶<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-25/62594/>

²⁴⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-19/61355>

The work to provide a definition of anti-Muslim hatred is being undertaken by an independent working group. They will provide advice to Ministers as per the established terms of reference and the Government will provide a response in due course.

60) 26 June 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 62976 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps she is taking to ensure that the creation of a definition of Islamophobia does not prevent discussion and scrutiny of the religious and ethnic dimensions of grooming gangs.”²⁴⁸

On 4 July Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:²⁴⁹

We are clear vile child sexual abuse must be pursued wherever it is found, and we must guard against misplaced cultural or political sensitivities.

As stated in the Terms of Reference for the Working Group to define Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred, any proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of speech and expression - which includes the right to criticise, scrutinise, express dislike of, or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherents.

Should government accept the recommendations of the Working Group, the definition used will be non-statutory. It will enable government and other relevant bodies to have a greater understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities – with anti-Muslim hate crime having reached record levels.

61) 27 June 2025: The Government’s former counter-extremism advisor, Crossbench peer Lord Walney contends that the proposal to have a definition of Islamophobia could impact the work of counter-extremism experts warning about Islamism, in an interview with The Times.²⁵⁰

Walney stated that “prejudice against Muslims absolutely exists in this country, and we should be alive to it,” but was also against an approach which could lead to Islam being protected from criticism.

62) 27 June 2025: MEND issue an Action Alert on social media to:²⁵¹

SUBMIT EVIDENCE TO THE GOVERNMENT’S WORKING GROUP ON DEFINING ISLAMOPHOBIA It is crucial that Muslims and those who believe in standing up to racism submit to this inquiry in order to protect Muslim communities from Islamophobia.

63) 2 July 2025: The MCB posts on X a video of its Secretary General Wajid Akhtar discussing the Islamophobia definition, following a

²⁴⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-26/62976/>

²⁴⁹<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-06-26/62976/>

²⁵⁰<https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/islamophobia-definition-britain-government-7j8cjj3cs?msockid=18e339d996bc6b-30005f2c4a97826a86>

²⁵¹<https://x.com/mendcommunity/status/1938645186202017899>

meeting at Parliament with MPs on the issue. The accompanying tweet states:²⁵²

Don't let others define Islamophobia for us.

That's not an accident. It's by design.

Those who profit from vilifying Muslims don't want it defined - because that would mean accountability.

Don't let them shape the narrative.

Add your voice. Ask your mosque or local organisation to respond too.

The MCB publishes a link to the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition working group's call for evidence,²⁵³ and a template for doing so with the MCB's suggested answers given.²⁵⁴

That MCB response criticises the working group's existence, complaining that there is already a widely adopted definition of Islamophobia. The MCB declares that:²⁵⁵

instead of trusting British Muslim communities to define the very Islamophobia that we are on the receiving end of, successive UK Governments, both Tory and Labour, have sought more politically convenient alternatives.

The MCB's proposed response to the template is reproduced in the boxed off section below.²⁵⁶

Suggested response template to Call for Evidence by the Islamophobia / Anti-Muslim Hatred Definition Working Group

Background:

- This call for evidence is by a Working Group established by the UK Government in Feb 2025 (see here for [info when it launched](#)).
- The Working Group's remit is to recommend to the Government a definition of Islamophobia / anti-Muslim hatred that is non-statutory but intended to "provide the government and other relevant bodies with an understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities."

The process is far from ideal, because:

MCB:

- There is already a widely consulted and accepted working definition of Islamophobia, articulated by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on British Muslims in 2018
- At the time, every major political party in the UK (except the governing

252. <https://x.com/MuslimCouncil/status/1940339237569581144>

253. <https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=EGg0v32c3kOociSi7zmVql6tIfR9NoR-Ni6VcrK9V665UQTdRVzRMM0I4UTA0R0ZCNzB-JQ0s4TVNYMS4u>

254. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kwOoD-POE3aZ-N5XIHy_YQrbSRZiXHC_-d_-picl46zl/edit?tab=t.0

255. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kwOoD-POE3aZ-N5XIHy_YQrbSRZiXHC_-d_-picl46zl/edit?tab=t.0

256. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kwOoD-POE3aZ-N5XIHy_YQrbSRZiXHC_-d_-picl46zl/edit?tab=t.0

Conservative Party) accepted and adopted the definition, including the Labour Party in Opposition.

- Upon winning the General Election in July 2024, the Labour Party U-turned and after several months, eventually decided to launch this Working Group to come-up with it's own alternative definition.
- Thus, instead of trusting British Muslim communities to define the very Islamophobia that we are on the receiving end of, successive UK Governments, both Tory and Labour, have sought more politically convenient alternatives.

Current problems

MCB:

- Reports of Islamophobic incidents in the UK are at an all-time high
- In UK law, there is legislation designed to protect religious and racial groups facing discrimination, hostility or forms of othering.
- In addition, non-statutory working definitions exist for some religious / racial groups, such as anti-semitism for Jewish communities.
- Non-statutory definitions can help tackle othering of such groups in wider society outside of the legal system, such as through pro-active education in schools, equality monitoring, employment practices etc.
- The UK Government has still not accepted a non-statutory definition of Islamophobia, which many believe is one (of the many) blockers to tackling the issue.

Call for Evidence

- The Working Group's Call for Evidence ([link here](#)) is currently open until 13 July 2025 and contains 13 questions (see below).
- Responses can be submitted as either individuals or organisations.

Suggested template response are provided in navy blue text. You are encouraged to add your personalise your response via your own reflections too (but note tight word count).

1. Organisation or Individual response

Tick whichever applies

2. What is your name? / What is your age?

Complete accordingly

3.What is your job title? / Please state your sex?

Complete accordingly

4.Which organisation do you represent? / Please state your ethnic group?

Complete accordingly

5.If you would be content for the working group to potentially contact you about any of your answers as part of their work on a definition of Islamophobia/anti-Muslim hatred, please leave your email address below

Complete accordingly

6.When referring to discrimination, prejudice, bigotry, hatred or violence directed at Muslims, which term do you think should be used? For instance, ‘Islamophobia’, ‘anti-Muslim hatred’, ‘anti-Muslim racism’, ‘anti-Muslim prejudice’, ‘Muslimophobia’ etc.

Please enter at most 70 characters.

MCB: Islamophobia

7.Please tell us your reason for suggesting this term

Please enter at most 600 characters

MCB: Islamophobia is a widely known and accepted term that has been widely used in the UK for nearly 30 years. The term has parallels to other similar phenomenon such as xenophobia, homophobia etc.

It is recognised globally e.g. the UN International Day to Combat Islamophobia on 15 March.

Substituting “Islamophobia” with “anti-Muslim hatred” is not neutral, rather it appears to be a political move that distances the issue from anti-racism frameworks, thereby reversing years of work by community organisations, academics, legal specialists and policy advocates who have worked on this for decades.

8.Do you think the UK Government should adopt a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia? (any definition would be non-statutory)

MCB: Yes

9.Please could you tell us more about why you think that?

Please enter at most 600 characters

MCB: The very fact this question is being asked is extremely regressive.

The UK Government formally adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism in December 2016, including all 11 examples. At the time, then Prime Minister Theresa May stated: "Britain will be one of the first countries to adopt the definition."

A non-statutory definition of Islamophobia, as currently proposed by Government, will greatly assist key institutions across the country in combatting Islamophobia outside the legal system which is so urgently needed.

10. Do you think Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia is also a form of racism?

Yes in all cases

[MCB]: Yes in most cases

Yes in some cases

No

Don't know

11. Please could you say more about why you think that?

Please enter at most 1000 characters

MCB: Evidence shows Islamophobia is a form of racialised religious prejudice, discrimination, or hostility i.e. it is experienced through an interplay of both race and religion. This approach reflects the lived reality of Muslim communities and aligns with definitions adopted by key European institutions like the ECHR and ECJ. Arguments that Muslims cannot be considered a racial group due to their ethnic diversity have been invalidated by existing legal provisions. Sections 9(4) & 14 of the Equality Act 2010 explicitly recognise that racial groups can include multiple ethnic identities and discrimination may arise from the combination of religion and race.

Muslims should be protected in UK law and policy in a way that is equal in principle and effect to other racialised religious groups, such as Jews and Sikhs. Anti-Sikhism and Anti-Semitism have long been recognised in the UK as both religious & racial, but Islamophobia has thus far been recognised in law only as religious, not racial.

12. Should any of the aspects below feature in a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia? Please tick all that apply.

What Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia includes - (e.g. behaviours, words, beliefs)

What Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia does not include

Who the definition should apply to

When the definition should be used - i.e. situations and settings when the definition should be used, including online and in-person settings.

Other content or components that should be included. Please give an example of up to two things which the definition should cover that are not already included above (please detail below)

MCB: Yes, please refer to detailed examples fully outlined in the Defining Islamophobia report by the Muslim Council of Britain (www.mcb.org.uk/resources/islamophobia)

13.If you wish to, please can you give an example(s) of anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia that you have witnessed, experienced or read about over the last two years?

Please refrain from disclosing personal information about other people involved in these examples - such as their name, address.

Please enter at most 1000 characters

Complete if you have examples to, noting word count of 1000 characters

64) 3 July 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables question UIN 64765 "To ask the Solicitor General, whether the Law Officers have met with (a) Dominic Grieve and (b) the members of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia to discuss the working group and the definition of Islamophobia."²⁵⁷

On 11 July Lucy Rigby MP replied for the Government:²⁵⁸

The Law Officers have not met with Dominic Grieve or the members of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia, to discuss the Working Group or the definition of Islamophobia. The Law Officers have previously met with Dominic Grieve on matters unrelated to the Working Group.

65) 3 July 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables question UIN 64773 "To ask the Secretary of State for Justice, whether (a) she and (b) her Ministers have had discussions with (i) the Chair and (ii) members of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia to

²⁵⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-03/64765/>

²⁵⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-03/64765/>

discuss its work.²⁵⁹

On 11 July Alex Davies-Jones MP replied for the Government:²⁶⁰

Details of ministers' meetings with external stakeholders and organisations are published quarterly in arrears on GOV.UK. Data for the period of July to September 2025 will be published in due course.

66) 3 July 2025: During a Business of the House debate in the House of Commons, Nick Timothy MP attacks the Government's consultation on an Islamophobia definition:²⁶¹

The rigged Government consultation on Islamophobia is overseen by supposedly independent people who have already declared their support for a definition that will kill free speech in this country. An invitation to participate in the consultation was sent only to hand-picked organisations, the identities of which the Government refuse to disclose. One of them appears to be the Muslim Council of Britain, which is supposedly subject to a Government policy of non-engagement. Which organisations were invited to take part in the consultation? Do they include the Muslim Council of Britain? May we have an oral statement, to provide some badly needed transparency?

Rt Hon Lucy Powell MP replied for the Government:²⁶²

It is really important that we tackle Islamophobia in this country. It has been on the rise in recent years, and it is one of the biggest issues raised with me as a constituency MP. We are considering how best to tackle it and define the issues. As ever, all Government consultations are open and transparent, and all the findings will be published and brought to the House in due course.

In the same debate, Andrew Pakes MP also raised the issue of Islamophobia and the work being done by Peterborough City Council:²⁶³

Like most of us in this House, I am incredibly proud of the rich mix of communities that I represent. It was an absolute privilege last week to attend a meeting at the Faizan-e-Madina mosque alongside representatives from our cathedral, our chief of police, our fire services, the mosques and other faith and community leaders to discuss the implementation of our city-wide Islamophobia statement, which came from a motion against Islamophobia put forward by Councillor Jamil and—unlike some debates in this House—received cross-party support. Will my right hon. Friend join me in congratulating Councillor Jamil and Mr Choudhuri on their leadership on this important issue, and will she ensure that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government continues to support communities such as mine as we develop important cross-community initiatives?

Lucy Powell MP replied for the Government:²⁶⁴

I am pleased to hear of the leadership that councillors in my hon. Friend's constituency have brought to this matter. He is absolutely right: Islamophobia

259.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-03/64773/>

260.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-03/64773/>

261.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-07-03/debates/3C633FAA-9179-4113-884F-CE4FABAF491D/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-9701E548-5BBF-4615-BB1D-EA-208B2AFC7E>

262.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-07-03/debates/3C633FAA-9179-4113-884F-CE4FABAF491D/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-89F1EEB6-A3CD-4A1F-8717-E7C-C72001B19>

263.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-07-03/debates/3C633FAA-9179-4113-884F-CE4FABAF491D/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-F714F572-F7E2-40DF-BB6A-59EB28CC3542>

264.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-07-03/debates/3C633FAA-9179-4113-884F-CE4FABAF491D/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-140C5BA7-6E80-4E8A-B031-72CFEEB6316E>

is a scourge across our society. We must do more to work together to stamp it out.

