

## Country Report

# The United Kingdom

Thomas Sealy & Tariq Modood

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This Country Report offers a detailed assessment of religious diversity and violent religious radicalisation in the above-named state. It is part of a series covering 23 countries (listed below) on four continents. More basic information about religious affiliation and state-religion relations in these states is available in our Country Profiles series. This report was produced by GREASE, an EU-funded research project investigating religious diversity, secularism and religiously inspired radicalisation.

### **Countries covered in this series:**

Albania, Australia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Russia, Slovakia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

<http://grease.eui.eu>



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**The EU-Funded GREASE project looks to Asia for insights on governing religious diversity and preventing radicalisation.**

Involving researchers from Europe, North Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Oceania, GREASE is investigating how religious diversity is governed in over 20 countries. Our work focuses on comparing norms, laws and practices that may (or may not) prove useful in preventing religious radicalisation. Our research also sheds light on how different societies cope with the challenge of integrating religious minorities and migrants. The aim is to deepen our understanding of how religious diversity can be governed successfully, with an emphasis on countering radicalisation trends.

While exploring religious governance models in other parts of the world, GREASE also attempts to unravel the European paradox of religious radicalisation despite growing secularisation. We consider the claim that migrant integration in Europe has failed because second generation youth have become marginalised and radicalised, with some turning to jihadist terrorism networks. The researchers aim to deliver innovative academic thinking on secularisation and radicalisation while offering insights for governance of religious diversity.

The project is being coordinated by Professor Anna Triandafyllidou from The European University Institute (EUI) in Italy. Other consortium members include Professor Tariq Modood from The University of Bristol (UK); Dr. H. A. Hellyer from the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) (UK); Dr. Mila Mancheva from The Centre for the Study of Democracy (Bulgaria); Dr. Egdunas Raciunas from Vytautas Magnus University (Lithuania); Mr. Terry Martin from the research communications agency SPIA (Germany); Professor Mehdi Lahlou from Mohammed V University of Rabat (Morocco); Professor Haldun Gulalp of The Turkish Economic and Social Studies Foundation (Turkey); Professor Pradana Boy of Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang (Indonesia); Professor Zawawi Ibrahim of The Strategic Information and Research Development Centre (Malaysia); Professor Gurpreet Mahajan of Jawaharlal Nehru University (India); and Professor Michele Grossman of Deakin University (Melbourne, Australia). GREASE is scheduled for completion in 2022.

For further information about the GREASE project please contact: Professor Anna Triandafyllidou, [anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu](mailto:anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu)

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GREASE - Radicalisation, Secularism and the Governance of Religion: Bringing Together European and Asian Perspectives

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**Introduction**

The United Kingdom represents a country case of moderate secularism, and also provides examples of what has been called a *multiculturalised secularism* (Modood, 2019a). This is in part owing to its general approach to ethnic and religious diversity being one of pragmatic accommodation. This diversity has a long history but has mainly been driven by migration patterns since 1945, predominantly from Britain's former colonies. Given the locations and extent of Britain's former empire, the UK has a profile of religious diversity different from other Western European states. The UK is also a compelling case study given the status of the Church of England as 'established under law', one of few European states, along with, for instance Denmark and Norway, to retain such an arrangement. This is not least as in debates about accommodating religious minorities this status of the Church of England has often featured, for different purposes.

The accommodation of Muslims and Islam have, similarly to other Western European countries, been at the forefront of debates and state action on the issue of terrorism. Britain's experiences of terrorism, as with several other European states, are older than the recent concern with Islamist attacks<sup>1</sup>; 'the Troubles' in Northern Ireland only came to a formal conclusion just a few years before 9/11. When it comes to the governance of religious diversity and responses to violent religious radicalisation, the UK forms an interesting comparative case as in terms of number of attacks and foreign fighters, it reports amongst the highest figures in Europe along with France, but has a quite different approach to religion and religious diversity.

This report proceeds as follows: The following section outlines some key sociodemographic data and points to some trends and differences in areas such as employment and education. The report then gives an historical outline of Britain's state-church relations that have developed to the present day, before outlining the contemporary arrangements, place and role of religion in the UK. It then outlines the main threats resulting from violent religious radicalization and how the state has responded to these in different ways.

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<sup>1</sup> See other reports in this series.

## Socio-demographic overview

The United Kingdom, or more fully, The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, is a union comprised of four countries, England, Scotland and Wales, which together make up Great Britain, and Northern Ireland. Each (except England) has a devolved government with degrees of autonomy. The population of the United Kingdom was 63 182 178 according the last census in 2011, and is estimated to be 66 435 600 by the Office or National Statistics as of June 2018<sup>2</sup>. This breaks down to 55 977 200 in England, 3 138 600 in Wales, 5 438 100 in Scotland, and 1 881 600 in Northern Ireland. Although a member of the EU, in 2016 the country voted to leave the EU in a national referendum, commonly known as Brexit, albeit with significant differences in voting patterns between the countries that comprise the union.

From 2001 a voluntary question on religion has been included in the census for England and Wales. The census for Scotland and Northern Ireland also collects religious affiliation data. The tables below reproduce census data for each country and give aggregate figures for the United Kingdom. In the UK table, projected figures from Pew are also given for 2020. This provides more direct comparative figures from the same source used in the other Western Europe country reports in this series.

United Kingdom	2001 %	2011 No.	2011 %	% change	Pew <sup>3</sup> 2020
Christian	71.6	37 583 962	59.5	-12.1	59.1%
Buddhist	0.3	261 584	0.4	+0.1	0.6
Hindu	1.0	835 394	1.3	+0.3	1.6
Jewish	0.3	269 568	0.4	+0.1	0.4
Muslim	2.7	2 786 635	4.4	+1.7	6.1
Sikh	0.6	432 429	0.7	+0.1	0.8
Other religion	0.3	262 774	0.4	+0.1	
No religion	14.8	16 221 509	25.7	+10.9	31.2
No answer	7.7	4 528 323	7.2	-0.5	-

England & Wales <sup>4</sup>	2001 %	2011 No.	%	change
Christian	71.8	33 243 175	59.3	-12.5
Buddhist	0.3	247 743	0.4	+0.1

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/2010/percent/Europe/>

<sup>4</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/religioninenglandandwales2011/2012-12-11> and <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion>

Hindu	1.1	816 633	1.5	+0.4
Jewish	0.5	263 346	0.5	-
Muslim	3.0	2 706 066	4.8	+1.8
Sikh	0.6	423 158	0.8	+0.2
Other religion	0.3	240 530	0.4	+0.1
No religion	14.8	14 097 229	25.1	+10.3
No answer	7.7	4 038 032	7.2	+0.5

<b>Scotland<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>2001 %</b>	<b>2011 No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>change</b>
Christian	65.1	2 850 199	53.8	-11.3
Buddhist	0.1	12 795	0.2	+0.1
Hindu	0.1	16 379	0.3	+0.2
Jewish	0.1	5 887	0.1	-
Muslim	1.8	76 737	1.4	+0.4
Sikh	0.1	9 055	0.2	+0.1
Other religion	0.5	15 196	0.3	-0.2
No religion	27.6	1 941 116	36.7	+9.1
No answer	5.5	368 039	7.0	-1.5

<b>Northern Ireland<sup>6</sup></b>	<b>2001 %</b>	<b>2011 No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>change</b>
Christian	85.8	1 490 588	82.3	-3.5
Buddhist	<0.1	1 046	<0.1	-
Hindu	<0.1	2 382	0.13	+0.03
Jewish	<0.1	335	<0.1	-
Muslim	0.12	3 832	0.21	+0.09
Sikh	<0.1	216	<0.1	-
Other religion	0.3	7 048	0.39	+0.09
No religion	10.9	183 164	10.1	-0.8

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/ods-web/home.html> ;

<https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/documents/censusresults/release2a/scotland/KS209SCa.pdf> ;

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/census/2001-census/results-and-products>

<sup>6</sup> [www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011\\_Excel/2011/QS218NI.xls](http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/Download/Census%202011_Excel/2011/QS218NI.xls) ;

<http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=135&themeName=Census%202001> ;

<http://www.ninis2.nisra.gov.uk/public/Theme.aspx?themeNumber=136&themeName=Census%202011>

No answer	7.3	122 252	6.8	-0.5
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Overall, Christianity remains the majority religion, although there has also been a significant decline in those identifying with Christianity along with a similar increase in those choosing 'no religion', which is comfortably second looking in both directions. Minority faiths all show small increases with Muslims increasing by the largest figure<sup>7</sup>. Muslims constitute the second largest non-Christian faith group, and although are diverse in their origins (some 50+ nationalities), just over half come from Pakistan and Bangladesh according to 2011 census figures (MCB, 2015) but this ratio is decreasing. Nevertheless, there are also significant differences between the four countries. Scotland's 'no religion' population is noticeably higher than elsewhere, and more recent survey results suggest it may now be as high as almost half the population<sup>8</sup>. The dominance of Christianity and extremely low numbers of minority faiths stands out for Northern Ireland.

