

# Ending identity- based violence

Manifesto and policy review  
General Election 2019



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## About Protection Approaches

Protection Approaches addresses the manifestations of identity-based violence that occur every day, all over the world, as a global but preventable challenge: when an individual or a group is attacked on the streets of London or in an unknown town on the other side of the world because of their gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, economic status, disability, race, culture, religion, or ethnicity, this is identity-based violence. Identity-based violence is not a phenomenon particular to certain countries, regions or groups. Almost everyone will witness, be the victim of, or – knowingly or unwittingly – play a part in the common pathways and processes that lead prejudice, exclusion, and identity-based violence.

Connecting rising domestic and global challenges to social cohesion, viewing these forms of violence through a wide lens, and understanding the shared responsibility to protect people as beginning with individuals and communities and stretching to global leaderships, is why we exist.

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# Introduction

The manipulation of identity to create division lies at the heart of many of our country's and our world's most serious challenges. These challenges require joined up, consistent effort, whether at home or abroad.

While racism, sexism, and other forms of prejudice may not always look the same as they did twenty or thirty years ago. Hate crime, hate speech, and other forms of verbal and physical attack motivated by how perpetrators conceptualise their victims' identity are becoming more common. Our own work in local communities and schools has documented rising anxieties felt across society of widening social divides

Around the world, the incidence of mass atrocities is also rising. It is estimated that by 2030 over half of the world's poor will be living in countries affected by high levels of violence and, as the consequences of the climate crisis continue to force people to flee their homes and exacerbate tensions, identity-based violence will become a (more) common feature of resource-based conflicts.

We believe that the responsibility to prevent identity-based violence, and when necessary help to protect vulnerable groups, is one in which we all share.

This is our third manifesto and policy review. It sets out what has been pledged by the major parties regarding identity-based violence, including hate crime, violent extremism, and mass atrocities. It is a survey of political attitudes and offers insight into the kinds of policies we can expect the parties to pursue during the next parliament.

It is a review of the manifestos and certain policy statements made during the 2019 general election campaign by the most prominent political parties standing across the UK, and by the national parties in Wales and Scotland; the Conservative and Unionist Party; Labour Party; Liberal Democrats; Brexit Party; the Green Party; Scottish National Party; Plaid Cymru.

We have included statements made by these parties in response to a letter to all party leaders by members of the UK Atrocity Prevention Working Group, which is convened by Protection Approaches. More information can be found on our website, where our letter and the responses can be read in full.

We have chosen not to include the parties who stand only in Northern Ireland. We recognise the importance of NI and its parties when discussing identity-based violence in the UK. However, to include these parties would have required resources we did not have given the short notice of the snap election. Although they have no representation in parliament, we decided to include an assessment of the Brexit Party because of their performance in the 2019 European Parliament election, their prominent media coverage and, as a result, influence on national debate.

Moments of this election campaign have revealed that our political parties could all do more within their own structures to prevent prejudice and its consequences. The intervention by religious leaders condemning the Labour and Conservative parties of institutional prejudice reminds us that statements and manifestos can never represent the full picture.

Whatever the outcome of the election, our objectives remain the same. Unless prevention is prioritised and root causes are addressed, current crises facing our local and global social cohesion will continue to deteriorate, with the most vulnerable paying the biggest price. Whoever leads the next parliament, the responsibility to help prevent discrimination in all its forms, and to help protect people from identity-based violence— here in the UK and around the world— will remain unchanged.

# Risk factors of identity-based violence

No community, society or country is immune to identity-based violence. Constant and consistent effort is required from local grassroots to political leaderships to ensure that the fundamental rights and freedoms of all are protected and respected. In times of political, economic, or social crisis, societies become more vulnerable. When a sense of local or national anxiety becomes widespread, minority and marginalised groups very often pay the greatest price.

There are certain risk factors that can reduce a society's resilience to divisive and hate-based behaviours.

We use these indicators to assess the resilience of states and societies, both in the UK and around the world.

## **Society-wide conditions:**

- National level political or economic crisis
- Intergroup tensions or patterns of discrimination against identity groups
- Widespread perceptions of grievance, threat, or inequality between groups
- Sense of group, community, or national insecurity
- Normalisation of hate speech, dehumanising language, and incitement to violence against identity groups
- Widespread disinformation, propaganda, and fake news
- Widespread delegitimisation of expertise
- Widespread lack of trust in the media
- Widespread lack of trust in the government

- Widespread belief that the democratic process cannot lead to positive
- Widespread belief that the democratic process cannot lead to positive change
- Removal of or failure to uphold human rights protections
- Growth in number and legitimacy of groups who use violence or the threat of violence
- Impunity for those who commit, incite, or threaten violence

**Individual risks:**

- Not feeling valued by those around you
- Not feeling represented by those who make decisions affecting your life
- Not feeling in control of your life or its direction
- Believing that certain groups are responsible for problems or pose a threat to your security or prosperity
- Believing that certain groups are 'less legitimate', 'less human', or deserving of punishment including violence
- Having a violent or criminal history
- Having a history of psychological ill health
- Personal networks or relationships with corrupting individuals

# Preventing identity-based violence at home



## Summary and trends

The country feels more divided than ever before. And yet, despite regular acknowledgement throughout the election campaign from all parties that the issue of Brexit has created new and exacerbated existing social divisions across the country, no party sets out a vision to bridge this cleavage.