67) 4 July 2025: Sir John Hayes MP tables question UIN 64974 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, how many times the Islamophobia Definition Working Group has met.”²⁶⁵

On 15 July Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:²⁶⁶

The working group has met weekly since it was first established. The meetings included engagement with relevant stakeholders.

68) 4 July 2025: MEND and the MCB issue a joint statement encouraging responses to the consultation on the Islamophobia definition, warning against “others” making the definition.²⁶⁷

DON'T LET OTHERS DEFINE ISLAMOPHOBIA FOR US

The Government has launched yet another consultation on defining Islamophobia.

Those who profit from villifying Muslims don't want it defined – because that would mean accountability.

DON'T LET THEM SHAPE THE NARRATIVE. ADD YOUR VOICE.

Ask your mosque or local organisation to respond too.

DEADLINE: 13 JULY 2025

Respond here:
bit.ly/islamophobiaconsultation2025

Please find example responses at the links below. Please note that copy and paste will be rejected, so ensure we adapt your own response.

bit.ly/islamophobiadefinition2025
bit.ly/islamophobia-define

YOUR MCB & MEND TEAMS

mend **MCB**

69) 7 July 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 65372 to ask “the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether any members of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia informed her Department of

265. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-04/64974/>

266. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-04/64974/>

267. <https://x.com/mendcommunity/status/1941136936908816538>

potential conflicts of interest.”²⁶⁸

On 15 July Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:²⁶⁹

The group members completed declaration of interest forms which have been held by the Department. Their appointment was made on the basis that they had no conflicts of interest in taking up this role. Should any potential conflict of interest arise in future, the group must notify MHCLG in writing and be prepared to step aside from decisions on which they are conflicted.

70) 7 July 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP tables written question UIN 65363 to “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, what steps she has taken to ensure the objectivity of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition.”²⁷⁰

On 15 July Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:²⁷¹

The working group includes members from a cross-section of society and have been selected for their technical expertise and experience and ability to work to deliver the objectives of the group.

The Terms of Reference and full membership of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Working Group were published on Monday 24 March. Per the Terms of Reference, the Group is an independent, non-statutory body. These also set a requirement for group members to immediately raise any potential conflicts of interest with MHCLG.

The group will make evidence-based recommendations for ministers to consider, informed by engagement with a wide cross section of individuals and organisations from across the sector.

A Call for Evidence was recently published on gov.uk to ensure that the advice provided to Government reflects the diverse experiences and opinions of our faith communities’ and beyond across the country.

71) 7 July 2025: On the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) blog section of the HM Government website, a brief update appears on the work of what is described as the Islamophobia Definition Working Group.²⁷²

The update reiterates that two in five police-recorded crimes of religious hate are directed at Muslims and that “The group’s work will support wider and ongoing government-led efforts to tackle religiously motivated hate crime – delivering on the government’s Plan for Change mission for safer streets.”²⁷³

The statement went on to declare that any proposed definition must be compatible with fundamental rights of free speech and expression. A MHCLG spokesman was quoted as saying:²⁷⁴

We are absolutely committed to defending freedom of speech, and any proposed

268. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-07/65372/>

269. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-07/65372/>

270. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-07/65363/>

271. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-07/65363/>

272. <https://mhclgmedia.blog.gov.uk/2025/07/07/islamophobia-working-group-definition/>

273. <https://mhclgmedia.blog.gov.uk/2025/07/07/islamophobia-working-group-definition/>

274. <https://mhclgmedia.blog.gov.uk/2025/07/07/islamophobia-working-group-definition/>

definition must be compatible with the right to freedom of speech and expression. The independent working group has been engaging extensively with a wide range of communities and will provide independent, evidence-based advice to Ministers.

Finally, a link was given to the working group's call for evidence, where it was stated "The Working Group would like to hear from a range of organisations and individuals relevant to its work."²⁷⁵ This gave a deadline of 20 July.

72) 7 July 2025: MEND publish their submission to the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group.²⁷⁶ It calls for the adoption of the 2018 APPG on British Muslims definition, "due to the inherent and manifold flaws in the term anti-Muslim hatred, while underscoring the conceptual superiority and practical applicability of Islamophobia for legal, policy and institutional frameworks."²⁷⁷

MEND go on to explain their reasoning in greater detail:²⁷⁸

Unlike anti-Muslim hatred, Islamophobia equips policymakers with a sociological lens through which to carry out structural analyses of discriminatory policies embedded within, for example, immigration, counter-terrorism legislation, media portrayals of Muslims and employment practices. It is important to note that none of this systemic and structural prejudice against Muslims employs any 'hatred' at all towards Muslims, and hence would not be captured by the narrower term 'anti-Muslim hatred'.

73) 8 July 2025: Nick Timothy MP writes to Dominic Grieve, Chairman of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, setting out a series of questions he has about that body's work and processes. He also denounces the process as "rigged".²⁷⁹

275. <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

276. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf>

277. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf> p. 2

278. <https://www.mend.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Islamophobia-Submission-MEND.pdf> p. 6

279. https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1942913613997416646/photo/1



Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
Email: nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk

8 July 2025

Dear Dominic

I am writing about the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition.

The Government is refusing to answer questions about the process, saying your work is independent, so I must ask you for clarity and transparency. For the sake of the legitimacy of your Working Group, please tell me:

- Which organisations or individuals were invited to participate in the consultation?
- Is the Muslim Council of Britain one of them?
- Are any organisations or individuals with known connections to the Muslim Brotherhood involved?
- On which dates have you held engagement meetings to discuss the definition?
- Which organisations or individuals were invited to attend the meetings?
- Which organisations or individuals have attended the meetings or submitted evidence to them?
- Have any organisations or individuals submitted any evidence separate to the online consultation? If they have, please provide a list.
- Have any invited organisations or individuals expressed opposition to adopting a definition?

On the definition itself, in 2018 you endorsed the definition produced by the APPG on British Muslims. Please tell me:

- Do you still endorse the APPG definition?
- If yes, what is the point of your Working Group?
- If not, what do you disagree with in the APPG report?
- If the report says Islamophobia is "a type of racism", is it possible for a white person to be Islamophobic to a white Muslim convert?
- Is it Islamophobic, as the report says, to say Islam was spread by the sword or that minority groups have been subjected under Muslim rule?
- Is it Islamophobic to accept or support Indian sovereignty over Kashmir?
- Is it Islamophobic to recognise that the crimes of the rape gangs were racially and religiously aggravated, and carried out by men of mainly Pakistani heritage and Muslim faith?
- Is it Islamophobic to show images of Muhammed?

Given the brief timeline of the Working Group consultation, please do reply before Sunday 20 July. I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk

74) 9 July 2025: Laila Cunningham of Reform UK gives a wide ranging interview to the Daily Telegraph in which she comes out against a definition of Islamophobia. She states²⁸⁰

If you want to criticise Islam, then it's up to you. Everyone has their own opinions. People criticise Christianity. I don't think there should be any law legislating how and what people can say in relation to different religions, different cultures. We don't need more government, we don't need more legislation. We need less.

75) 9 July 2025: Middle East Eye reports that the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group has been

280. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/07/06/reform-tough-crime-candidate-could-save-london-sadiq-khan/>

prevented from speaking to the Muslim Council of Britain.²⁸¹

Imran Mulla wrote that the Government has had a veto over who the working group consults, stating:²⁸²

Government sources with knowledge of the matter said that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), headed by Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner, told the group it could not consult the MCB because the government has a policy of “disengagement” with the organisation.

Mulla’s article claimed that the working group had spoken to the Community Security Trust (CST) which monitors anti-Semitism, and had approached Policy Exchange, who declined to speak to them. It was also suggested that the Centre for Media Monitoring had been caught up in the Government’s approach to the MCB.²⁸³

By contrast, the government told the working group it could not consult the Centre for Media Monitoring (CfMM), a watchdog that focuses on media coverage of Muslims. The CfMM was set up by the MCB but says it has now become an independent entity.

76) 9 July 2025: The Muslim Association of Britain (MAB) responds to the Middle East Eye report on the Anti-Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia Definition Working Group (above) by reposting the article by Imran Mulla, and stating:²⁸⁴

“The government’s strategy to tackle Islamophobia: exclude Muslims, empower Islamophobes, and appoint someone linked to illegal Israeli settlements to oversee it all.”

77) 10 July 2025: In a thread on social media, The Muslim Vote campaign alleges that an “Islamophobe will be defining Islamophobia for Britain”.²⁸⁵

The post on X goes on to add:

Trevor Phillips was suspended from Labour for anti-Islam comments.

Now Keir Starmer has put him IN CHARGE of defining Islamophobia.

But it’s the government response to the MCB that will horrify you.

As well as complaining that the Government has shut out the MCB from the consultation but has consulted Policy Exchange, the thread criticises the presence of a civil servant in the Anti-Muslim hatred/ Islamophobia definition working group:²⁸⁶

Meanwhile, the working group is overseen by Joel Salmon.

His background: • Former Board of Deputies officer • Worked for arms industry trade group • Took trips with organization in West Bank settlements

281.<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/exclusive-uks-islamophobia-advisers-consulted-figures-accused-islamophobia-blocked-consulting>

282.<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/exclusive-uks-islamophobia-advisers-consulted-figures-accused-islamophobia-blocked-consulting>

283.<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/exclusive-uks-islamophobia-advisers-consulted-figures-accused-islamophobia-blocked-consulting>

284.<https://x.com/MABOnline1/status/1942937490324689160?t=Ys5ePcHQkCyT-5QqioRDJA&s=19>

285.<https://x.com/themuslimvoteuk/status/1943323840274387235>

286.<https://x.com/themuslimvoteuk/status/1943324063134552214>

78) 11 July 2025: The Muslim Vote campaign issues a clarification stating that Trevor Phillips is not leading the search for a definition of Islamophobia but is, they state, being consulted.²⁸⁷

79) 11 July 2025: Dominic Grieve KC, Chairman of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group takes part in Choppers Political Podcast with GB News presenter Christopher Hope.²⁸⁸

Mr Grieve stated that the work the group was doing was private to government, but that people should look at the terms of reference they had been given:

They make absolutely explicit that we will not introduce some blasphemy law to protect religion whether its Islam or anything else by the back door.

Mr Grieve went on to remind listeners that he had opposed an act on Incitement to Religious Hatred that Tony Blair had attempted to introduce after blasphemy was removed from the statute books. When asked if the group's work would be finished this year, Mr Grieve stated it should be finished "in the Autumn."

80) 14 July 2025: Writing in the Daily Telegraph, Charles Moore argues that the term Islamophobia is a grievous concept for free speech.²⁸⁹

Moore's article followed both the letter from peers to Mr Grieve, but also a meeting Dominic Grieve had held with peers about the working group, in which he reportedly said that the definition would deal, among other things, with 'micro-aggressions.' Charles Moore states that Mr Grieve declined to make public the advice he has been receiving, and argued:²⁹⁰

Mr Grieve does not seem to see that a definition forged for Muslims by Muslims is inherently divisive. How can "community cohesion" be assured if one group can impose its definition on everyone else?

81) 14 July 2025: 37 members of the House of Lords write to Dominic Grieve KC, Chairman of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia working group, warning of the threat a definition poses to free speech, and that it could increase community tensions.²⁹¹

Among the peer's demands is that the working group make the definition freely available for public and parliamentary scrutiny before the Government decides on adoption.

82) 14 July 2025: During Topical Questions in the House of Commons, Kevin Hollinrake MP asked The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Angela Rayner:²⁹²

The chair of the working group on anti-Muslim hatred / Islamophobia, Dominic

²⁸⁷<https://x.com/themuslimvoteuk/status/1943640959612330181>

²⁸⁸<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETYW-su2kNYc&list=PLA2T8B4OekbzITrhB2d1hmqkH-Bq7mR-sM&index=2>

²⁸⁹<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/07/14/is-lamophobia-blasphemy-law-wimbledon-archbishop-canterbury/>

²⁹⁰<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/07/14/is-lamophobia-blasphemy-law-wimbledon-archbishop-canterbury/>

²⁹¹<https://www.scribd.com/document/888147455/dominic-grieve-kc-14-07-25>

²⁹²<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Committees/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-EC859263678/details#contribution-B785A90D-C2CD-4598-BC02-71FB-6649D6E7>

Grieve, who was appointed by the Secretary of State, has previously stated a preference for a definition of Islamophobia that would shut down talk of religion in cases like the grooming gangs scandal. All other members of that committee—again, appointed by the Secretary of State—are adherents of the Muslim faith. Does the Secretary of State not share our concerns that their report and recommendations will be seen as predetermined and biased?