Membership, attendance and identification have gradually dropped since the 1960s as has the use of the church for traditional rites of passage such as marriage, baptism and funerals, although the rate of decline has slowed since 2014 (also CofE, 2018)<sup>9</sup>. The larger Anglican and Roman Catholic churches have been particularly affected with some smaller Christian churches such as evangelical, Pentecostal and so-called 'fresh expressions' congregations growing recent years, largely as a result of immigration. Nevertheless, these patterns of growth do not offset the general pattern of decline (Bruce, 2013).

According to British Social Attitudes data (BSA 36), while attitudes towards religious people may be increasingly tolerant, attitudes towards public religion is largely and increasingly negative compared to 1998 figures; and those with a religious affiliation have generally more positive views compared to those without. Less than half (46%) have confidence in religious institutions, down from 54%; over a third (35%) say they think religious organisations have too much power, an increase of 15%; and almost two thirds (63%) say they agree that religion brings more conflict than peace, although this figure has decreased from 75% in 1998 (BSA 36).

Attitudes towards those who are religiously different, however, are contrastingly tolerant with largely indifferent or positive attitudes towards people of other faiths reported. Muslims, notably, were the group people felt least positive towards, although even here the figures were comparable with those for other faiths (17% negative, 42% neutral and 30% positive). Nevertheless, other opinion polls have routinely found that over half think that Islam is not compatible with 'British values', which sits in stark contrast to over 90% of Muslims reporting a strong sense of belonging to Britain (Ipsos Mori, 2018).

A wide-ranging study from 2011 (Weller et al., 2013) into people's experiences of unfair treatment on grounds of their religion reported discrimination across various areas of society but also noted that this had, on the whole, declined from 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Also see for detailed breakdown:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/articles/fullstorywhatdoesthecensustellusaboutrigionin2011/2013-05-16>. And an MCB report (MCB, 2015) gives a detailed breakdown and commentary on the Muslim data.

<sup>8</sup> <https://scotland.shinyapps.io/sg-equality-evidence-finder/>. Accessed 09/08/2019

<sup>9</sup> Also see Brierley, 2017; Davie, 2015; and the British Social Attitudes Survey 36.

However, whereas overall trends of racism and religious discrimination may show decline, the trend for discrimination against Muslims shows the reverse (Modood, 2019b). Notable though is that some forms of discrimination ‘spike’ in particular social and political circumstances; instances of Islamophobia, for example, increase following reports of terror related attacks, highlighting the wider social and political context and events that are important. This has also increased in the period surrounding the referendum as part of assertive ethno-nationalist discourses. This is not just a matter of forms of extreme populism confined to segments of the population, however. The Windrush scandal, controversy over funding and claims by the Vote Leave campaign, the deliberate ‘hostile environment’ policy, and Shamima Begum case have sparked debates about the government’s complicity in not just a questionable stance towards ‘immigrant others’ but also towards non-white British citizens. It is also noteworthy with regard to Muslims that an All Party Parliamentary Group report<sup>10</sup> (2018; see also Modood 2019, chps 1 and 4) has recommended the adoption of a definition of Islamophobia as a form of racism, and while this has been adopted by the opposition Liberal Democrat and Labour parties, as well as the Mayor of London, the government has rejected the definition as ‘unworkable’.

### *Economy, Employment & Education*

Following the 2008 financial crisis and the coming to power of first the Conservative led coalition government in 2010 and the now Conservative government, government departments, local authorities and services have faced deep budget cuts as part of austerity measures. The economy gradually recovered, GDP rising until 2014, although it has been dropping since<sup>11</sup> and the impacts of Brexit are yet to fully materialise or be fully understood.

The unemployment rate is estimated at 3.8% (as of May 2019), its lowest level since 1974, and has been falling since 2011; the employment rate is 76% and has been steadily increasing over the last 5 years<sup>12</sup>. Figures for all ethnic groups have shown an increase over the last decade, although there are noticeable disparities between them. For religious minorities, the picture is intersectionally complex, but scholars have pointed to a ‘religion penalty’ that particularly affects Muslims, who have rates of unemployment at more than double the national average<sup>13</sup> in addition to lower occupational status in comparison to other religious groups as well as to the national average. Moreover, this effect seems to apply particularly to Muslim women<sup>14</sup> (Khattab & Modood, 2015; Khattab & Johnston, 2014; Heath & Martin, 2013; Lindley, 2002). There are various and complex reasons for this, including lack of bridging social capital, language limitations, cultural factors, and discrimination. With regard to discrimination, tests where CVs sent in response to job adverts that bear a ‘Muslim-sounding’ name and an ‘English-sounding’ name but are otherwise identical, have shown that applicants with Muslim-sounding names are far less likely to be called for interview (Modood, 2019b; BBC, 2017) By contrast, Jews rank above the national average and Hindus seem to do equally as well as the national average. These trends

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<sup>10</sup>

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599c3d2febbd1a90cffdd8a9/t/5bfd1ea3352f531a6170ceee/1543315109493/Islamophobia+Defined.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <https://obr.uk/forecasts-in-depth/the-economy-forecast/real-gdp-growth/>

<sup>12</sup>

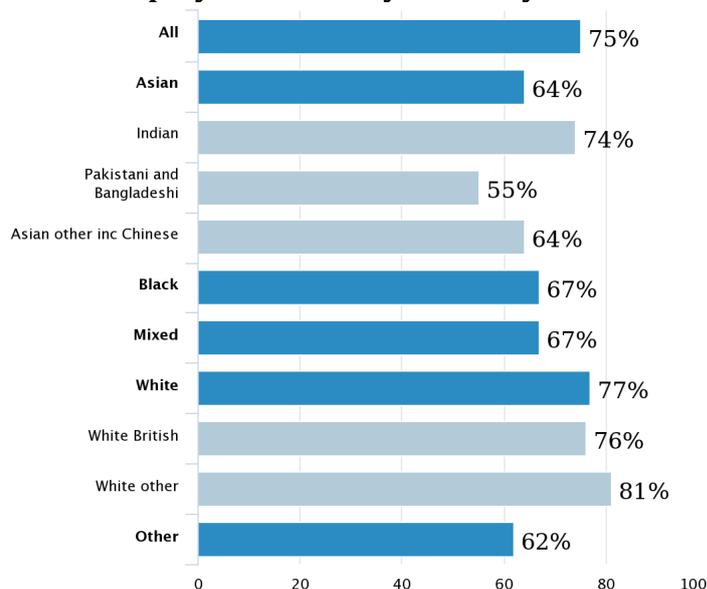
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/uklabourmarkt/july2019>

<sup>13</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201617/cmselect/cmwomeq/89/89.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/CSI-26-Muslim-employment-1.pdf>; see also *fn* 2

can be seen reflected in chart 1 in that they go some way to explaining the national differences within the ‘Asian’ category (2017 government figures)<sup>15</sup>.