Ms Rayner replied for the Government:²⁹³

No, I do not. There is no blasphemy law in this country because the previous Labour Government got rid of it, whereas the Conservative party had kept it on the statute book for years. We will always protect free speech, including the right to criticise religions. That kind of incendiary language is beneath the shadow Secretary of State.

Mr Hollinrake then followed up with a further question concerning the working group's report, stating:²⁹⁴

Incendiary language? I was merely stating the facts; that is the reality. The right hon. Lady is right in one regard: freedom of speech is on the line. The current position is that the report will be for Government eyes only, and that the decision on a definition will be taken in private. Will she at least commit to making the full report publicly available so that it can be scrutinised in the House and elsewhere before a decision is taken?

The Secretary of State replied:²⁹⁵

As set out in the terms of reference, the independent working group will submit its findings to Ministers. We will then consider its recommendations and set out the next steps. I urge Members to let the independent group get on with its work. If the shadow Secretary of State has views, he should feed them in as part of the call for evidence.

In the same debate, Nick Timothy MP asked:²⁹⁶

Can the Deputy Prime Minister guarantee that no Muslim Brotherhood affiliates will participate in the consultation on the definition of Islamophobia?

Angela Rayner MP replied for the Government:²⁹⁷

We have the terms of reference, and we have the consultation that is going on at the moment. I am not going to provide a running commentary on the work of the independent group. The Government have a non-engagement policy with the MCB, and that position has not changed.

83) 15 July 2025: The Anti-Islamophobia Working Group meets with Minister for Faith Lord Khan of Burnley and presents him with a copy of their February 2024 report "Strategies for eradicating Islamophobia in the UK".²⁹⁸

The AIWG stated:²⁹⁹

It's fantastic to finally have Government engagement in this area and AIWG is

293.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-ECD859263678/details#contribution-CD945B99-0A58-45E0-A184-DC922CE-2BC6C>

294.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-ECD859263678/details#contribution-7946BCC5-212F-4AA0-A8F6-4AE-28DE302E1>

295.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-ECD859263678/details#contribution-58CD3433-C230-46E1-87B7-E798E93F9F54>

296.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-ECD859263678/details#contribution-59DA51FD-9C97-4070-87D9-9591F6297027>

297.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-14/debates/A60E06BA-0FDE-4AF8-AFF1-ECD859263678/details#contribution-56C935C0-7CEF-4EBB-B915-DCAD-626FEB66>

298.<https://www.aiwg.co.uk/our-report>

299.<https://www.aiwg.co.uk/post/presenting-report-findings-to-the-government>

proud to work with this administration in tackling Islamophobia.

A definition is the first and most significant step in addressing this issue. You cannot tackle a problem you cannot name.

Our policy recommendations range from media literacy, to better hate crime data collection, and measures to protect Muslim women.

84) 15 July 2025: Nick Timothy MP submits written question UIN 68060 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the consultation on the Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim Hatred Definition will take evidence from (a) the Muslim Council of Britain, and (b) other organisations with whom the Government has a policy of non-engagement.”³⁰⁰

On 22 July Alex Norris replied for the Government:³⁰¹

The Working Group is an independent, non-statutory body which will provide advice to ministers on a definition of anti-Muslim hatred/islamophobia. Ministers will consider the advice that the independent working group provides.

Any proposed definition by the independent Working Group should comprehensively reflect multiple perspectives and implications for different communities. The Working Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive consultation they’ve already undertaken. The Call for Evidence closed on Sunday 20 July. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was welcome to submit evidence.

85) 16 July 2025: Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP submits written question UIN 68493 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether there is (a) lesbian, (b) gay and (c) bisexual Muslim representation on the Working Group to define Islamophobia.”³⁰²

On 22 July Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:³⁰³

The independent working group includes members from a cross-section of society and have been selected for their technical expertise and experience and ability to work to deliver the objectives set out in the Terms of Reference.³⁰⁴ Alongside drawing on their own expertise, the working group are engaging widely to ensure their proposed definition accounts for the variety of backgrounds and experiences of Muslim communities across the United Kingdom.

86) 16 July 2025: Linsay Taylor, CEO of MEND, denounces the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group’s consultation process, in an article for the magazine Byline Times, entitled “The Government’s Call for Evidence on Islamophobia is a

300.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-15/68060>

301.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-15/68060>

302.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-16/68493>

303.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-16/68493>

304. Here the answer linked to the following: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

Rigged Box-Ticking Exercise”.³⁰⁵

The articles sub-heading states “Ministers are effectively blocking the voices of victims, while ‘soliciting those of the perpetrators’, argues the CEO of Muslim Engagement & Development, Lindsay Taylor.”³⁰⁶ In her piece Ms Taylor observes “Reports claim that the working group was prohibited by the Government from engaging with grassroots civil rights Muslim bodies like the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)”, before going on to declare:³⁰⁷

Reportedly, Trevor Phillips, who was previously suspended from the Labour Party over allegations of Islamophobia, was asked about the definition. The right-wing ‘think tank’ Policy Exchange – for whom Phillips was a senior fellow – was also consulted, which is truly mind-boggling, considering that they have long been accused of foisting Islamophobic tropes into British public’s understanding about Islam and Muslims.

87) 17 July 2025: Lord Lebedev makes a speech in a House of Lords short debate on Online Communication Offence arrests. In it, he attacks any potential definition of Islamophobia.³⁰⁸

As this House learned only last week, former Attorney-General Dominic Grieve has been asked by this Government to further restrict free speech by introducing a new definition of Islamophobia, designed to punish those who dare to question certain beliefs. What impact does the Minister believe Government-sanctioned restrictions on free speech, on Islamophobia grounds, would have had on reporting into the grooming gangs scandals? Would it have made the work of brave reporters such as Andrew Norfolk on uncovering the Rotherham scandal easier or more difficult? I think we know the answer.

88) 18 July 2025: Lord Godson tables written question UIN HL9644 “To ask His Majesty’s Government whether they will publish the representatives from (1) overseas governments, and (2) non-governmental organisations, that the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group has met during the course of its research.”³⁰⁹

On 23 July Lord Khan of Burnley replies for the government:³¹⁰

As noted in the Terms of Reference,³¹¹ the advice provided to government by the independent Working Group will be private. Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

89) 19 July 2025: Shadow Equalities Minister The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP writes to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner setting out her objections to the definition of Islamophobia.³¹²

Writing following a meeting with Lord Khan of Burnley, The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho alleges that the Minister for Faith told her that the Government intends to press ahead with a definition, even if the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group finds that one

305.<https://bylinetimes.com/2025/07/16/government-islamophobia-anti-muslim-hate/>

306.<https://bylinetimes.com/2025/07/16/government-islamophobia-anti-muslim-hate/>

307.<https://bylinetimes.com/2025/07/16/government-islamophobia-anti-muslim-hate/>

308.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2025-07-17/debates/F807CB70-D90D-4A19-9433-99539B7CF21F/OnlineCommunicationOffenceArrests?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-40D379F6-E67E-4F52-BFB8-8FC8118624F2>

309.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-18/HL9644/>

310.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-18/HL9644/>

311.<https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/working-group-on-anti-muslim-hatredislamophobia-definition>

312.<https://x.com/ClaireCoutinho/status/1946558986183918071>

is either unnecessary or undesirable. She argues “the term Islamophobia moves the focus away from the (Muslim) person and onto the religious institution of Islam instead.”³¹³

Ms Coutinho adds that:³¹⁴

Labour tried to carry out this process in secret.

But I uncovered the link to their rigged ‘consultation’ because the public deserve to have their say on something that will limit free speech.

It closes tomorrow. Make sure you share your views below.

90) 19 July 2025: MCB spokesman Miqdaad Versi replies to Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP’s intervention stating:³¹⁵

Disgusting

Apparently “any definition” of the prejudice faced by Muslims, risks “serious consequences for freedom of speech”

These hard right politicians believe there should be a definition for prejudice against Jews but not against Muslims

Their double standards are clear

91) 20 July 2025: The consultation process established by the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, comes to a close.

92) 21 July 2025: The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government announces that the newly formed British Muslim Trust (BMT) is its new partner to monitor and tackle anti-Muslim hatred.³¹⁶

The MHCLG press release explained:

The BMT brings together the Aziz Foundation and Randeree Charitable Trust to form a comprehensive organisation, combining their expertise and strong community foundations, gained from over twenty-years of work, to meet the demands of today’s landscape.

It was also announced that Akeela Ahmed would be appointed CEO of the new organisation, which would have Shabir Randeree as Chairman. There were supportive quotes for the BMT from Minister for Faith Lord Khan of Burnley, Shabir Randeree of the Randeree Charitable Trust, the National Police Chiefs’ Council (NPCC) Advisor for Hate Crime Paul Giannasi and Imam Qasim, Executive Chairman and Founder of the Al-Khair Foundation.

93) 21 July 2025: In a statement to Parliament Alex Norris MP

313.<https://x.com/ClaireCoutinho/status/1946558986183918071>

314.<https://x.com/ClaireCoutinho/status/1946558992115024328>

315.<https://x.com/miqdaad/status/1946564986119078051>

316.<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/british-muslim-trust-appointed-as-new-partner-to-monitor-and-tackle-anti-muslim-hatred>

details the work the British Muslim Trust is committed to as the government's partner:³¹⁷

The Minister for Faith, Communities and Resettlement, my noble Friend Lord Khan, has today made the following statement:

In April the Government announced a new fund to provide a comprehensive service to monitor anti-Muslim hatred and to support victims. The establishment of the fund will contribute to the Government's commitment to creating safer streets as part of the plan for change, with addressing the rise of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hate playing a crucial part in building safer, stronger and more cohesive communities for all.

The grant competition opened on 7 April and closed on 18 May. We received a number of strong applications from organisations that share the Government's enthusiasm and impatience for tackling anti-Muslim hatred.

We have now concluded the competition process, and I am pleased to announce that we have appointed the British Muslim Trust as our new Government-funded partner.

The British Muslim Trust will establish a multi-channel helpline for reporting anti-Muslim hate crimes and incidents, undertake deep outreach into grassroots and Muslim communities, conduct research to better understand Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred, and deliver training and public awareness campaigns to shift perceptions of British Muslims. The British Muslim Trust plans to mobilise and launch its service by the autumn.

The Government will continue to work with communities to confront all kinds of racial and religious hatred, to create a more tolerant and understanding society for everyone.

94) 21 July 2025: A row breaks out over a potential conflict of interest following the news that Akeela Ahmed will be CEO of the new British Muslim Trust.³¹⁸

Ms Ahmed also sits on the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group. This led Lord Young of the Free Speech Union to respond:³¹⁹

This is a clear conflict of interest since Akeela Ahmed's new job will be to monitor and tackle Islamophobia and anti-Muslim hatred. And the more broadly the working group defines it, the more work there will be for the BMT to do and the more money it will be given by the government. I think she has no choice but to step down from the working group.

317. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Com-mons/2025-07-21/debates/2507216000018/CombatingHatredAgainstMuslimsFund?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-F5158CF6-676F-4852-85A4-4AFA4B6E98DE>

318. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/07/21/conflict-interest-row-over-rayners-islamophobia-definition/>

319. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/07/21/conflict-interest-row-over-rayners-islamophobia-definition/>

95) 21 July 2025: Kevin Hollinrake MP submits written question UIN 69292 "To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the new definition of Islamophobia will be adopted by the police for (a) the recording of non-hate crime

incidents and (b) deciding whether to prosecute an individual for telecommunications or public order offences.”³²⁰

On 4 September Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:³²¹

The Government established an independent Working Group to advise the Government on a definition of Islamophobia/Anti-Muslim hatred. Should the Government accept the recommendations of the Working Group, the definition used will be non-statutory. It will enable Government and other relevant bodies to have a greater understanding of unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities. Once the Government has had time to review this independent advice, it will consider its next steps.

96) 21 July 2025: Lewis Cocking MP submits written question UIN 69629 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, if she will hold discussions with the Chair of the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition on the potential merits of publishing all responses to the call for evidence.”³²²

On 4 September Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:³²³

As noted in the Terms of Reference³²⁴ the advice provided to government by the independent Working Group will be private. Once the Government has had time to review the advice, it will consider its next steps.

97) 21 July 2025: David Simmonds MP tables written question UIN 69674 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, whether the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia has had meetings with (a) MEND, (b) CAGE, (c) MCB and (d) Palestine Action; and whether that group plans to accept written representations from those bodies.”³²⁵

On 4 September Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:³²⁶

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Working Group has not met with any of the mentioned groups. The Working Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive consultation they’ve already undertaken which closed on Sunday 20 July. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was welcome to submit evidence.

Per the Terms of Reference for the Working Group³²⁷ the Group is supported by a small secretariat function based within the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, with Senior Civil Servant-level oversight provided in the usual manner.