**Chart 1: employment rate by ethnicity**



Patterns in education are similarly intersectionally complex and varies at different educational levels<sup>16</sup>. Muslims have tended to record lower attainment levels in comparison to other religious groups, where Hindus and Jews are above the national average (Khattab, 2009). This seems to be changing, nevertheless, with Muslims now performing at the national average (Khattab & Modood, 2018). At GCSE<sup>17</sup> level people of South Asian ethnicity record the second highest attainment scores (after Chinese), although there is a difference between those of Indian origin compared to those of Bangladeshi or Pakistani origin, a difference that has a bearing on the religious difference already noted. Those of white and black ethnicity have lower levels of attainment at this level. At A Level<sup>18</sup>, people of White and Asian ethnicity have similar levels (although about half that of Chinese) while Black African and Black Caribbean figures are considerably lower. In gaining a place in higher education the order becomes, in descending order Chinese, South Asian, Black, White. Yet, while nearly all ethnic minorities have proportionally higher levels of participation in higher education than whites (Modood 2004), nearly all have worse degree results<sup>19</sup>. There has been an upward trend for all ethnic groups over the past five years, with figures for Asian and Black groups increasing at a higher rate than for whites (10.8%, 10.7%, 7.7% respectively)<sup>20</sup>. Nevertheless, when it comes to ‘sustained employment’ post-

<sup>15</sup> Source: government statistics, <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/work-pay-and-benefits/employment/employment/latest#by-ethnicity>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/11-to-16-years-old/gcse-results-attainment-8-for-children-aged-14-to-16-key-stage-4/latest#by-ethnicity> ; <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/a-levels/students-aged-16-to-18-achieving-3-a-grades-or-better-at-a-level/latest#by-ethnicity> ; <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/apprenticeships-further-and-higher-education/entry-rates-into-higher-education/latest#by-ethnicity>

<sup>17</sup> General Certificate of Secondary Education – the standard exams taken at the end of secondary school.

<sup>18</sup> Advanced level – standard college exams which also form the entry qualifications for university

<sup>19</sup> see: <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/apprenticeships-further-and-higher-education/undergraduate-degree-results/latest#degree-classifications-by-ethnicity>

<sup>20</sup> See fn 18

graduation, White represents the highest percentage at 1, 3, 5 and 10 years following graduation (although the figure is comparable at 3 and 5 years with Indian)<sup>21</sup>.

In terms of representation in government, although non-white MPs can be traced back to the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, this was limited to a few figures until 1987, since when there have been increasing numbers of ethnic minority MPs, although this remains disproportionately low (and how far this benefits those populations is debated). The 2017 general election led to 52 ethnic minority MPs in the House of Commons (out of 650) (HoC, May 2019; British Future, 2017), while the new Johnson government of July 2019 had half a dozen non-whites in the Cabinet, these being the highest proportions so far not just in the UK but in the EU.

## Historical background of state-organised religion relations

The UK is a parliamentary democracy and a constitutional monarchy, with the monarch as the 'Supreme Governor' of the established Church of England (CofE) and also the 'Defender of the Faith'. There are in fact two established churches, the Church of England and the Church of Scotland; those in Ireland and Wales having disestablished in 1871 and 1920 respectively (see Lucas, 2009). The Church of Scotland is characterised as 'separate and distinct' from the state, or 'national and free' in a way that the CofE is not (Morris, 2009: 78, 84; MacLean et al., 2009). The following sections thus concentrate on the Church of England.

The establishment of the Church of England is in many ways a muddled arrangement; it is defined by various statutes and conventions dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. In historical overview, we can, notwithstanding historical swings and nuance, point roughly to three main periods: a period of Protestant ascendancy and dominance following the Reformation, characterised by close state church entwinement; followed by a 'long' 18<sup>th</sup> century, marking a period of gradual pluralization alongside a loosening of state-church ties and erastianism, which intensifies in a 'long' 19<sup>th</sup> century, marking something of a turning point; and finally, since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century the emergence of 'new' religious diversity and arrangement of increasing mutual autonomy between state and Church.

### *From entangled domination to subordinate pluralisation*

England as a Christian country, and the close ties with monarchs, can be traced back to the early Middle Ages and the conversion of the Anglo-Saxon kings (Chaney, 1967). The decisive moment here though was Henry VIII's break with Rome in 1533, prompted by Henry's desire to have his marriage to Catherine of Aragon annulled and the Pope's refusal. This marked the beginning of the English Reformation and of Protestant ascendancy. The establishment of the Church of England came through the First and Second Acts of Supremacy in 1534 and 1559, under which the monarch became 'supreme Head on earth of the Church of England'<sup>22</sup>. The title 'Defender of the Faith', had originally been conferred by the Pope (Leo X) on Henry in 1521, but was reconferred by Parliament in 1544. Also dating from this period (and still in force today), the monarch must "join in communion with the Church of England as by law

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/education-skills-and-training/after-education/destinations-and-earnings-of-graduates-after-higher-education/latest#graduate-destinations-by-ethnicity>

<sup>22</sup> Changed to 'Sureme Governor under Elizabeth I, the title which is used today

established”<sup>23</sup> (Morris, 2009: 34-35). This has ensured a centuries-old Protestant religious character for the nation and for the state. Despite its beginning with Henry VIII, however, it is the 1689 settlement following the English Civil War that is most significant for the Church’s current constitutional basis, and the subsequent privileging of Anglican Protestantism.

Following the Reformation, religious minorities, here being Protestant non-Conformists and Dissenters, Catholics, and Jews (who had been expelled in the 13<sup>th</sup> century), were frequently persecuted and under legal disabilities in terms of religious freedoms and rights. For some four centuries, beginning with Edward VI in 1552 and restated by Elizabeth I 1558-59, (Anglican) church attendance was made mandatory under successive acts. From the beginning of the ‘long’ 18<sup>th</sup> century (taking in the latter part of the 17<sup>th</sup> century), however, these ‘old’ religious minorities gradually came to be accommodated, marking the beginning of a process pluralization in both the public presence of religious diversity as well as its recognition in law. In 1650 choice was introduced in the religious service that could be attended (Field, 2008) and was strengthened and expanded under the Toleration Act 1689 and gaps opened up between legislation and its enforcement (Rivers, 2010: 14-15; Field, 2008). The period also saw a rise in Protestant groups and Jews were readmitted.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century represents an important turning point. Early in the century there was mutual entanglement of State and Church: Parliament was wholly Protestant and predominantly Anglican, Anglican bishops sat in the House of Lords, Parliament legislated on both secular and ecclesiastical affairs, meaning that ecclesiastical rulings were supported by state mechanisms, the monarch could not be or marry a Roman Catholic<sup>24</sup>, Anglican bishops and Archbishops were appointed by the state, and the Anglican Church received financial support in the forms of tithe<sup>25</sup> and church rates, which all had to pay no matter their faith. Furthermore, following a low period in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, church attendance picked up in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Yet, at mid-century the religious census in 1851 showed that nearly half the population did not attend church, the results weakening the claim on privileges enjoyed by the Anglican Church (and a census religious question would not be repeated for 150 years). Acts for Dissenters and Non-Conformists (1779, 1828, 1846), Catholics (1791, 1828, 1829, 1844, 1846), and Jews (1667, 1846, 1858) gradually recognised the rights of these groups, removing civil and political disabilities such as their being barred from entering parliament or operating schools, as well as repealing mandated attendance at church (Morris, 2009: 20; Rivers, 2010)<sup>26</sup>. Financial ties were also cut: the church tax abolished in 1868 and the tithe phased out through changes in its character and finally abolished in 1936. Other forms of financial gifts and grants (subvention arrangements such as Queen Anne’s Bounty in 1704 and money for church building initiatives in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries) ceased from 1828 (Morris, 2009: 65).

State and church also become more formally separate structures. In the second half of the century the state expanded into and took over various functions previously dominated by the Church, such as marriages and divorces, and education and welfare provision. As a result of the disentangling process, the Church reinstated separate

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<sup>23</sup> Coronation Oath Act 1688 and Act of Settlement 1701

<sup>24</sup> The outlawing of marrying a Catholic was repealed in 2013 although the monarch still cannot be Catholic

<sup>25</sup> Although it should be noted that this form of tax has pre-Christian origins in Saxon England.

<sup>26</sup> although in theory this remained (unenforced) on the statute books for Anglicans until The Statute Law (Repeals) Act 1969 (Field, 2008)

bodies, including its own legislative body, which could propose measures to Parliament, although the latter had the final say<sup>27</sup> - the General Synod (founded in 1970) is the body that currently fulfils this function. Yet, erastianism would become apparent in 1927-28 when Parliament refused to pass measures for a revised prayer book, and also on the issue of the ordination of women priests in the early 1990s and late 2000s (see Maltby, 2009).