98) 21 July 2025: David Simmonds MP tables written question UIN 69676 “To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 17 July 2025 to Question 65809 on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Working

320.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69292>

321.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69292>

322.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69292>

323.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69629>

324.https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

325.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69674>

326.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69674>

327.https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

Group, what the (a) grade and (b) title is of the senior civil servant providing oversight of the working group.”³²⁸

On 4 September Alex Norris MP replied for the Government:³²⁹

The Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Working Group has not met with any of the mentioned groups. The Working Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive consultation they’ve already undertaken which closed on Sunday 20 July. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was welcome to submit evidence.

Per the Terms of Reference for the Working Group,³³⁰ the Group is supported by a small secretariat function based within the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, with Senior Civil Servant-level oversight provided in the usual manner.

99) 21 July 2025: After the GB News journalist Tom Harwood comments that a definition of Islamophobia is about protecting a set of ideas, Wes Streeting MP replies:³³¹

Protecting believers, not beliefs.

For example: bacon pinned to mosque doors, bricks thrown through mosque windows, hijabs being pulled from women’s heads, abuse directed at people because of their religion.

All things that have happened to my Muslim constituents.

100) 26 July 2025: Nick Timothy MP reports that he has received a reply from Dominic Grieve, Chairman of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, and reproduces that reply on social media.³³²

Mr Timothy writes in response:

I’m afraid denying he endorsed the 2018 definition, when he chose to write its foreword, stretches credulity.

So does the claim that the consultation was open to anybody, when only handpicked groups were asked to participate.

His report will be secret.

This is not reassuring.

Mr Grieve’s letter is reproduced below.³³³

328.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69676>

329.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-07-21/69676>

330.https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67e12094d8e313b503358c7c/Anti-Muslim_Hatred_Islamophobia_Definition_Working_Group_Terms_of_Reference_March_2025.pdf

331.<https://x.com/wesstreeting/status/1947299611741471153>

332.https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1949030418822369511

333.https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1949030508433662182

Dear Nick,
Thank you for your letter of 8 July concerning the Working Group on Anti Muslim Hatred/ Islamophobia.

The background to this review is that, as you will know, there are currently record levels of anti-Muslim hate crime. In the most recent statistics 2 in 5 police recorded religious hate crimes were targeted towards Muslims.

The advice that we are submitting to ministers once we have completed our findings is private. This is to enable the Government to have the time and space to consider the recommendations we make. Once it has done so, it will consider its next steps in the usual way.

In accordance with our terms of reference we are consulting widely to ensure that our conclusions take account of the diverse views and opinions both on the principle of having any definition and, if we recommend having one, its contents. Our call for evidence was publicly available for any individual or group to submit views by 20th

July and we will be considering the replies received. The terms of reference set out clearly that no definition must interfere with the right to freedom of expression under law. It was made clear by ministers at the outset that our work will not result in any changes to the existing criminal law or the provisions of the Equality Act.

In the second part of your letter you ask me some questions about my personal views. They start however with the mistaken premise that I have endorsed the definition produced by the APPG on British Muslims, which I have not. The APPG produced in my view a valuable report on a serious problem which repays reading in its entirety and I was pleased to write the foreword as I considered it, as a whole, to be a valuable

contribution to an important discussion. But I have never recommended the adoption of its suggested definition. I was responsible with David Davis in 2005/6 in instigating and securing Conservative support for the Labour rebellion that saw the then Labour government defeated for only the second time since 1997 on the amendment of its legislation on "incitement to religious hatred" because of concerns that it would have a chilling effect on freedom of expression. I was also outspoken on the desirability of abolishing the law of blasphemy and arguing against any attempt at its extension. My views on this have not changed since.

Yours sincerely
Dominic

101) 30 July 2025: Following a four-week trial at Liverpool Crown Court, Mohammed Fahir Amaaz is convicted of common assault and two counts of actual bodily harm.³³⁴ The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP commented on the outcome of the trial, observing that:³³⁵

Those who were quick to call the police Islamophobic will face no consequences.

There has been no apology.

Assigning innocence purely based on someone's religion or race, is as wrong as assigning guilt.

Labour's Islamophobia definition will make this worse.

102) 14 August 2025: Nick Timothy MP writes to Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner criticising the Government's appointment of the British Muslim Trust to run the government's monitoring system opposing Islamophobia.³³⁶

Mr Timothy attacks the BMT as being established by the Aziz Foundation, which opposes Prevent, and complaints that the organisation's CEO is already advising the government on the very issue it will be paid to monitor – Islamophobia.



334. This related to violence which occurred at Manchester Airport on 23 July 2024, in which a female police officer received a broken nose. The jury was unable to reach a decision on a count that Mr Amaaz and his brother Muhammad Amaad assaulted PC Zachary Marsden causing actual bodily harm. The Crown is to seek a retrial on those counts. <https://www.gmp.police.uk/news/greater-manchester/news/news/2025/july/man-convicted-of-assaulting-two-female-police-officers-and-a-member-of-the-public/>

335. <https://x.com/ClaireCoutinho/status/195065040877244229>

336. <https://x.com/nj.timothy/status/1955993689601314956?s=48>



Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
Email: nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk

The Aziz Foundation funded the APPG on British Muslim's 2018 report on defining "Islamophobia". This definition – also supported by the Chairman of the Working Group you established – claimed the rape gangs are a "real life example" of a "subtle form of anti-Muslim racism."

The Government's approach to its work on "Islamophobia" is alarming. The consultation will supposedly consider whether a definition is necessary, but also presupposes that it is. It has appointed a Working Group to advise ministers, but the consultation launched by the Working Group was sent only to handpicked recipients and contained loaded questions. Ministers continue to insist the recommendations of the Working Group will be kept secret and refuse to answer legitimate questions about its work. Ministers have admitted, however, that the Working Group is free to take evidence from the Muslim Council of Britain – supposedly banned from contact with government – and affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Now there are serious questions about the decision to grant large sums of public money to the BMT, and about how appropriate it is for the BMT to be appointed to monitor "Islamophobia" and anti-Muslim hatred while its CEO helps to produce the Government's official definition.

Until the Government is able to address all these issues and questions, the contract with BMT should be suspended, and no public funds transferred.

I look forward to receiving your response.

Yours sincerely

Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk

103) 15 August 2025: The Times reports that the report of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group will be delayed. Oliver Wright explains "Angela Rayner's working group sought recommendations from a limited number of groups but the Conservatives critical of the plan disseminated it more widely."³³⁷

The article goes on to state that the panel Chairman, Dominic Grieve has asked for more time to finalise its conclusions. It is also stated that "The panel is now expected to provide its advice to ministers in the autumn, although Rayner has not committed to publishing their findings."³³⁸

104) 17 August 2025: In a critical comment concerning the work of the Anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, Nick Timothy MP states on social media that under government guidance, consultation exercises should be followed by a statement covering the responses received:³³⁹

This is awkward for Labour's rigged "Islamophobia" consultation.

Govt guidance says the following must be published:

- number and summary of responses*
- how responses have influenced policy*
- official response to the consultation*

³³⁷<https://archive.ph/d2lss#selection-1503.0-1503.155>

³³⁸<https://archive.ph/d2lss>

³³⁹https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1957107095670595899?t=1PD_1SKu-Va3At4Zg4EXZ5Q&s=19

Demand transparency!

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5ae6d71ae5274a702130dc30/Consultation_principles.pdf

105) 18 August 2025: The Times publishes an editorial in which it argues against a definition of Islamophobia.³⁴⁰

Noting that the Government has now extended the definition working group's duties until the Autumn, following it being swamped with responses on the subject, *The Times* writes "That expression of public concern should be taken by Labour as a signal that their ill-thought-through plans ought to be abandoned altogether." It goes on to conclude:

To think that now is the time to impose on the public speech-policing guidance that seeks to prioritise "appropriate and sensitive language" to the detriment of free speech is a folly. Britain must remain a country in which even offensive speech is legally protected. The government should abandon the attempt to control it.

106) 18 August 2025: Nick Timothy MP writes to Dominic Grieve KC, head of the Anti-Muslim hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, following press reports that the group will not meet the deadline to deliver its findings by the end of August. Among a series of questions, Mr Timothy asks for clarity in terms of the responses received, and what he considers as a potential conflict of interest involving working group member Akeela Ahmed:³⁴¹

340. <https://www.thetimes.com/comment/the-times-view/article/labour-must-abandon-its-project-to-define-islamophobia-66xnjj0cm>

341. https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1957389886824067174?t=t4FCR6sD4rDq-jet4UweN2Q&s=19



Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk
House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA
Email: nick.timothy.mp@parliament.uk

Monday, 18 August 2025

Dear Dominic

On Friday, *The Times* reported that your “Islamophobia” consultation has received so many responses from concerned members of the public, you have told ministers your working group “needs more time to finalise its conclusions and will not meet the government’s existing deadline of the end of August.”

It is very encouraging that the consultation – having originally only been sent to handpicked organisations – has had so many replies from the public. But concerns about a lack of transparency in your work remain unaddressed. So, I am writing to ask you the following questions. Will you:

- Confirm how many responses you received?
- Publish the names of all individuals and organisations you invited to participate in the consultation?
- Publish the names of all individuals and organisations who responded to the consultation?
- Set out what steps you took to ensure organisations with links to extremism, and any affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood, did not take part?
- Explain whether you have raised with ministers Akeela Ahmed’s conflict of interest as both a member of your working group and the chief executive of the British Muslim Trust, which is now funded by the Government to monitor “Islamophobia” and anti-Muslim hatred?
- Commit to publishing your report and recommendations to ministers in full, notwithstanding your terms of reference?

You will be aware that official government guidance on staging a consultation requires you to “publish any response on the same page on gov.uk as the original consultation, and ensure it is clear when the government has responded to the consultation. Explain the responses that have been received from consultees and how these have informed the policy. State how many responses have been received.”

Yours sincerely

Nick Timothy
Member of Parliament for West Suffolk

107) 25 August 2025: The founder of Tell Mama, Fiyaz Mughal, tells *The Times* that the UK could face unrest if the Government pushes ahead with a definition of Islamophobia.³⁴²

Mr Mughal explained:

We need proper enforcement of existing laws, not additional definitions which in fairness given that the world has also changed, given our country and the dynamics has changed, any definition that marks out one community is going to cause major social divisions. and it’s happening in our society. We don’t need social divisions. We need the implementation of existing laws which are more than sufficient.

It will raise community tensions and it will just add to the narrative that

³⁴²<https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/uk-social-unrest-labour-islamophobia-definition-dk9dvrmrt?msocid=18e339d996bc6b-30005f2c4a97826a86>

actually one community is getting a better deal than another. And that just leads to local anger.

Mr Mughal also had doubts about the practicality of the Government's position that any definition would be non-statutory:³⁴³

It doesn't matter whether it's statutory or non-statutory. Defence and prosecutors, defence solicitors and prosecutors could use this in legal argument. Now the judges could say, actually, I'm not going to listen to this because it's non-statutory. But some judges may well listen to it.

108) 27 August 2025: Stephen Evans, Chief Executive Officer of the National Secular Society, publishes an article in which he argues that a definition of Islamophobia will do more harm than good.³⁴⁴

Mr Evans notes a rising tide of hatred against Muslims:

exacerbated by a climate of suspicion fuelled by negative stereotypes and narratives spread on social media. The ongoing migrant crisis, the grooming gangs scandal and the Hamas-Israel conflict further complicate perceptions of Muslims, contributing to a toxic environment which leaves many British Muslims feeling unjustly vilified and targeted.

He does not believe however, that a sense of 'something must be done' should lead to a definition of Islamophobia, calling instead for the government to assert and defend liberal values:

clarify the distinction between the extremist Islamist minority and the moderate Muslim majority. By doing so, the Government can reinforce the voices of the many British Muslims who embrace secular liberal democracy and simply seek peaceful coexistence.

109) 27 August 2025: A new campaign group, Keep The Law Equal, emerges to oppose a definition of Islamophobia.

In its opening post on social media, it states:³⁴⁵

Britain is a tolerant country, but Keir Starmer is working to favour one religion over the rest.

We are campaigning against a two-tier society. We are campaigning to Keep The Law Equal.

The group's website describes itself thus:³⁴⁶

Keep The Law Equal is a grassroots campaign to defend fairness in Britain.

We believe:

The law must treat everyone equally.

No religion should have privileged legal status.