The loosening of ties has continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the Church has also gained greater autonomy in its own affairs, such as religious doctrine and worship. From 1976 the Church was given the initiative in terms of nominations for the appointment of bishops (submitting two names for the PM to choose from) and following an announcement in 2007 by the then Prime Minister, Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister no longer plays an active role in Church appointments<sup>28</sup>. Moreover, the 20<sup>th</sup> century also saw a shift in the law's relationship to religion, which became based on an individualised and privatised paradigm of the protection of religious conscience (Rivers, 2010: 30; also McCrudden, 2011) and the significance of Human Rights.

### *Secularization and 'new' diversity*

The 1960s have been identified as the pivotal decade in the decline of relevance of the Church in Britain (Davie, 2015; Brown, 2009). In many ways this is a result of an increasing secularisation, along with significant social changes such as the role of women and sexual(ity) attitudes. It is important to note though that these were not changes simply 'done to' the church; secularization discourses emanated from within British Christianity (at least) as much as from without. This period also marked a turning point in terms of identity as religion and Christianity "started to stop mattering" to an increasing number of people's self-conceptions (Brown, 2009: 7).

A second dynamic was the increasing recognition of Britain as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious country. Owing to Britain's colonial relations and seaborne trade, there has been a long history of people of different faiths coming to Britain and more settled communities can be traced back to late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Yet, prior to WWII and post-war migration patterns, these religious minorities were largely absent from public awareness. This was to change from the 1950s, as post-WWII migration flows brought more significant numbers to Britain, and which has seen a growth in Christian denominations as well as non-Christian religions, notably Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs.

Under the terms of the 1948 British Nationality Act, Commonwealth immigrants, in theory at least, had access to all rights and privileges and some 800 million people had the right to move to settle in Britain under the expansive category of Citizenship of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKC)<sup>29</sup>. Britain's contemporary religious diversity has thus largely resulted from the movement of people within an imperial polity.

The utilization of this by migrants from the 'new Commonwealth' (the West Indies and Indian sub-continent) and subsequent immigration flows had been unanticipated, however, and resulted in successive citizenship legislation gradually becoming more restrictive (Karatani, 2003; Hampshire, 2005). The Commonwealth Immigrants Act

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<sup>27</sup> Technically Parliament can still legislate for the Church of England without the latter's consent, but this has never been used, Parliament effectively ceding the initiative to the Church (Morris, 2009: 41).

<sup>28</sup> See <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN04403>

<sup>29</sup> For discussion of restrictions and differentiated statuses prior to this, see Karatani, 2003.

1962 and Immigration Act 1971 introduced immigration controls and was widely criticized for racialized policies (Karatani, 2003; Hampshire, 2005). The British Nationality Act 1981 established British citizenship (Karatani, 2003) and created differentiated statuses, limiting those in the former colonies without the requisite ancestral connection to British Overseas Citizenship or British Dependent Territories Citizenship, while simultaneously maintaining a fairly liberal naturalisation process for those already residing in the UK. This had its own unintended consequence in further increasing immigration as people already settled in Britain brought their families over. As a result, the ethnic minority population in Britain grew rapidly, from 1% in 1968 to 5.5% in 1991, 7.1% in 2001, and was 14% in the 2011 census.

## Current institutional structure and governance framework

Britain does not have a written constitution of the kind found in many other European states. Rather, a more pragmatic and tangled relationship between the state and various religious bodies has developed across different areas, a result of historically inherited arrangements along with more recent state policies as well as of minority claims-making. Weller (2009) has suggested that the religious landscape of the UK is three-dimensional: Christian, plural and secular, and we can point to overlaps and intersections between them.

It is under the Equality Act 2010<sup>30</sup> that freedom of religion is guaranteed as a positive as well as negative right, with freedom of conscience (*forum internum*) an absolute right and freedom to manifest a religion or belief (*forum externum*) a qualified right. The Act consolidated and simplified a diverse variety of separate equality and anti-discrimination regulations<sup>31</sup> into one as well as supplementing the 1998 Human Rights Act, which had incorporated the European Convention on Human Rights into domestic law. It designates 'protected characteristics', of which religion is one. For a religion or belief to be recognised under the act, it must be recognized as being cogent, serious, cohesive, compatible with human dignity, and widely recognized in the United Kingdom (Hunt, 2012: 704-705). Faith traditions recognised as such include Christianity (and denominations within), Baha'i, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Rastafarianism, Sikhism, Zoroastrianism, and Paganism.

In balancing the protected characteristics 'religious clauses' were included, as they had been in previous equality acts, granting exemptions to religious bodies to be able to discriminate on certain grounds according to religious conscience. Sexuality, or non-heterosexuality, was a particular concern for many, and has proven especially controversial, including from groups and individuals within faiths, and seen various cases fought in the courts (Hunt, 2012). Support for amendments came from numerous religious groups, including a number of Christian groups, the Muslim Council of Great Britain, the Hindu Council UK, Sikhs in England and the Jain Network (Hunt, 2012: 699). Yet, it is also a sign of the secular times that arguments for these amendments have adopted a rights rather than religious discourse (Hunt, 2012).

The Church of England continues to play a significant role in the life of the nation, even if 'vicariously' (Davie, 2015); it is often still relied upon at times of national celebration

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<sup>30</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

<sup>31</sup> "one hundred different pieces of equality legislation amassed in thirty-five acts, fifty-two statutory instruments, and thirteen codes of practice" (Hunt, 2012: 692)

or crisis and presides over national rites and ceremonies such as state weddings and funerals, and the coronation of the monarch. Indeed, as part of the oath Queen Elizabeth II swore in 1953, as with those before her, were the lines “to maintain in the United Kingdom the Protestant Reformed Religion established by law” and “to maintain and preserve inviolably the settlement of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline and government thereof, as by law established in England”.

The Church also retains some privileges. Notable is the reserved seats in the House of Lords for 26<sup>32</sup> bishops, who sit as ‘Lords Spiritual’, including automatic seats for the two archbishops of Canterbury and York as well as the bishops of London, Durham and Winchester<sup>33</sup>. The UK is the only country in Europe to have such an arrangement for explicit religious representation (Morris, 2009: 45; 2011: 272). This has not been without controversy, with some arguing for its abolishment and others for its pluralisation, which would reduce the number of Anglican bishops to include other faiths and Christian denominations. This was the recommendation of the report of the Wakeham Commission tasked with looking into reform of the House of Lords<sup>34</sup> and was welcomed by the Church of England. It has, however, been shelved as too problematic to actually implement.

While the public position and privileges of the established Church are historical inheritances, minority faiths have gradually been making claims for their role as part of a multi-faith Britain (Modood 1994, 1997, 2019a). Muslims in fact are on the whole supportive of establishment as it secures a public role for religion (Modood, 2019a). Moreover, the religious establishment has generally been conducive to helping Muslims with institutional access and claims for recognition. Christian religious leaders first recognised that these growing communities would have religious needs, whereas political leaders were much slower to do so; during the 1990s the Conservative government was reluctant to respond to Muslims’ involvement in the public and political sphere, for instance (Nielsen, 2009).

In political discourse and policy a shift has occurred over recent decades when it comes to minorities in Britain, at the forefront of which have been religious minorities, especially Muslims. Initially, in the 1950s and 1960s, minorities were seen through the lens of ‘race’. In response to forms of discrimination that migrants had been subject to, the 1976 Race Relations Act was brought in and the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) was also established (since replaced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission). In the 1980s and 1990s the focus shifted to ‘ethnicity’ and earlier exemptions and accommodations, such as the exemption for turbaned Sikhs from wearing a motorcycle helmet in 1976, were on the basis of them being an ethnic group. Religion was noticeably absent from early discrimination legislation and accommodation, a fact commented on by Muslims, whose religion became increasingly important as they settled in Britain and began to institute Islam through organisations and mosques to provide for religious worship, education, and later politics (Nielsen, 2009). Moreover, they felt that anti-racism movements did not offer adequate protection from religious discrimination.

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<sup>32</sup> 42 bishops are eligible to sit but there are only 26 reserved seats at any one time.

<sup>33</sup> See discussion in Anderson, 2015.

<sup>34</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-house-for-the-future-royal-commission-on-the-reform-of-the-house-of-lords>. Accessed 06/08/2019

Emerging from these concerns came the Runnymede Trust's landmark report *Islamophobia: a challenge for us all* in 1997 (Modood, 2019a), which popularised the term *Islamophobia* to conceptualise the discrimination faced by Muslims, although its use remains politically controversial. Since the turn of the century these groups have come to be defined more and more through 'religion' (Grillo, 2010). In 2001 a religion question was included in the England and Wales census for the first time in a hundred and fifty years, largely a result of lobbying on the part of British Muslim organisations (Sherif, 2011).

If the shift to religion in political discourse can be traced back to a particular event, then the Rushdie Affair in 1989 was undoubtedly pivotal (Modood 1990). The protests that followed the publication of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*, citing its blasphemy against the Prophet Muhammad, along with the ensuing *fatwa* issued by Ayatollah Khomeini (then leader of Iran) calling for Rushdie's death, announced Muslims and their religion in the public sphere, likewise marking "the beginning of the end of [the] illusion of religion's insignificance" (Knott, 2012). This was amplified following urban riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford in 2001, which stemmed from what a report called communities living 'parallel lives' in segregated societies (Cantle, 2001), following which the government pursued its Cohesion agenda, centred around promoting cross-ethnic contact. Notably, the far Right, beginning with the BNP under Nick Griffin, also changed their discourse from one of Britain having a race or ethnic minority problem to having a 'Muslim problem' (McLoughlin, quoted in Fetzer & Soper, 2005; Modood, 2005).

Thus, the emergence of public religion and of religious diversity occurs in a context of growing concern over social and cultural integration of minority communities, with a particular emphasis on the 'otherness' of Muslims.

### *Institutionalization*

Since the years of New Labour (1997-2010), the government has involved, consulted, partnered with and supported faith-based organisations much more systematically at different levels, although, with the exception of the Greater London Authority, there is no statutory requirement for local authorities to do so. The relative prominence of these features, therefore, undergoes political fluctuation.

A specific body, The Faith Communities Consultative Council, created in the early 2000s was later, under the Conservative led Coalition government, subsumed under the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in preference for working with faith communities in "a manner that is strategic and appropriate for particular situations"<sup>35</sup>. A Faith Minister responsible for working with religious leaders was created in 2012 but scrapped in 2015. Responsibility for relations with faith communities continues to lie with the DCLG, although a number of government departments consult with faith groups on various policies and department officials attend meetings at the Faith Communities Forum and the Inter Faith Network, two national umbrella networks for faith organisations.

For minority faiths this has made necessary the creation of an organisational infrastructure and bodies to serve as representative interlocutors with government.

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<sup>35</sup> <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm110623/text/110623w0003.htm>

Different religions in Britain are represented by a range of bodies and actors participating in national and local forms of governance, mostly having developed at the local level and some dating back decades (see Weller, 2009). Claims of representation have often been questioned, not least by those within the respective faith tradition, leading to the range that can now be found. Important national umbrella organisations are the Hindu Council UK, National Council of Hindu Temples, and The Hindu Forum of Britain, the largest umbrella organisation for Hindu groups self-described as “the first port of call from the central government”<sup>36</sup>. For Sikhs the Network of Sikh Organisations and Sikh Federation are two prominent bodies amongst others. There are a couple of national level Buddhist organisations, The Buddhist Society and the Network of Buddhist Organisations. For Jews, representation comes principally through the Board of Deputies of British Jews and also the Office of the Chief Rabbi and the Jewish Leadership Council. For Muslims, the fallout from the Rushdie affair eventually led to the creation of the umbrella organisation the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) in 1997 (McLoughlin, 2005).

The lack of a formal recognition status has meant that ‘state patronage’ can be easily removed, as highlighted by the MCB falling out of favour with the New Labour government when it failed to support the war in Afghanistan in 2001 (see McLoughlin, 2005). The MCB is still the largest umbrella organisation representing Muslims<sup>37</sup>, and has continued to be the most influential single body (O’Toole et al., 2013). Yet, since 2005, the government has increasingly recognised as well as had a strong hand in creating a more diversified ‘democratic constellation’ (Modood, 2013[2007]), including bodies for young people, women, bodies that represented sectarian differences and interests, and those focussed on mosque governance or areas such as education (see below) (O’Toole et al., 2013).

As well as umbrella organisations for different faiths, there are also umbrella organisations across faiths. The Inter Faith Network (IFN), a ‘network of networks’, and its development in fact represents the gradual emergence and realisation of Britain as a multi-religious society. (Weller, 2013; Pearce, 2012). Governmental engagement with these bodies itself has been in recognition of the religious diversity of the contemporary UK as well as public benefit of religious organisations and their reach and ability to promote social integration in ways unavailable to the government. A high level, independent Commission (Commission on Religion and Belief in British Public Life), chaired by a former senior judge, Baroness Butler-Sloss, has argued that this diverse set of religious organisations should be encouraged to cooperate amongst themselves, be recognised as a partner to secular organisations as well as government, and to be seen as part of a new evolving Britishness (CORAB, 2015).

### *Public religion and society*

Religious bodies are important actors across multiple areas of society and although the established Church might still be seen as privileged, they are becoming increasingly multi-faith. The Church of England must fund its own running costs but does receive larger subsidies and grants for some religious buildings. This, nevertheless, is based on their heritage value rather than it being religious per se (Morris, 2009: 69-70).

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<sup>36</sup> See <http://www.hfb.org.uk/>. Accessed 07/08/2019

<sup>37</sup> See <https://mcb.org.uk/>

The 'advancement of religion' is recognised as a charitable purpose under the Charities Act 2011 and it is from gaining charitable status that financial benefit in terms of tax reliefs are open to religious bodies<sup>38 39</sup>. Indeed, the vast majority of religious organisations and churches are charity organisations, and mostly overseen by the Charity Commission.

In welfare provision, since the 1980s socio-economic restructuring, faith-based organisations have played an increasing role as part of the growing plurality and competition among service providers in the 'third sector' (Rivers, 2010; Dinham & Jackson, 2012), helped initially by the parish system of the Church of England meaning it had resources in every area of the country. This gained prominence in the 2000s under New Labour and then the so-called 'Big Society' under the Coalition government. A national review of faith organisations in 2007 identified 48 categories of community activities and thousands of projects in each region across the country (Dinham, 2007, 2009).

Chaplains' salaries are paid for in the armed forces, education and healthcare institutions (where they are authorized but not required), and prisons (where they are required by law), although it is the state that provides for these services and salaries come from the requisite budgets.

Establishing religious buildings has been, on the whole, comparatively less controversial than elsewhere (Fetzer & Soper, 2005), although doing so either through a new building or repurposing an existing building has not always been easy. Restrictions and delays in the planning permission process tend to revolve around existing laws of building use and concerns around access and parking. The ISKCON Temple at Bhaktivedanta Manor provides a prominent example. In this case Hare Krishnas fought a long-running battle in the 1980s and 1990s with the local planning authority to repurpose an old manor house for religious worship, before the direct intervention of the Secretary of State for the Environment (at the time John Gummer) finally approved the repurposing of the building and the building of new road across green belt land to ease traffic congestion (Nye, 1998).

Further exemptions and accommodations to meet some religious practice requirements also exist; for *halal* and *kosher* slaughter of animals and for circumcision of infants, for instance. On the whole, pragmatic accommodations have generally won out and the approach has been more ad hoc, leaving certain types of decision to non-judicial institutions and non-legal authority rather than blanket legislation and legal provision (Malik, 2008).

A few important cases related to accommodations at work were taken to the European Court of Human Rights under *Eweida and Others v United Kingdom*. For *Eweida*, bringing a case against British Airways suspended for wearing a visible cross, the court upheld her complaint, in no small measure because BA allowed other visible religious signs (such as turbans and *hijabs*) and had adjusted its uniform policy in the meantime anyway. In the other cases (*Chaplin*, *Ladele* and *MacFarlane*), the claims were dismissed on the basis that other considerations, health and safety in the case of

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<sup>38</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/excepted-charities/excepted-charities--2> for the legislation and <https://www.lawandreligionuk.com/2015/09/04/churches-as-charities-some-basics/> and Rivers (2000) for discussion.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/charitable-purposes/charitable-purposes#the-advancement-of-religion>

*Chaplin*, and the balance against the rights of others in *Ladele* and *MacFarlane*, outweighed any infringement on religious freedom (see Cranmer, 2013; Maher, 2014).