343.<https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/uk-social-unrest-labour-islamophobia-definition-dk9dvrmt?msocid=18e339d996bc6b-30005f2c4a97826a86>

344.<https://www.secularism.org.uk/opinion/2025/08/defining-islamophobia-will-do-more-harm-than-good>

345.<https://x.com/KeepTheLawEqual/status/1960610867621274019>

346.<https://keepthelawequal.com/>

True tolerance comes from fairness and freedom, not censorship

110) 29 August 2025: David Simmonds MP tables written question UIN 71454 to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department:³⁴⁷

pursuant to the Answer of 21 July 2025 to Question 65009 on Islamophobia, whether her Department has (a) submitted evidence to and (b) had meetings with the Working Group.

On 8 September Sarah Jones MP replied for the Government:³⁴⁸

The work he refers to is being overseen by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

As agreed with the Home Secretary, the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing are currently conducting a review of non-crime hate incidents. We will update Parliament in due course on the findings of that review.

111) 29 August 2025: David Simmonds MP tables written question UIN 71468 to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department:³⁴⁹

whether she plans to use the Islamophobia Working Group definition for non-criminal hate incidents.

On 8 September Sarah Jones MP replied for the Government:³⁵⁰

The work he refers to is being overseen by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

As agreed with the Home Secretary, the National Police Chiefs' Council and College of Policing are currently conducting a review of non-crime hate incidents. We will update Parliament in due course on the findings of that review.

112) 1 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables written question UIN 73759, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁵¹

what information her Department holds on the number of meetings between the Working Group on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition and (a) external organisations and (b) other individuals since 28 February 2025.

On 12 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁵²

The independent Working Group on Anti-Muslim-Hatred/Islamophobia has undertaken extensive engagement with stakeholders from a wide range of perspectives to ensure its proposed definition accounts for the variety of

³⁴⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-08-29/71454>

³⁴⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-08-29/71454>

³⁴⁹<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-08-29/71468>

³⁵⁰<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-08-29/71468>

³⁵¹<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-01/73759>

³⁵²<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-01/73759>

backgrounds and experiences across the United Kingdom. This work has been supported by a small secretariat function based within the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

As set out in the published Terms of Reference for the Working Group, the independent advice provided to government by the Working Group will be private.

113) 1 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables written question UIN 73794, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁵³

pursuant to the Answer of 28 July 2025 to Question 65978 on Islamophobia, whether the True Vision reporting portal will use the Government's definition of Islamophobia.

On 12 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁵⁴

The Government has established the independent working group to advise government on a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia, and how to best understand, quantify and define prejudice, discrimination, and hate crime targeted against Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

The advice the group produces will be private initially and once government has had time to review the advice it will consider the next steps.

114) 2 September 2025: Jonathan Hall KC, the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, declares his opposition to a definition of Islamophobia.³⁵⁵

Mr Hall stated:

I am against an Islamophobia definition as its directed against a thing, rather than an anti-Muslim hatred law which is about protecting people. I am very conscious of the free speech debate. I'm no JD Vance and I have a fundamental support for the outlines of the Online Safety Act actually, even though of course it will be perfected because we're just at the foothills. I see that a comedian has been arrested at Heathrow for tweets. There seems to be some zealotry among some parts of law enforcement. And I suppose at the moment I wouldn't entrust something too spongy or inaccurate when it comes to speech and expression with the authorities.

115) 4 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables UIN 75175, to ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁵⁶

with reference to the Terms of Reference for the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, for what reason the advice provided to her Department by the independent Working Group will be private.

353. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-01/73794>

354. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-01/73794>

355. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoPOnuax76k> 23:00 onwards.

356. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-04/75175>

On 16 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁵⁷

It is important that government is transparent in the actions it takes to address all forms of hatred. However, any independent work should also have the space to consider sensitive and complex issues in private. This is the approach the Working Group will take when considering the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim.

Once submitted, the Government will review the Working Group's advice and consider next steps.

116) 4 September 2025: During a Business of the House debate in the Commons, Independent MP Shockat Adam raised the issue of Islamophobic attacks during the month of August, the language used both in Parliament and in the media, and the need for a definition of Islamophobia.³⁵⁸

In the month of August alone, across our country mosques as well as women, children and families have been subjected to unacceptable levels of Islamophobic abuse and attacks—from a young Muslim mother with her young child being abused in a park in Yorkshire for simply wearing a niqab, to a young autistic man in Manchester being threatened to have his throat slit and told to go to his mosque. Does the Leader of the House agree that some language and rhetoric used by some Members both in this Chamber and in some media outlets fuel this hatred on the streets? Given the ever-increasing number of attacks, will she remind Members of our responsibility in our use of language, and will she urge the Government to expediate the ongoing consultation and urgently adopt a robust definition of Islamophobia?

Leader of the House of Commons Lucy Powell MP replied for the Government:³⁵⁹

The rise in Islamophobia, which we have all seen in our constituencies—I know I have seen it in mine—is absolutely unacceptable. Hate crime itself is unacceptable, and we need to call it out and root it out. We have the independent working group, which is soon to advise Ministers on the definition of Islamophobia, and we have a wider action plan to tackle the issues. The hon. Member is right to say that we should all be mindful of the language we use and the impact it might have.

357.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-04/75175>

358.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-04/debates/5B918E77-1AC9-4AFD-8892-EE5B16FD5624/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-458F8E83-4048-4C1B-8938-BF-F549EEE955>

359.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-04/debates/5B918E77-1AC9-4AFD-8892-EE5B16FD5624/BusinessOfTheHouse?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-474BF8A5-0CB3-4D07-B083-E894CD0D1D73>

360.<https://x.com/MuslimCouncil/status/1963931426249757149>

117) 5 September 2025: Responding to the resignation of Angela Rayner from Government, the MCB criticises her time in office, including that she had rejected the APPG definition of Islamophobia, and had not met with the MCB.³⁶⁰

MCB MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN

MCB Statement On The Resignation of Angela Rayner

Angela Rayner's short tenure as Deputy Prime Minister and Communities Secretary has been underwhelming. We have seen slow movement on housing reform, a lacklustre response to last summer's riots, and a rejection of the widely accepted APPG definition of Islamophobia replaced instead with a confusing and drawn-out MHCLG-led consultation.

For the Muslim Council of Britain, this is especially disappointing. As Deputy Leader of the Opposition in 2022, Angela Rayner was happy to meet us. Yet, as Deputy Prime Minister in 2025, she chose to parrot the same non-substantive non-engagement lines used by the Conservatives against the MCB throwing Britain's largest Muslim umbrella body under the bus.

It is little wonder that trust in politicians remains so low across all communities.

Friday 5th September 2025

118) 5 September 2025: MEND respond to the resignation of Angela Rayner by describing her tenure as “disappointing” and that “her record includes serious shortcomings in relation specifically to Muslim communities.”³⁶¹

The statement goes on to add:

Following the far-right riots of July 2024, which saw violent attacks on Muslims and mosques, Ms Rayner's response was inadequate. While condemning disorder and misinformation, she failed to explicitly acknowledge the far-right Islamophobic nature of the violence or commit to the urgent measures needed to safeguard Muslim communities.

Equally concerning was her rejection of the APPG definition of Islamophobia once in government, even though Labour endorsed it while in opposition. Despite support from councils, trade unions, Muslim communities and anti-racism organisations, Ms Rayner and the Labour government declined to adopt the definition as government policy, ambiguously citing the need for “further consideration.” Instead, Ms Rayner chose to launch a convoluted consultation process into whether the government should use the term anti-Muslim hatred or Islamophobia. This decision has left a critical gap in policies aimed at protecting Muslims at a time of rising Islamophobia.

361. <https://www.mend.org.uk/angela-rayners-resigns/>

119) 5 September 2025: Nick Timothy MP posts on social media and writes to the new Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, Steve Reed, stating:³⁶²

Labour's "Islamophobia" consultation is rigged.

It's taking evidence from extremists.

And it will destroy your free speech.

The new minister responsible for producing a definition backs a version that shuts down discussion of the rape gangs.

In his letter, Mr Timothy asks the Secretary of State to:³⁶³

- Confirm how many responses the Working Group has received?
- Publish the names of all individuals and organisations invited to participate in the consultation?
- Publish the names of all individuals and organisations who responded to the consultation?
- Set out what steps you will take to ensure organisations with links to extremism, and any affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood, do not take part?
- Explain whether you will address Akeela Ahmed's conflict of interest as both a member of the working group and chief executive of the British Muslim Trust, which is now funded by the Government to monitor "Islamophobia" and anti-Muslim hatred?
- Commit to publishing the Working Group's report and recommendations in full, notwithstanding the terms of reference?

On the definition itself, in 2018 you endorsed the definition produced by the APPG on British Muslims. Please tell me:

- Do you still endorse the APPG definition?
- If yes, what is the point of the working group?
- If not, what do you disagree with in the APPG report?
- If the report says "Islamophobia" is "a type of racism", is it possible for a white person to be "Islamophobic" to a white Muslim convert?
- Is it "Islamophobic", as the report says, to say Islam was spread by the sword or that minority groups have been subjected under Muslim rule?
- Is it "Islamophobic" to accept or support Indian sovereignty over Kashmir?

³⁶²https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964025737603580028

³⁶³https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964025737603580028/photo/1 and https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964025737603580028/photo/2

- Is it “Islamophobic” to recognise that the crimes of the rape gangs were racially and religiously aggravated, and carried out by men of mainly Pakistani and Muslim faith?
- Is it “Islamophobic” to show images of Muhammad?

120) 5 September 2025: Lord Lebedev tables written question UIN HL10267 to the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁶⁴

To ask His Majesty’s Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the ongoing work to create an official definition of Islamophobia does not exacerbate anti-Muslim sentiment.

On 18 September Baroness Taylor of Stevenage replied for the Government:

The Government has established the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition working group to advise the Government on the appropriate and sensitive language to describe, understand and define unacceptable treatment, prejudice, discrimination and hate targeting Muslims or anyone who is perceived to be Muslim. The Government is committed to ensuring that efforts to define Anti-Muslim hatred/ Islamophobia contribute positively to tackling the issue, informed by extensive engagement with a wide range of communities and views.

121) 7 September 2025: Nick Timothy MP responds to the appointment of Shabana Mahmood as Home Secretary by stating on social media:³⁶⁵

The new Home Secretary promoted the 2018 definition of “Islamophobia”.

This sought to shut down investigation of the rape gangs and entryist tactics by extremists.

She endorsed the Muslim Council of Britain and spoke at an event organised by MEND.

In a letter to Ms Mahmood, he goes on to ask a series of questions about her past positions on a definition of Islamophobia, including whether she still endorses the 2018 APPG definition of Islamophobia.³⁶⁶ Mr Timothy asked:

- Do you still endorse the APPG definition?
- If yes, what is the point of the working group?
- If not, what do you disagree with in the APPG report?
- If the report says “Islamophobia” is a type of racism, is it possible for a white person to be “Islamophobic” to a white Muslim convert?

³⁶⁴<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-05/hl10267>

³⁶⁵https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964715968678215900

³⁶⁶https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964715968678215900/photo/1

- Is it “Islamophobic” as the report says, to say Islam was spread by the sword or that minority groups have been subjected under Muslim rule?
- Is it “Islamophobic” to accept or support Indian sovereignty over Kashmir?
- Is it “Islamophobic” to recognise that the crimes of the rape gangs were racially and religiously aggravated, and carried out by men of mainly Pakistani heritage and Muslim faith?
- Is it “Islamophobic” to show images of Muhammad? environment.

122) 8 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables a written question UIN 75610 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁶⁷

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, pursuant to the Answer of 4 September 2025 to Question 69674 on Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group, if he will amend the terms of reference of the working group such that representations submitted by organisations which (a) are subject to the Government’s policy of non-engagement and (b) condone criminal activity should not be considered by the working group.

On 19 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁶⁸

As per their Terms of Reference, the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia Definition Working Group should work within HMG’s published engagement standards and will inform the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in writing of all external engagement prior to it taking place. The Working Group has engaged extensively to inform their independent advice to Ministers on a definition and have not met with any organisations subject to the Government’s policy of non-engagement. The Working Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive engagement they’ve already undertaken. The Call for Evidence closed on Sunday 20 July. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was able to submit evidence.

123) 8 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables a written question UIN 75615 to the the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁶⁹

whether the British Muslim Trust will be contractually obliged to use the Government’s new definition of Islamophobia when recording anti-Muslim hatred under Combating Hate Against Muslims fund; and if he will publish a copy of the contract.

On 29 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁷⁰

The British Muslim Trust and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local

³⁶⁷<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75610/>

³⁶⁸<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75610/>

³⁶⁹<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75615/>

³⁷⁰<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75615/>

Government have signed a Grant Funding Agreement, rather than a contract. It is not a stipulation of the Grant Funding Agreement that any specific definition is used by the British Muslim Trust. The prospectus set out that to apply for funding an organisation must 'be willing to record and monitor instances of anti-Muslim hate crime in such a way that is consistent with the government's working definition of anti-Muslim hate or Islamophobia, should the government choose to adopt a definition in future'.