Church of England ecclesiastical courts are recognised as part of state law and have certain jurisdictional autonomy in church affairs, such as over discipline of the clergy. This itself has come under scrutiny recently as the Church has found itself embroiled in a child abuse scandal and covering it up. While minority faiths do not have their own courts with a similar legal status, Catholics, Jews and Muslims do have bodies that adjudicate on areas mainly to do with family law as part of what has been termed ‘minority legal orders’ that interpret and apply religious and cultural norms according to the faith community (Malik, 2014, 2012). For Jews the Beth Din is the oldest and largest authority, and Muslims are served by sharia councils, of which there are many across different communities without a centralised structure. Importantly, these are subordinate to state law and decisions made do not have the same legal status, although in a recent judgement the High Court has shown a willingness to recognise religious marriages from sharia councils as coming under state law (Guardian, 2018) and there have been calls for these to be more formally linked<sup>40</sup>. Sharia councils in particular have attracted attention and controversy, including in response to what was taken by many to be an overly supportive speech by the then Archbishop of Canterbury (Rowan Williams) in 2008 (Modood, 2019a: chp 7). More recently, the government has commissioned an independent review into their operation<sup>41</sup>.

### *Faith and education*

If education provides a microcosm for wider societal arrangements and relations (Sandberg, 2009), it offers a good discussion to further highlight a number of the features so far, namely, structural privilege along with pragmatic accommodation and state-religion partnership. Historically, formal education was entwined with the Church and it wasn’t until the move toward providing elementary universal education in the 19<sup>th</sup> century<sup>42</sup> that the government became firmly involved, which expanded to secondary education in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, non-denominational schools grew and with them a more secularised education; accompanied by a gradual shift from religious instruction to religious education in the second half of the twentieth century. At the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, nevertheless, faith schools gained a new lease of life, becoming seen as desirable in order to maintain and promote a religious way of life in a dominantly secular environment.

Religious education is stipulated for state schools in The Education Act 1944, which also included the further stipulation for an act of worship. In the Education Reform Act 1988<sup>43</sup> it was further stated that the act of worship “shall be wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character”, although exceptions to the character of worship are permitted “as may be appropriate having regard to any relevant considerations relating to the pupils concerned”. The syllabus for religious education likewise “shall reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian whilst taking account of the teaching and practices of the other principal religions represented in Great Britain”. As such the religious make-up of the school is taken into

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<sup>40</sup> See fn 33

<sup>41</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/678478/6.4152\\_HO\\_CPFGR\\_Report\\_into\\_Sharia\\_Law\\_in\\_the\\_UK\\_WEB.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/678478/6.4152_HO_CPFGR_Report_into_Sharia_Law_in_the_UK_WEB.pdf). Last accessed 09/08/2019

<sup>42</sup> The first state elementary schools were established in 1870.

<sup>43</sup> See <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1988/40/part/1/chapter/1/crossheading/religious-education/enacted>

consideration by the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) and Local Standing Advisory Committees on Religious Education (SACRE), who are the authorities responsible for designing and implementing syllabi, and schools have interpreted the stipulations flexibly and may provide acts of worship of a wholly different character. Pupils also may be withdrawn from attendance. On the whole, a pragmatic approach to working with local faith leaders and parents for understanding and accommodating the needs of the local population has prevailed.

There is a variety of types of school, each with slightly different arrangements when it comes to the provision of religious education, worship and involvement of, for example, churches<sup>44</sup>. Schools may be maintained by the local education authorities (LEAs) or, as is the case for academies and free schools, be independent of them. Broadly speaking, whereas faith schools must teach the national curriculum but have more freedom when it comes to religious education, faith academies do not need to follow the national curriculum. Having faith school status, of whatever kind, means that schools may have different admissions criteria and staffing policies, to varying degrees according to school type, and are to an extent permitted to discriminate along religious lines if they are oversubscribed, an exception provided for under the Equality Act 2010. An important case along these lines occurred in 2009 concerned an Orthodox Jewish school which refused admittance to a Jewish boy on the grounds that his mother, who had converted to Judaism, was not considered Jewish according to Orthodox prescriptions. The case went to the Supreme Court, where the school's policy was considered unlawful on grounds of direct ethnic discrimination. The case thus represented the law interpreting and requiring a non-Orthodox Jewish definition of who is Jewish (Liberal synagogues do not require a blood line); and a concept of religion which fits dominant (broadly Christian) understandings (Rivers, 2010; Mancini, 2010). The case thus provides an illustration of Britain's Christian inheritance grappling with religious diversity within a frame of racial equality and secular law and rights more generally.

Muslims began forming their own schools in the late 1970s and early 1980s<sup>45</sup>, yet calls for state-funded Muslim schools were rejected in the 1980s and first half of the 1990s (Modood, 2006; for some early accommodation, see Carr 2018). The first state-funded Muslim primary schools were opened under New Labour in the late 1990s, which also saw a more general expansion of faith school provision for minority faiths, and included Sikh, Seventh-Day Adventist, Greek Orthodox, and Hindu schools. The Education Act 2005 also in part encouraged more faith schools. Government statistics show that in England there are (as of January 2017)<sup>46</sup>

Religious character	Primary		Secondary		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
None	10 609	63.2	2 771	81.3	13 380	66.3
Church of England	4 377	26.1	209	6.1	4 586	22.7
Roman Catholic	1 645	9.8	322	9.4	1 967	9.7
Methodist	25	0.1	-	-	25	0.1

<sup>44</sup> See <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06972> for a summary. The National Secular Society, which has long campaigned against faiths schools, also provides a useful summary: <https://www.secularism.org.uk/faith-schools/what-types-of-school-are-there.html>. And Rivers (2000) provides a more detailed discussion.

<sup>45</sup> See [http://directory.ams-uk.org/schools\\_full.asp](http://directory.ams-uk.org/schools_full.asp)

<sup>46</sup> See this research briefing paper published in June 2018 <https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN06972>

<b>Other Christian</b>	72	0.4	73	2.1	145	0.7
<b>Jewish</b>	36	0.2	12	0.4	48	0.2
<b>Muslim</b>	13	0.1	14	0.4	27	0.1
<b>Sikh</b>	5	>0.1	6	0.2	11	0.1
<b>Hindu</b>	4	>0.1	1	>0.1	5	>0.1
<b>Total Schools</b>	16 786		3 408		20 194	
<b>Total Faith Schools</b>	6 177		637		6 814	

*Table adapted from: Long & Bolton, 2018*

Muslim schools have been particularly controversial in recent years, highlighted by the ‘Trojan Horse’ affair beginning in 2014, in which it was asserted that there was a conspiracy over an alleged ‘Islamisation’ of some schools in Birmingham. The initial government response banned a number of teachers and prompted extra inspections of certain schools by the government’s education inspectorate (Ofsted), although these were later overturned by the courts and the whole affair was shown to be unfounded (see Holmwood & O’Toole, 2017).

Religious signs and symbols in schools along with other spaces have also been debated. High profile instances and cases have occurred around Christian crosses, Sikh turbans and kirpans, and Muslim women’s clothing.

The accommodation of religious difference in school uniform policy is left to individual schools, in consultation with parents. An early case in this regard was *Mandla v Dowell-Lee* (1982), in which a Sikh boy was refused entry to his local school for wearing a turban. Although the Court of Appeal initially upheld the school’s position, this was overturned by the House of Lords. This, however, as similar turban exemptions mentioned above, was based on Sikhs constituting an ethnic rather than religious group. Further accommodations concerning Sikhs have been the allowance of the Sikh kirpan worn under clothing for Khalsa-baptised and observant Sikhs in schools, hospitals, public places, and even at the tightly secured London 2012 Olympic Games (Singh Juss, 2012).

Another high-profile case in schools, this time concerning Muslim clothing, was *Shabina Begum v Denbigh High School*. The school was 79% Muslim and had designed its uniform policy in consultation with parents and mosques, providing a shalwar kameez and *hijab* as an alternative to the standard uniform for those who preferred. Shabina Begum, who started wearing the *jilbab* was told she could not wear this to school. The case went to the High Court, which upheld the school’s position. The Court of Appeal, after Shabina had since left the school and was 17, overruled this decision in 2005, before the House of Lords reversed the decision again in 2006. Yet, as Lord Bingham stated when delivering his decision, “It is important to stress at the outset that this case concerns a particular pupil and a particular school in a particular place at a particular time” (Malik, 2008: 389). There have been no serious political moves to legislate to ban clothing that covers the head or face, unlike in some other European countries.

## Violent religious radicalisation challenges

The UK's experience of domestic terrorism goes back to the late 1960s when the conflict over the status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom, known as 'the Troubles'<sup>47</sup>, began. Mostly Protestant Unionists wanted NI to remain part of the UK, while mostly Catholic Republicans wanted it to leave the UK and become part of a united Ireland. However, despite this confessional difference, the conflict was ethno-national rather religious. The main terrorist threat in this period was the paramilitary wing of the political party Sinn Féin, the Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA). The IRA undertook a bombing campaign in Northern Ireland and England between the 1970s and 1990s, targeting economic and political targets, including two attempts at UK Prime Ministers. The conflict was formally brought to an end in 1998 with the Good Friday Agreement, although low level attacks have continued.

Islamist terrorism has formed the major source of contemporary religious radicalisation. The first major Islamist related attack on UK soil was the bombings on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2005 (7/7) in London. Four coordinated bombings targeted the transport network, three underground trains and a bus, during rush hour, killing 52 and injuring 784. The attacks were led by Mohammed Siddique Khan, who had trained in Pakistan and stated his allegiance to al-Qa'eda in a martyrdom video released shortly afterwards. Further high-profile suicide bombing attacks have included attempted bombings, such as in London and Glasgow airport in 2007, and the Manchester Arena suicide bombing in 2017 at the end of an Ariana Grande concert. The attack, which became the deadliest attack since 7/7 killing 23 (including the bomber) and wounding up to 250, was claimed by ISIS.

There have also been increasing low-level attacks. Notable among these was the murder of a British Army soldier, Fusilier Lee Rigby, in May 2013 by two converts to Islam, who ran him over before attacking him with meat cleavers and knives. Two attacks similar to one another occurred in 2017 and became the first attacks with multiple fatalities since 2005. The first occurred when another convert, Khalid Masood, drove his car onto the pavement on Westminster bridge, killing four pedestrians and injuring more than 50, and then fatally stabbed a police officer before being shot by another. The second occurred in June when three people drove a van into pedestrians on London Bridge before continuing a knife attack, killing a total of eight people.

Britain, furthermore, has been linked as a hub for international support for Islamists with global tentacles emanating from London, such that French intelligence nicknamed it 'Londonistan' (Pantucci, 2010: 254). The UK has also been one of the main source countries for foreign fighters. The latest government estimate of British nationals who have travelled to Syria and Iraq to take part in the conflict is 850, with around half of those having since returned (House of Commons, 2018). People leaving the UK as foreign fighters in conflicts involving Muslims had occurred earlier, in the 1980s to Afghanistan and 1990s to Bosnia, but came under specific interest as a security concern with people leaving to join the conflicts in Iraq and Syria.

In 2017 the UK reported the highest number of terror-related fatalities, arrests, and foiled, failed and successful attacks of Western European countries and arrests and convictions for terrorism related offences have risen in the last few years (Home Office,

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<sup>47</sup> This name had also been used for historical conflicts

2018). The vast majority of these attacks were in Northern Ireland, although it also reported the highest number of Islamist attacks (Europol, 2018). Terrorism-related arrests reached a peak in 2017, having generally climbed since 2010 (House of Commons, 2018). During the period 2001 to 2012 46% of those arrested and 67% of those charged with terrorism offences were Muslim (ibid).

There have also been incidents of far -right anti-Muslim radicalised violence, which have increasingly been seen in similar terms. A significant event was the Finsbury Park attack in 2017, when a man drove a van into Muslim worshippers, and which the then Prime Minister, Theresa May, was quick to label a terror attack and "every bit as sickening" as other attacks that same year (BBC, 2017).

## **Policies and practices addressing / preventing such radicalisation**

Responses to Islamist terrorism and counter-terrorism legislation have in large part developed from measures taking shape from 1970s and the conflict in Northern Ireland<sup>48</sup>. Following a pub bombing in 1974 in Birmingham, the government brought in the Prevention of Terrorism (Temporary Provisions) Act which, like most such bills during this period was a temporary measure (Burke, no date). The Act was the first in a series to confer enhanced powers on police in instances of terrorism. Yet, in response to the threat of Islamist terrorism, state security measures and resources have developed and extended beyond those stemming from this period. This has included the introduction of permanent rather than temporary legislation and a previous distinction between domestic and international terrorism has become less clear-cut (Burke, no date).

The cornerstone of the government's national strategic response is CONTEST, first developed in 2003 prompted by 9/11, and subsequently revised in 2006 following 7/7, and then 2009, 2011 and 2018. It is owned by the Home Office and overseen by the Home Secretary and Prime Minister with a significant role for the Office of Security and Counter-Terrorism (OSCT), an Office created in 2006 and located within the Home Office.

CONTEST comprises four aspects, each with its own main aim: *Pursue*, to stop terrorist attacks, *Prevent*, to stop people becoming or supporting terrorists, *Protect*, which largely encompasses the security services working with the private sector to ensure that critical national infrastructure is physically protected and its vulnerability reduced, and *Prepare*, aimed at mitigating the effects and consequences of an attack in its immediate aftermath and being able to return operating as normal as quickly as possible (Home Office, 2011, 2018). The number of government agencies, departments and bodies that are part of the counter-terrorism apparatus is large (Burke, no date, lists 36 governmental organisations). The security services, comprising the overseas focussed Secret Intelligence Service (SIS or MI6), the domestic focussed Security Service (MI5) and GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters) work closely with special police units such as the Metropolitan Police Service's Counter Terrorism Command (CTC or SO15) and nine regional Counter Terrorism Units (CTUs). The Joint Terrorism Analysis Centre (JTAC), created in 2003, coordinates inter-agency collaboration, including other agencies or departments as needed, such as medical,

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<sup>48</sup> although it has also been suggested that certain methods and measures go back to late 19<sup>th</sup> century colonial practices (Sabir, 2017)

traffic management and so on. JTAC also sets the threat level (which has been at 'Severe' or higher since August 2014) and issues warnings and reports. In 2007 the Research, Information, Communications Unit (RICU) was established to help manage the language the government used when communicating about terrorism.

Under the aegis of *Pursue* a series of legislation has been enacted. While not exhaustive, this section outlines some of the most significant Acts and their features.

The Terrorism Act 2000 included some measures of the temporary bills during the Troubles, such as pre-charge arrest and detention, but also expanded to include providing or seeking training for terrorism in the UK or overseas and incitement to terrorism. The Anti-Terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001, passed following 9/11, included a provision for the (potentially) indefinite detention without charge of suspected foreign terrorists if it was not possible to deport them. It also included a measure against withholding information, thereby allowing scope to prosecute family members of terrorists, something rarely used in NI.

The Terrorism Act 2006 responded to 7/7 and widened the scope to include early intervention measures such as indirect encouragement or glorification of terrorism (particularly aimed at 'radical preachers'), dissemination of terrorist publications, preparatory acts for terrorism, training for terrorism or attending a place used for training. It also lengthened the pre-charge detention period from 14 to 28 days (following a second failed attempt to extend it to 90 days – which had also been attempted under The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005). The Terrorism Prevention and Investigation Measures Act 2011 repealed the controversial Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 but strengthened measures aimed at those "who pose a real terrorist threat, but whom we cannot prosecute or, in the case of foreign nationals, deport"<sup>49</sup>. Measures against suspects include curfews, limits to travel and movement and provisions to monitor these, control of electronic communication devices, limits on financial services access, and limits to freedom of association.

The Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (CTSA) was introduced mainly in response to foreign fighters and includes a variety of travel restriction measures aimed at people both leaving or entering the UK. It also places a legal duty requiring public bodies (such as those involved in education, healthcare and social services), to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism" (Part 5, Chapt. 1, point 26) in carrying out their functions, and as such "It has, arguably, become a civic obligation to contribute to, and participate in, the monitoring of others ... In so doing, they may therefore become simultaneously the subjects, objects and tools of anti-terrorism" (Jarvis & Lister, 2013: 661).