124) 8 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables a written question UIN 75621 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁷¹

with reference to paragraph 83 of his Department's policy paper entitled *Restoring trust in our democracy: Our strategy for modern and secure elections*, published on 17 July 2025, whether the code of conduct will include Islamophobia.

On 16 September Samantha Dixon MP replied for the Government:³⁷²

The Government is clear that all forms of harassment, intimidation and abuse are unacceptable and have no place in our democracy. As set out in the *Restoring Trust in our Democracy* strategy, we will work with the Speaker's Conference and the Electoral Commission to develop a code of conduct for campaigning which is fit for purpose. This code will aim to reduce harassment and intimidation of all forms, improve the tone of campaigning, and promote a safer and more inclusive democratic environment.

125) 8 September 2025: Sir James Cleverly MP tables a written question UIN 75628 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁷³

pursuant to the Answer of 22 July 2025 to Question 68060 on Islamophobia, whether the Working Group has had a meeting with MCB; and whether they have received evidence from the MCB.

On 29 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh MP replied for the Government:³⁷⁴

The Working Group is an independent, non-statutory body which will provide advice to ministers on a definition of anti-Muslim hatred/islamophobia. Ministers will consider the advice that the independent working group provides.

The Working Group have engaged with a range of stakeholders and proposed definition by the independent Working Group should reflect a wide range of perspectives from different communities. The terms of reference set out that the Working Group should work within HMG's published engagement standards. The Government has a non-engagement policy with the MCB and that position has not changed.

The Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive engagement

371. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75621/>

372. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75621/>

373. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75628>

374. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-08/75628>

they've already undertaken. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was able to submit evidence.

126) 8 September 2025: Nick Timothy MP writes to Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood, raising the presence in the United Kingdom of the Forum of European Muslim Youth Organisations (FEMYSO), stating it is "an organisation recently identified by the French government as a key player in the Muslim Brotherhood."³⁷⁵ Among a series of questions, Mr Timothy asks "Has FEMYSO or its officers contributed to the Government's working group on Islamophobia, and if so in what capacity?"³⁷⁶

127) 9 September 2025: James Cleverly MP tables written question UIN 75979, to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁷⁷

pursuant to the Answer of 22 July 2025 to Question 68060 on Islamophobia, whether the responses to the Islamophobia definition call for evidence from organisations which are subject to his department's policy of non-engagement would be considered and given material weight.

On 17 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh replied for the Government:³⁷⁸

The Working Group is an independent, non-statutory body which will provide advice to ministers on a definition of anti-Muslim hatred/islamophobia. Ministers will consider the advice that the independent working group provides.

Any proposed definition by the independent Working Group should comprehensively reflect multiple perspectives and implications for different communities. The Working Group launched a Call for Evidence to build on the extensive consultation they've already undertaken. The Call for Evidence closed on Sunday 20 July. It was open to the public and any individual or organisation was welcome to submit evidence.

128) 9 September: Sir James Cleverly MP tables a written question UIN 75992 to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government:³⁷⁹

To ask the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, with reference to the Written Ministerial Statement of 21 July 2025, HCWS872, on Combating Hatred Against Muslims Fund, how many bids to provide an anti-Muslim hatred monitoring and victim support service through the Combating Hate Against Muslims fund were received by his Department.

On 18 September Ms Miatta Fahnbulleh replied for the Government:³⁸⁰

The Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government received 34 applications to the Combating Hatred Against Muslim Fund.

All applicants were required to submit a detailed business plan as well as

375.https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964963260912050663/photo/1

376.https://x.com/NJ_Timothy/status/1964963260912050663/photo/2

377.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-09/75979/>

378.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-09/75979/>

379.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-09/75992/>

380.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-09/75992/>

provide answers to questions related to 16 criteria. More information on the 16 criteria which applications were assessed against can be found on the fund's prospectus.³⁸¹

Due diligence checks were undertaken into all high scoring applicants. Financial checks were undertaken using the Spotlight due diligence tool. This uses risk indicators, developed by national security and fraud experts to inform decisions about whether to award a grant or contract, and onward monitoring, providing real time information from a range of government and commercial data sources in order to risk assess grant applicants including any linked directors, companies and beneficial owners.

129) 10 September 2025: The House of Commons holds a debate "Equality Act 2010: Impact on British Society."³⁸²

Three speakers raise the issue of the Islamophobia definition – Andrew Rosindell MP, Claire Coutinho MP and Seema Malhotra MP, for the Government. Mr Rosindell stated:³⁸³

we increasingly hear calls to adopt a legal definition of Islamophobia. What kind of society do we want to live in? One where these proposed definitions conflate criticism of an ideology or a religion with hatred of people? Criticising Islam as a religion is not the same as hating people of the Muslim faith. Indeed, freedom of thought and freedom of speech require the ability to critique religious ideas, no matter what the religion may be. To criminalise such critique would be wholly inconsistent with the liberal, democratic principles that have evolved in this country over centuries.

The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP argued³⁸⁴:

the Government are set on introducing an Islamophobia definition, which they have tried to do behind closed doors. That will have a chilling effect on the ability of our public services to grasp difficult and sensitive issues, such as grooming gangs, gender inequality or Islamist extremism. They are doing this under the pretence of combating hatred and violence, which are already against the law.

Seema Malhotra MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Department for Education) (Equalities) replied:³⁸⁵

Let me address some of the other points made in the debate, starting with addressing head-on the point about the definition of Islamophobia and the ongoing working group. Members will have heard it said in Parliament before that, should the Government accept the recommendations of the working group, the definition used will be non-statutory. It will enable the Government and other relevant bodies to have a greater understanding of the unacceptable treatment and prejudice against Muslim communities.

We have seen a massive rise in hate crime against the Muslim and Jewish communities, which accounts for about 71% of hate crime in the past year. As the right hon. Member for East Surrey (Claire Coutinho) knows, the working

381.<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus/combating-hate-against-muslims-fund-prospectus>

382.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-10/debates/5C9D-ED7E-3149-4A26-AD7A-BE3378FA4ECA/EqualityAct2010ImpactOnBritishSociety?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-2B268323-61FB-48F0-81E5-6121BB02CC51>

383.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-10/debates/5C9D-ED7E-3149-4A26-AD7A-BE3378FA4ECA/EqualityAct2010ImpactOnBritishSociety?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-A53D6AFB-25AE-4B13-BFC7-BD-1F96DBFBFA>

384.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-10/debates/5C9D-ED7E-3149-4A26-AD7A-BE3378FA4ECA/EqualityAct2010ImpactOnBritishSociety?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-10EB679F-30C7-4D6F-AA2E-E55536379743>

385.<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-10/debates/5C9D-ED7E-3149-4A26-AD7A-BE3378FA4ECA/EqualityAct2010ImpactOnBritishSociety?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-2B268323-61FB-48F0-81E5-6121BB02CC51>

group's proposed definition must be compatible with the unchanging right of British citizens to exercise freedom of belief and expression, which includes the right to criticise, express dislike of or insult religions and/or the beliefs and practices of adherence. We fundamentally believe in freedom of speech but we do not believe in hate. It is important to have a legal framework that supports people's rights to have their own freedom of religion and belief, without fear of what could happen to them.

130) 10 September 2025: Baroness Warsi tables question UIN HL10430 to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.³⁸⁶

To ask His Majesty's Government what plans they have to commission research into the scale and effect of Islamophobic disinformation originating from foreign states on public attitudes in the United Kingdom.

On 24 September Baroness Taylor of Stevanage replied for the Government:³⁸⁷

At present, the government does not have plans to commission research specifically on the impact of Islamophobic disinformation on public attitudes. However, the government remains committed to addressing religiously motivated hate crime and promoting social cohesion.

131) 15 September 2025: In a House of Commons Topical Questions debate, Nick Timothy MP asks of Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood MP:³⁸⁸

The 2018 definition of Islamophobia by the all-party parliamentary group on British Muslims said that the debate about rape gangs was a form of "anti-Muslim racism". Among other alarming things, it said that raising concerns about entryism into government by extremists, which is an established tactic of the Muslim Brotherhood, was Islamophobic. The Home Secretary endorsed that definition. Does she still believe that addressing the religion of rape-gang members or identifying Muslim Brotherhood entryism is Islamophobic, or does she now disown that definition?

Shabana Mahmood MP replied:³⁸⁹

That definition sought to give context to patterns of behaviour. Let me be clear for the hon. Gentleman and the whole House: there is absolutely no excuse for, or hiding of, the criminality of those who engage in heinous crimes such as those involving rape or grooming gangs. That is why the Government will take forward the Casey recommendations and have that national inquiry. He knows that the Government are working with a working group on a definition of Islamophobia. We have been absolutely clear that we will not pursue any measures that would impinge on our ancient right of freedom of speech.

386. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-10/hl10430>

387. <https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-10/hl10430>

388. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-15/debates/BD6B8AF1-523D-45EB-87C4-6B72FF9A2C68/TopicalQuestions?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-03B9F95C-E47E-40A6-B384-D394778F2FE5>

389. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-09-15/debates/BD6B8AF1-523D-45EB-87C4-6B72FF9A2C68/TopicalQuestions?highlight=islamophobia#contribution-B2B5788C-CA45-427D-9D63-03E9733C91B1>

132) 15 September 2025: Baroness Warsi tables written question

UIN HL10551:³⁹⁰

To ask His Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with faith leaders regarding recent Islamophobic hate crimes against Muslim communities and mosques since August.

On 30 September Baroness Taylor of Stevenage replied for the Government:³⁹¹

The government is committed to building a Britain where all communities feel safe, and where the contributions of people of faith and belief, including Muslims, are warmly welcomed. The government protects the right of individuals to practise their religion freely at their chosen places of worship. There is no excuse for violence or threats targeted at places of worship and we support the police in taking strong action against those who carry out these crimes.

The government works with partners to combat religiously motivated hatred, including by taking steps to safeguard Muslim places of worship and faith schools, providing £29.4 million through the Protective Security for Mosques scheme. We are providing funding for the British Muslim Trust to provide a comprehensive service to monitor anti-Muslim hatred and support victims. The government has also established an independent working group to advise government on a definition of Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia.

133) 21 September 2025: Tom Cross KC, an advisor to Attorney General Lord Hermer sitting on his "A" Panel of Crown Counsel, warns that an Islamophobia definition could have a detrimental effect on the criminal justice system, warning that it was reasonable to:³⁹²

suppose that such a definition would in practice be relied on in objecting to the use of powers by the police and security services to investigate persons who happen to be Muslim for criminal offences, including of the most serious violent or sexual nature.

As well as potentially interfering with such investigations, Mr Cross also warned that the police and prosecutors would have to take the definition into account under both the Public Order Act 1986 and Equality Act 2010.

134) 22 September 2025: The Rt Hon Claire Coutinho MP, the Shadow Equalities Minister, writes an article for The Times, arguing that an Islamophobia definition will give special status to one group, and shut down difficult but necessary conversations on issues like grooming gangs, gender equality and Islamist extremism.³⁹³

Ms Coutinho warned:

We have seen this playbook before, with the spread of radical gender ideology through our institutions. Behind closed doors, an army of activists convinced

390.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-15/hl10551>

391.<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-09-15/hl10551>

392.<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/09/21/hermer-adviser-warns-against-islamophobia-definition/>

393.<https://www.thetimes.com/uk/politics/article/labours-islamophobia-definition-gives-grooming-gangs-impunity-clbfcjvds>

officials in the NHS, schools and councils to embed an extreme doctrine as official policy, then they used it to stamp down on those who disagreed.

Just as women were labelled “transphobic” and hounded from their jobs if they stood up for the reality of biological sex, accusations of Islamophobia will be thrown at public servants who want to raise legitimate concerns. This is already rife within our institutions.

135) 25 September 2025: Journalist Noa Hoffman of The Sun writes that the Prime Minister is “under pressure to scrap Labour’s controversial plan to impose Islamophobia definition.”³⁹⁴

The article goes on to declare that Whitehall officials are looking to move away from a definition, while Downing Street is said to still be in favour.

A Government source is quoted as saying:

We want to bury the Islamophobia definition – we believe that current equalities laws already fully cover issues around prejudice against Muslim people.

The article also stated:

But insiders said that binning the definition will require Downing Street, who are still wedded to the idea.

They said the main stumbling block is the huge number of MPs whose constituencies can be swayed by Muslim voters.

136) 26 September 2025: Writing for the Turkish news site TRT World, former MCB Secretary-General Zara Mohammed condemns President Trump’s speech to the United Nations General Assembly, saying it “exposes the global consequences of Islamophobia.”³⁹⁵

Ms Mohammed goes on to argue:

Riots, mass rallies, graffiti and mosque vandalism are not isolated incidents. Rising Islamophobia does not strengthen Europe. It weakens it, fuelling division and polarisation at a time when leadership is urgently needed.