The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 focussed on communication monitoring measures, consolidating existing powers to obtain such data and provisions for internet data collection. The Counter-Terrorism and Border Security Act 2019 followed a review in the aftermath of the attacks in 2017 and the killing of Sergei and Yulia Skripal by a nerve agent in Salisbury in March 2018, with suspected links to the Russian government, as well as the ongoing issue of foreign fighters travelling to Iraq and Syria. It has, amongst other measures, increased border control powers, increased sentences for preparatory acts, introduced the offence of entering or remaining in certain

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<sup>49</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/terrorism-prevention-and-investigation-measures-act>. Accessed 01/08/2019.

overseas territories, and provided expanded scope for prosecution of viewing rather than just downloading terrorist material.

State power to remove citizenship has also been strengthened. This power had existed since the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act 1914, but had been used mainly against those engaged in espionage in the Cold War and largely lain dormant in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, its last use in 1973 (Choudhury, 2017). The scope of the power has since been extended, as has the Home Secretary's discretion under the terms of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Acts of 2002 and 2006, the Immigration Act 2014, and the CTSA. It is now applicable to born British citizens, not just naturalized citizens, and is exercisable without the need for a conviction of terrorist offences. Between 2006 and 2015 more than 50 British citizens were stripped of their citizenship, and in 2017 alone reached over 100<sup>50</sup>. The recent case of Shamima Begum, who left the UK for Syria whilst still a legal minor, married a fighter and had a child, has brought debates on this into popular conscience.

Following the March 2017 attack a fresh debate was sparked about the balance between digital privacy and access to digital communications by the police and security services as the police tried to gain access to the perpetrator's WhatsApp messages as part of their investigation.

The *Prevent* strand has probably attracted the most sustained attention, scrutiny and criticism. *Prevent* represents 'soft' measures or the 'hearts and minds' approach to addressing the social, cultural and ideological aspects of (de)radicalization, along with promoting 'moderate' Islam and helping develop a *British* Islam. It was in fact identified as the most important strand by the government in 2007 (DCLG, 2007). It combined de-radicalisation with community cohesion, and aimed at promoting shared values, challenging extremist ideologies, building leadership within Muslim communities, and strengthening institutions within those communities, all with a particular focus on young people (Thomas, 2009: 284, 2010). While it has been argued that the supposed division between *Prevent* and *Pursue* was already a false dichotomy (Sabir, 2017), the latest iteration explicitly identifies the link between *Prevent* and *Pursue* as particularly important (Home Office, 2018: 29).

Under the coalition government, and driven by deep budget cuts under austerity as well as a different political and ideological stance, the 2011 iteration of CONTEST marked two shifts: to a 'value for money' approach and the separation between *Prevent* and the Cohesion agenda, thus away from social programmes to focus on 'ideology' and counter-narratives. Notably, in this period there was also a discursive shift, where citizenship became concomitant with 'British values' and programme partners were screened more thoroughly. The identified threat moved from violent extremism to extremism more generally, thus including *non-violent* extremism (Home Office, 2011; also Mythen et al., 2017). To this end it stated, "some terrorist ideologies draw on and make use of extremist ideas[,] which are espoused and circulated by apparently non-violent organisations, very often operating within the law" (Home Office, 2011: 9, 10). 2011 was also the year in which the then Prime Minister David Cameron, at a speech at the Munich Security Conference, blamed multiculturalism for the "weakening of our collective identity" and for the growth in 'home-grown terrorists'; the answer was to be

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<sup>50</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/727961/CCS207\\_CCS041\\_8538240-1\\_Transparency\\_Report\\_2018\\_Web\\_Accessible.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/727961/CCS207_CCS041_8538240-1_Transparency_Report_2018_Web_Accessible.pdf). Accessed 07/08/2019

a ‘muscular liberalism’ and a defence of British values<sup>51</sup>. A further feature of the speech, as in CONTEST, is the identification of a variety of ‘extremisms’ and terrorism threats, with Northern Ireland mentioned. Yet, commentators have generally criticized its near exclusive emphasis on Muslims, who have replaced the Irish as *the* ‘suspect community’ (Jarvis & Lister, 2013; also Kundnani, 2014; Thomas, 2009, 2010). This is reflected in the funding of *Prevent*, which was initially channelled to city councils according to the size of the Muslim population (first to those at more than 5% and then where this was over 4000 people) and then, following the 2011 iteration, by the threat level still based on Muslim demographics.

At the core of *Prevent* is working with community actors and organisations, seen to have ‘insider’ knowledge and therefore the social capital to influence people away from extremism. This has produced an at times ‘bewildering variety’ of projects, some government-led but mostly led by Muslim and other community initiatives. This has also served to highlight differences between Muslim communities (Griffith-Dickson et al., 2014) and there has also been a variety of ways in which such programmes have been implemented at local levels as community organisations have flexibly interpreted and applied the *Prevent* strategy (O’Toole et al. 2012, 2013, 2016)<sup>52</sup>.

One of the most significant programmes is *Channel*, which was launched in 2007 in response to 7/7 and designed as an early-intervention de-radicalization programme. It is based on referrals of those deemed to be at risk of radicalization, and might involve a series of social support bodies, governmental and non-governmental, and measures including counselling, education, housing and employment. Initially in 2014, and subsequently under the terms of the CTSA 2015, such referrals, which had previously been voluntary, became a statutory duty for professionals working in local government, education, and health and social care amongst other areas, thus drawing them into active counter-terrorism policing roles and enforcing government policy and strategy; a process that has been referred to as the ‘securitization of social policy’ (Ragazzi, 2017; Sabir, 2017). This has proved especially controversial for the at times absurdity of its racialised application, perhaps well-exemplified by a four year old who was threatened with being referred under *Prevent* by staff at his nursery school in 2016 when they misunderstood his pronunciation of ‘cucumber’ and drawing of his father cutting a cucumber, thinking he was depicting and describing a home-made bomb (a ‘cooker-bomber’). This feature of the programme is now also expanding into the private sector with staff at major retailers also receiving training in spotting signs of violent extremism in co-workers (FT, 2019). Numbers being referred to *Prevent* and supported by *Channel* have gradually increased year on year. In 2017/18, there were a total of 7 318 referrals under *Prevent* (44% for concerns of Islamist extremism and 18% for right wing extremism), representing a 20% increase on the previous year, with 394 being supported through *Channel*, a 19% increase (45% for Islamist extremism and 44% for right wing extremism)<sup>53</sup>.

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<sup>51</sup> See <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-speech-at-munich-security-conference>. Accessed 05/08/2019

<sup>52</sup> Also, see contributions in <https://discoversociety.org/2019/09/04/focus-an-independent-review-of-the-prevent-strategy/> for commentary on *Prevent* and its developments.

<sup>53</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/763254/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2017-mar2018-hosb3118.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/763254/individuals-referred-supported-prevent-programme-apr2017-mar2018-hosb3118.pdf). Accessed 08/08/2019

## Concluding Remarks

Britain then is an example of a moderately secular country, well along the road of secularization in many respects but also encompassing the historical inheritance of dominant Christianity, into which religious diversity and pluralism has been increasingly finding a home and helping to shape.

There are clear areas in which the historical inheritance and legacy of Anglican dominance can be seen. Yet, there is also no clear Anglican versus non-Anglican or even Christian versus non-Christian divide that fits the whole picture. What is found in general terms are forms of tolerant pragmatism with space within the existing state-religion framework that forms part of Britain's historical inheritance. Fetzer and Soper have, in comparing the UK, France and Germany on their accommodation of Muslims, in fact argued that Britain's church-state framework has made it comparatively open. While there is an on-going decline in Christianity, religion has become highly visible, if controversial feature, of what might be seen as an emergent multiculturalising of a moderate secularism. With regard to this, however, it is important to make more explicit an important qualification which has been perhaps more implicit in the summary discussions above; that is that these accommodations have often been hard fought and hard won by minorities themselves, and Muslims have often been at the forefront of claims-making for religion's role in the public sphere (Modood 2005, 2019).

In common with other Western European states in this series Islam now forms the 'second religion' in Britain after Christianity, while other religious minorities, although much smaller, are also important to Britain's multiculturalism. The focus on Muslims, however, as a result of Islamist terrorism, has put and continues to put this tolerant pragmatism under strain, with, at least as far as Islam is concerned, a trend towards the securitization of religion. Britain has been one of the most affected countries on the continent when it comes to violent religious radicalisation and has developed an expansive apparatus of 'hard' and 'soft' measures which are increasingly blurred.

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Project Coordinator: Professor Anna Triandafyllidou

Contact: [anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu](mailto:anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu)

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