Our Prime Minister must be unequivocal. Islamophobia is not a side issue. It is a danger to public safety and to democratic life. It must be confronted with the same urgency as any other form of hate. And beyond words, the government must set out a confident national narrative in which all parts of society are proudly part of the whole.

The world needs leadership that faces real crises: ending the suffering in Gaza, addressing displacement, poverty, and climate change. Islamophobia cannot be allowed to become the language of distraction, deflection, or scapegoating.

137) 27 September 2025: New Communities Secretary Steve Reed MP declares he is willing to overrule the Anti-Muslim hatred/

³⁹⁴<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/36836680/keir-starmer-pressure-scrap-labour-islamophobia-definition/>

³⁹⁵<https://www.trtworld.com/article/d8f53a01a24f>

Islamophobia definition working group, if it suggests anything that might undermine free speech. The claim also emerges that Dominic Grieve, the Chairman of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia definition working group, has doubts about a definition.³⁹⁶

Mr Reed was quoted in the *The Daily Telegraph* as saying:

We haven't got a definition to introduce yet. There's a group working on it and we'll have to look at what they propose.

But at the front of my mind in taking that decision will be, I will defend free speech.

He further stated:

I'm not going to bring in blasphemy laws by the backdoor.

So let's wait and see what the independent group comes up with and then we'll take a view. But if people are concerned about it, there will be no infringement of free speech whatsoever.

The same article also claimed that Dominic Grieve KC, tasked with leading the search for a definition of Islamophobia, had concerns:

Mr Grieve himself reportedly expressed doubt about the need for a definition in a meeting with ministers in July.

If he decides to recommend one, ministers will then have the option to accept or reject his suggestions.

The definition will not become law, but Labour says it will be used to inform the Government and agencies when dealing with cases of discrimination.

138) 30 September 2025: In an article by Charles Hymas in The Daily Telegraph, Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood is quoted as expressing the reservation that an official definition of Islamophobia could limit free speech, by giving "special treatment" to Muslims.³⁹⁷

The report followed a discussion between Ms Mahmood and Spectator editor Michael Gove, during the Labour party conference in Liverpool. The Telegraph noted that on the issue of specific solutions for specific communities, she stated:

"That might be, in the end, the right answer," she said. "But it might be the case as well that everyone is safer when you're subject to the same law, and that there's just a deeper understanding amongst our public services, our police and our local councils about how hatred presents itself, whether it's towards the Jewish community or Muslims or Sikhs or other groups as well.

"So I would say that it's imperative that whichever solution you come to, it actually does the job firstly, but that what it doesn't do is actually create further conditions that increase hatred, rather than deal with it, because then

396. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/09/27/steve-reed-veto-islamophobia-law-free-speech-labour/>

397. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/09/30/islamophobia-law-risks-giving-muslims-special-treatment/>

people feel like one group's getting special treatments against another group, and also that now their freedom of speech has been curtailed.

"And they might not have said it two weeks ago, but they're definitely going to say it now, because it's been taken away from them. And so that is the public confidence point.

"It's also crucial because we believe in freedom of speech, but it's actually crucial if you want to keep communities safe."

139) 1 October 2025: In an article on the Hyphen website headed "Sacked faith Minister: Government must tackle hatred against Muslims" Lord Wajid Khan calls for more work to be done to address divisions in society.³⁹⁸

On the suggestions that the Government had doubts about the Islamophobia definition, it was reported: "Khan said he had contacted the communities department and No 10 about the reports and that he would be "disappointed" if there wasn't action on the "particular problem of religious hate crime".

140) 2 October 2025: Imam Qari Asim, co-Chairman of the British Muslim Network issues a statement responding to the terrorist attack on a synagogue in Manchester:³⁹⁹

My thoughts are with the victims, their families and British Jewish community, who are understandably shaken and hurt.

This act of violence is utterly abhorrent and has no place in our society. Places of worship must always be sanctuaries of peace and safety - not scenes of fear and hatred.

We cannot ignore the growing tide of religious hatred in our country. Whether it is Islamophobia, antisemitism or any form of bigotry, we must confront it together - with unity and courage, not silence. As a British Muslim leader, let me be clear - antisemitism in all its forms is totally unacceptable.

The bloodshed and violence in the Middle East - which is excruciatingly painful to witness for all of us - must not be allowed to poison our streets in Britain. We must never let pain abroad be used to justify hatred and violence against anyone at home. British Jews, British Muslims and all communities must be able to live together without violence, intimidation and the fear of being targeted because of their faith.

Together, we must reject hatred, resist division and reaffirm our shared commitment to peace, human dignity and co-existence. We ask all communities to remain vigilant and supportive, in particular around places of worship. This is a moment for all communities to come together and build a future rooted in respect, understanding and shared values.

³⁹⁸<https://hyphenonline.com/2025/10/01/wajid-khan-faith-minister-labour-britain-muslims-is-lamophobia/>

³⁹⁹https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/live/2025/oct/02/police-reports-stabbing-synagogue-greater-manchester-live?CMP=share_btn_url&page=with%3Ablock-68de77a-98f08694a84a03f47#block-68de77a-98f08694a84a03f47

141) 5 October 2025: MEND respond to the apparent arson attack of a mosque in Peacehaven, Sussex, by requesting that the incident must be treated as terrorism, posting on social media #endIslamophobia #endhate.⁴⁰⁰



142) 6 October 2025: Writing on the Daily Telegraph's website, the author of this document, Paul Stott, suggests that the Government may be looking to introduce a special representative or envoy on Islamophobia, following the examples in Australia and Canada.⁴⁰¹

143) 7 October 2025: The Network of Sikh Organisations (NSO) issues a pre-action protocol letter to the Government, over the intention to introduce a definition of Islamophobia.⁴⁰²

The NSO describes the background to its action, thus:

Regrettably, we have not had a satisfactory response from the government to assuage our concerns that any non-statutory definition of 'Islamophobia' will impact our freedom as Sikhs (and that of other faiths) to practice our faith and talk freely about our history without fear of censorship or potentially risk criminal investigation into so called 'hate' crime. In short, any non-statutory definition of 'Islamophobia' breaches our right under law to practice and

400. <https://x.com/mendcommunity/status/1974871882932576622>

401. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2025/10/06/islamophobia-tsar-foolish-scheme/>

402. <https://nsouk.co.uk/nsos-decision-to-send-the-government-a-pre-action-protocol-letter-over-islamophobia/>

manifest our religion without interference or sanction — an inalienable human right.

They set out three grounds for potential legal action:

Ground 1: Any definition of Islamophobia that interferes with the right of the Sikh community (and other communities) to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest religion or belief, in worship, teaching practice and observance, engages Article 9(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights (“ECHR”);

Ground 2: Any “non-statutory” definition of Islamophobia that engages Article 9(1) does not meet the requirement of being prescribed by law, and cannot therefore impose a justified limitation on Article 9(1) rights for the purpose of Article 9(2) of the ECHR;

Ground 3: Any definition of Islamophobia will place Sikhs, as well as members of other faiths, at a disadvantage, and will therefore be discriminatory for the purpose of Article 14 of the ECHR.

The NSO then conclude:

We hope to resolve this matter without lodging a claim. However, if British Sikhs’ rights to practise their religion, observe their cultural history, or express opposition to objectionable beliefs are challenged, pursuing legal action against the government will be considered a necessary course of action.

In response to media coverage of the letter in *The Times*, a spokesman for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government explained: “No decisions on a definition have been made, and we will not accept any definition which damages freedom of speech or discriminates against religious communities.”⁴⁰³

144) 9 October 2025: The Home Office publishes official statistics for hate crime in England and Wales for the year ending 31 March 2025.⁴⁰⁴

Police recorded hate crimes against Muslims increased by 19%, from 2,690 to 3,199 offences, with a spike after the Southport murders. The report goes on to state:⁴⁰⁵

In the last year, there were 106 religious hate crimes per 10,000 population targeted at Jewish people, the highest rate for any religious group. The next highest rate was for hate crimes targeted at Muslims, with 12 per 10,000 population. ‘Other religion’ had a rate of 18 religious hate crimes per 10,000 population.

403.<https://www.thetimes.com/article/4984b7df-b000-4c44-815a-d00fb-09b892e?shareToken=a8d9c0f1055c3871dba0b-3fe8d60843a>

404.<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2025/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2025>

405.<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2025/hate-crime-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2025> see note 1.

145) 13 October 2025: The Muslim lifestyle website Hyphen reports that the working group tasked with developing a non-statutory definition of Islamophobia submitted its report to the

Government “last week”.⁴⁰⁶

In the same article, working group member Baroness Gohir comments that:

Ever since the group was announced there’s been regular articles every single week about our views as a group — we were attacked and demonised. There was a lot of misinformation about what was going to be in the definition, without any evidence. I think there was a lot of scaremongering taking place

Baroness Gohir also stated that the group had arrived at its definition independently, without Ministerial interference. She expressed disappointment that Secretary of State Angela Rayner had not met the group, saying this “showed a lack of respect” although Faith Minister Lord Khan had met the group regularly.

146) 13 October 2025: The Home Secretary, Shabana Mahmood, makes a statement to the House of Commons on the 2 October terrorist attack at a Manchester Synagogue. In it she described it’s perpetrator as “a terrorist pledging his allegiance to the warped ideology of Islamism.”⁴⁰⁷

When responding, Shadow Home Secretary Chris Philp, raised the issue of the Islamophobia definition.⁴⁰⁸

We should not be afraid to call out this extremist ideology wherever we see it. It has no place in this country. Will the Home Secretary pledge to drop any definition of Islamophobia that would make calling out Islamist extremism any harder? The fact is that 75% of MI5’s terrorism-related caseload is related to Islamist extremism, and the vast majority of terrorist murders in the past 25 years were perpetrated by Islamists, yet only 13% of the Prevent caseload is Islamist related. What does the Home Secretary propose to do about that?

147) 16 October 2025: In an article published in The National (UAE), journalist Thomas Harding claims “Britain set to ditch plans for Islamophobia law.”⁴⁰⁹

Stating that he has spoken to those “inside the room” Harding argues that Downing Street, and Communities Secretary Steve Reed are now opposed to a definition, on the grounds it both risked bringing back past laws concerning religion, and secondly that it would embolden the far-right.

148) 18 October 2025 The Daily Telegraph publishes an article entitled “Labour tears up Islamophobia definition” adding that the “Party adopts new wording to define ‘anti-Muslim hate’.”⁴¹⁰

The piece, by Janet Eastham and Nick Gutteridge, goes on to claim that the new definition suggested by Dominic Grieve KC’s working group, will remove all references to “Muslimness”, and to “Islamophobia”, a departure from the 2018 APPG on British Muslims definition. The new definition is now with Communities Secretary Steve Reed for consideration.

Baroness Gohir, a member of the Anti-Muslim Hatred/Islamophobia

406. <https://hyphenonline.com/2025/10/13/islamophobia-anti-muslim-hatred-working-group-definition-shaista-gohir/>

407. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-10-13/debates/7A05D463-9A75-45B4-AB7E-28C883F9BD3A/ManchesterTerrorismAttack#contribution-F5FF4886-F8B4-4718-AF14-A6037329BCA3>

408. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2025-10-13/debates/7A05D463-9A75-45B4-AB7E-28C883F9BD3A/ManchesterTerrorismAttack#contribution-EC8780CF-C304-4198-A595-20A44B39F143>

409. <https://www.thenationalnews.com/news/uk/2025/10/16/britain-set-to-ditch-plans-for-islamophobia-law/>

410. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/10/18/labour-party-rows-back-islamophobia-definition-muslimness/>

definition working group, is quoted as saying:⁴¹¹

I expect those who opposed the already existing definitions for being too vague, or because they felt these prevented criticism of Islam or debate of other issues of concern to them, will want ministers to adopt ours, as I believe it resolves those concerns.

Of course, if our wording is not adopted, the existing definitions – including versions some regard as problematic – will continue to be used, and adopted by organisations, and increasingly so, given the rise in anti-Muslim hostility in Britain in all areas of life.

411. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2025/10/18/labour-party-rows-back-islamophobia-definition-muslimness/>

Appendix – support from politicians, public and other bodies for Islamophobia Awareness Month in the last two years

Devolved authorities

In addition to the Labour Governments in the UK and Wales, IAM has been supported and/or promoted by the Scottish Parliament,⁴¹² and the London Assembly.⁴¹³



Local authorities and local authority bodies (26)

Bexley Community Safety Partnership⁴¹⁴

Birmingham City Council⁴¹⁵

Blackburn & Darwen Council⁴¹⁶

Brent Council⁴¹⁷

Bury Council⁴¹⁸

Calderdale Council⁴¹⁹

Camden Council⁴²⁰

Edinburgh City Council⁴²¹

Greenwich Council⁴²²

Hackney Council⁴²³ (which promoted a reading list in its libraries)

412. https://ugc.production.linktr.ee/67ba6988-0be0-41a3-9b0d-80c7a717b04b_IAM-Highlights-2023.pdf and <https://x.com/HumzaYousaf/status/1722728486480036003>

413. <https://x.com/LondonAssembly/status/1728352833731236203>

414. <https://x.com/BexleyCSP/status/1852278154263724251>

415. <https://x.com/BhamCityCouncil/status/1852301991554297868>

416. <https://x.com/blackburndarwen/status/1721899396022108668>

417. https://x.com/PhIR_R/status/1727045554184822842

418. <https://x.com/BuryCouncil/status/1729036127581958254>

419. <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/iam-supporters/>

420. https://x.com/Nash_Ali21/status/1729551869540794535 and <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/iam-supporters/>

421. <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/13843/city-of-edinburgh-council-and-police-scotland-issue-joint-statement-for-islamophobia-awareness-month-2023>

422. https://x.com/Royal_Greenwich/status/1862058924888711347

423. <https://x.com/hacknycouncil/status/1852305372670800083>

424. <https://www.lovehackney.uk/reading-lists/islamophobia-awareness-month-2024-seeds-of-change>

425. <https://x.com/haringeycouncil/status/1730296062873657673>

426. <https://x.com/HaveringSP/status/1728022746838278618>

427. <https://x.com/IslingtonLife/status/1729466099467514001>

428. <https://x.com/LCCHateCrime/status/1861359186593882133>

429. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1729453337693601801>

430. <https://x.com/lutoncouncil/status/1852289482600612317>

431. <https://x.com/MancLibraries/status/1718939613891621145>

432. <https://x.com/SaferManchester/status/1854477808057123014>

433. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1903041279086223467> and <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1790283034152853580>

434. <https://x.com/RedbridgeLibs/status/1853877857648603352>

435. <https://x.com/sandwellcouncil/status/1857375519127290062>

436. <https://x.com/TamesideCouncil/status/1854465086510792832>

437. <https://x.com/Mendcommunity/status/1860036374906438144>

438. <https://x.com/MayorOfWY/status/1854086931497308271>

439. <https://x.com/WestYorkshireCA/status/1856335106283069778>

440. <https://www.aiwg.co.uk/post/aiwg-flagship-islamophobia-awareness-month-24-event>

441. <https://x.com/lutoncouncil/status/1862468878976094311>

442. <https://x.com/PolicePosAction/status/1852259734511890519>

443. https://x.com/schthgc_nwopcc/status/1856279936513749430

444. <https://x.com/NorthantsPolice/status/1857060081075929222>

445. <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/news/article/13843/city-of-edinburgh-council-and-police-scotland-issue-joint-statement-for-islamophobia-awareness-month-2023>

446. <https://x.com/DeputyMayorPCWY/status/1856818035514118456>

447. <https://www.islamophobia-awareness.org/iam-supporters/>

448. https://x.com/UoB_Business/status/1726563883266265138

449. <https://x.com/UniofBradford/status/1853427063299977600>

450. <https://x.com/DUEDI7/status/1852297532199547055>

451. <https://x.com/UniofHerts/status/1854436397425332441>

452. <https://x.com/MiddlesexUni/status/1724367341486510520>

453. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1904161462970409406>

454. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1783500068194038006>

including Arun Kundnani's The Muslims Are Coming)⁴²⁴

Haringey Council⁴²⁵

Havering Safeguarding Partnerships⁴²⁶

Islington Council⁴²⁷

Leeds City Council⁴²⁸

Steve Rotherham, mayor of Liverpool City Region⁴²⁹

Luton Council (which endorsed the discredited CfMM negative stories figure)⁴³⁰

Manchester City Council⁴³¹

Manchester Community Safety Partnership⁴³²

Newham Council, for whom IAM did Islamophobia awareness training.⁴³³ (Newham also appears to have funded IAM events in 2022, 2023 and possibly 2024).

Redbridge Council⁴³⁴

Sandwell Council⁴³⁵

Tameside Council⁴³⁶

Lutfur Rahman, mayor of Tower Hamlets, who floodlit the Town Hall in green to celebrate IAM⁴³⁷

Tracey Brabin, mayor of West Yorkshire⁴³⁸

West Yorkshire Combined Authority⁴³⁹

Westminster Council⁴⁴⁰

Police forces, police and crime commissioners (PCCs) or their mayoral combined authority equivalents (6)

Bedfordshire Police⁴⁴¹

Devon & Cornwall Police "positive action team"⁴⁴²

North Wales PCC⁴⁴³

Northamptonshire Police⁴⁴⁴

Police Scotland⁴⁴⁵

Alison Lowe, deputy mayor of West Yorkshire for policing and crime⁴⁴⁶

Universities (14), shown here⁴⁴⁷ if not separately footnoted

University of the Arts London

University of Birmingham Business School⁴⁴⁸

University of Bradford⁴⁴⁹

University of Durham⁴⁵⁰

University of Greenwich

University of Hertfordshire⁴⁵¹

Lancaster University

Leeds Trinity University

Middlesex University⁴⁵²

Nottingham Trent University⁴⁵³

Salford University⁴⁵⁴

University of Sheffield

University of Sunderland
University of Westminster

By many other bodies:

The FA⁴⁵⁵ (which held a Ramadan iftar at Wembley)⁴⁵⁶
Yorkshire Cricket Club⁴⁵⁷
Tranmere Rovers FC⁴⁵⁸
Paddington Station⁴⁵⁹
Healthcare Inspectorate Wales⁴⁶⁰
GLA Muslim Staff Network⁴⁶¹
Victim Support (and many local branches)⁴⁶²
NHS Muslim Women’s Network⁴⁶³
College of Legal Practice⁴⁶⁴
Royal Assn of British Dairy Farmers (“agriculture lacks diversity”)⁴⁶⁵
National Association of Muslim Police⁴⁶⁶ (with the then MCB leader Zara Mohammed⁴⁶⁷)
Imperial NHS Trust⁴⁶⁸
Leeds Teaching Hospitals⁴⁶⁹
Royal Pharmaceutical Soc⁴⁷⁰
Royal College of GPs⁴⁷¹
Association of Mental Health Providers⁴⁷²
British Association of Social Workers⁴⁷³
GMB London Region⁴⁷⁴
Show Racism the Red Card⁴⁷⁵
Adecco, a major recruitment agency⁴⁷⁶
Deloitte⁴⁷⁷
Azeem Rafiq, cricketer⁴⁷⁸

MPs, MSs and MSPs (or then MPs, MSs and MSPs) who expressed support for IAM in 2023, 2024 or both (43):

Debbie Abrahams, Lab⁴⁷⁹
Shockat Adam, ind⁴⁸⁰
Zubir Ahmed, Lab⁴⁸¹
Steve Baker, Con⁴⁸²
Paula Barker, Lab⁴⁸³
Apsana Begum, Lab⁴⁸⁴
Rachel Blake, Lab⁴⁸⁵
Hina Bokhari, Lib Dem (MLA)⁴⁸⁶
Richard Burgon, Lab⁴⁸⁷
Jackson Carlaw, Con, former Scottish leader⁴⁸⁸
Maggie Chapman, Grn⁴⁸⁹
Foyso Choudhury, Lab⁴⁹⁰
Jacob Collier, Lab⁴⁹¹
Jeremy Corbyn, ind⁴⁹²
Janet Daby, Lab⁴⁹³
Alun Davies, Lab⁴⁹⁴

455. https://www.launchgood.com/v4/campaign/islamophobia_awareness_month_is_counting_on_you_to_help_tackle_discrimination_in_our_society_be_par

456. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1775928756890210743>

457. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1904863499844563395>

458. <https://x.com/TRFCCCommunity/status/1728037657916117238>

459. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1793216079906455729>

460. https://x.com/HiW_Wales/status/185734797691131260

461. https://x.com/educ_research/status/1858985618409439258

462. <https://x.com/VictimSupport/status/1852274490421473615>

463. <https://x.com/NHSMuslimWomen/status/1854255309742612921>

464. <https://x.com/collegalpract/status/1854921833218261178>

465. <https://x.com/theRABDF/status/1729789851556261951>

466. https://x.com/Official_NAMP/status/186259535873320396 and <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1904863499844563395>

467. <https://x.com/ZarMo1/status/1857011622864134442>

468. <https://x.com/ImperialPeople/status/1854826325921403112>

469. <https://x.com/LeedsHospitals/status/1730143650640801944>

470. <https://x.com/rpharms/status/1854554647702216951>

471. <https://x.com/rcgp/status/1729460026299793916>

472. <https://x.com/AssocMHP/status/1861349348631589364>

473. https://x.com/BASW_UK/status/1861001894531076228

474. <https://x.com/GMBLondonRegion/status/1858808072283562018>

475. https://x.com/SRTRC_England/status/1860926494706467072

476. https://x.com/Adecco_UK/status/1856367642132578712

477. <https://x.com/DeloitteUK/status/1724819549323710972>

478. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1722611854038663584>

479. https://x.com/Debbie_abrahams/status/1724738384050913307

480. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1854583133414604835>

481. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1856718324891009144>

482. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1730178094797849023>

483. <https://x.com/PaulaBarkerMP/status/1724523041827282987>

484. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1859615540018299311>

485. <https://x.com/RNBlake/status/1862110487552442754>

486. <https://x.com/HinaBokhariLD/status/1852282246171897927>

487. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1859615540018299311>

488. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861507310553628827>

489. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861837177228767295>

490. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1862144421539516852>

491. <https://x.com/JacobCollierMP/status/1859270232117834123>

492. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1859615540018299311>

493. <https://x.com/JanetDaby/status/1724448579010298284>

494. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861757212080656579>

495. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1859615540018299311>
496. <https://x.com/FloEshalomi/status/1724489819240145034>
497. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1862099251074854997>
498. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861096520486961636>
499. https://x.com/rach_hopkins/status/1724449324669587953
500. <https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2024-11-27/debates/5CDC74BA-B602-4676-A97A-B678AF436F85/Engagements>
501. <https://x.com/cajardineMP/status/1724418357712064898>
502. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861010627658944545>
503. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861816838583103535>
504. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1862582815654662308>
505. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1721492725546070300>
506. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1853452468769767879>
507. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861052781009752453>
508. <https://x.com/DarrenMillarMS/status/1852296927150260329>
509. <https://x.com/Christian4BuryS/status/1724415401864417540>
510. <https://x.com/IslamophobiaAM/status/1859615540018299311>
511. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1729822801245176245>
512. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1861393226977972687>
513. <https://x.com/TaiwoOwatemi/status/1861451635643367743>
514. <https://x.com/Christian4BuryS/status/1724415401864417540>
515. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1859203827074740410>
516. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1726960607616983287>
517. <https://x.com/NazShahBfd/status/1861083945263079618>
518. <https://x.com/gareththomasMP/status/1724517732308209923>
519. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1858855999316078866>
520. <https://x.com/Christian4BuryS/status/1724415401864417540>
521. <https://x.com/PolicyCommunity/status/1855997359332708814>
- Carla Denyer, Grn⁴⁹⁵
- Flo Eshalomi, Lab⁴⁹⁶
- Vicky Foxcroft, Lab⁴⁹⁷
- Mike Hedges, Lab⁴⁹⁸
- Rachel Hopkins, Lab⁴⁹⁹
- Imran Hussain, Lab⁵⁰⁰
- Christine Jardine, Lib Dem⁵⁰¹
- Afzal Khan, Lab⁵⁰²
- Kim Leadbeater, Lab⁵⁰³
- Monica Lennon, Lab⁵⁰⁴
- Caroline Lucas, Grn⁵⁰⁵
- John McDonnell, Labour⁵⁰⁶
- Fulton MacGregor, SNP⁵⁰⁷
- Darren Millar, Con leader in Senedd⁵⁰⁸
- Nav Mishra, Lab⁵⁰⁹
- Iqbal Mohammed, ind⁵¹⁰
- Caroline Nokes, Con⁵¹¹
- Chi Onwurah, Lab⁵¹²
- Taiwo Owatemi, Lab⁵¹³
- Sarah Owen, Lab⁵¹⁴
- Peredur Owen Griffiths, Plaid⁵¹⁵
- Bell Ribeiro-Addy, Lab⁵¹⁶
- Naz Shah, Lab⁵¹⁷
- Gareth Thomas, Lab⁵¹⁸
- Harpreet Uppal, Lab⁵¹⁹
- Christian Wakeford, Lab⁵²⁰
- Nadia Whittome, Lab⁵²¹



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