Likewise, while hate crime is addressed in different ways by different parties, there is commitment to assess the new and emerging risks to the country's social cohesion.

All except the Brexit Party commit to learning lessons from the Windrush scandal. Labour, the Liberal Democrats, Greens, SNP, and Plaid Cymru promise to end the hostile environment adopted by the Home Office under the Coalition government in 2012. Poor treatment, anti-migrant sentiment, and the scapegoating of refugees and migrants are identified by all parties except the Conservatives and the Brexit Party as a harmful trend they pledge to reverse.

Parties that wish to expand hate crime's definition to include misogyny and violence against women and girls do not seek to include anti-migrant and anti-refugee identity-based violence.

There is near consensus commitment to passing the Domestic Abuse Bill, and Labour, SNP, and the Liberal Democrats would seek to ratify the Istanbul Convention.

Only Labour and the Green parties set out an educational approach to tackling prejudice and some of the root causes of division and identity-based violence.

In contrast to previous elections, preventing domestic violent extremism is no longer seen as a priority. Labour and the Greens seek to review the Prevent programme and Labour wishes to assess threats posed by far-right extremism.



## The Conservative Party prevention at home

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*It is a basic point of principle - and natural justice - that you should not be able to take out before you have put in. Of course, we should help those in genuine need – especially those who have fled from persecution. But at the same time, it is both right and fair that, as in other countries, people making the UK their home should pay into the tax system for a reasonable period of time before they can access welfare.*

”

The Conservatives promise to ‘improve the lives of all and reject the policies of division’. They believe Britain to be a ‘diverse and tolerant country with confidence in its own identity and values’.

### **Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups**

The Conservatives commit to ‘protect people from physical attack or harassment for their sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion or disability’; but the manifesto contains no specific strategy for addressing high levels of hate crime and other forms of identity-based violence. Likewise, the manifesto includes a pledge to ensure that ‘no-one is put off from engaging in politics by threats, harassment or abuse’ but does not set how this would be achieved.

The Conservatives promise to pass the Domestic Abuse Bill and support victims.

A commitment to set out a national strategy for disabled people, which would look at ways to improve the benefits system, opportunities and access for disabled people in a number of key fields, would be accompanied with by an additional £74 million over three years for those with learning difficulties and autism.



Proposed policy set out during the campaign to bring in measures to target travellers and gypsies with immediate evictions would represent a significant step backwards for the rights of some of the UK's more marginalised communities. These measures have been described by academic experts as 'ethnic cleansing via legislation...rather than guns and bullets'.

### **Preventing domestic violent extremism**

The Conservative strategy to 'combat extremism' includes commitments to protect those who work in countering extremism from threats and intimidation; prevent extremists from receiving public money; legislate to protect people from online harms, and invest in the police and security services, granting them the 'powers they need to combat new threats'. Offline solutions to online harms and the root causes of violent extremism are not discussed.

### **Promoting social cohesion**

The party commits to tackle prejudice, racism and discrimination, and 'address the complex reasons why some groups do less well at school, earn less at work, or are more likely to be the victims of crimes.' This would include efforts to improve the quality of evidence and data within government about the types of barriers different groups within the UK face, although there is no detail on how this would be achieved.

The manifesto promises communities that are 'pleasant, safe and prosperous'. A towns fund would support local libraries and regional museums, and a community ownership fund to increase local ownership of civic organisations (football clubs, pubs and post offices are the examples given). Support would also be given to activities, traditions and events that 'bring communities together'.

Although the party promises to invest £500 million into youth services, it is unclear which specific youth services would benefit.

### **Upholding human rights in the UK**

The Conservatives promise to 'update' the Human Rights Act and



associated law to ensure a ‘proper balance’ between the rights of individuals, national security, and effective government. There is no guarantee whether and how existing rights safeguarded by the 1998 Act would be preserved.

As the UK withdraws from the EU, the manifesto promises to legislate to maintain the ‘high standards’ of workers’ rights, environmental protection, and consumer rights. It pledges to withdraw Britain from the jurisdiction of European Court of Justice, which would mean fewer protections of rights for people in the UK.

### **Attitudes towards refugees and migrants**

The Conservatives do not address anti-migrant sentiment or violence. While the party acknowledges that ‘what happened to the Windrush generation’ under the last government was ‘horrific’ and support a Windrush memorial and compensation scheme, there is no commitment to move away from the hostile environment policy.

A new ‘Australian-style’ points-based immigration system is proposed, with priority given to those who have good English, have not broken the law in their own country, and have ‘good education and qualifications’. The proposals would require most people to have a clear job offer to enter the UK, and there are plans to introduce a specific visa for those coming to work for the NHS. To access unemployment, housing, and child benefits, future migrants would have to have been UK residents for five years.

### *“We will update the Human Rights Act”*

The Conservatives guarantee the preservation of existing rights of EU citizens who came to live in the UK before Brexit - although these rights, as with the rights of UK citizens, would alter following the pledged ‘update’ of the UK Human Rights Act.

The party commit to uphold international law by continuing to grant asylum and support to refugees fleeing persecution, with a caveat that the ‘ultimate aim’ is to return these refugees home if it is safe to do so.



## The Labour Party prevention at home

*“ We are built on the values of social justice, internationalism and human rights. Each are rooted in the fundamental truth that whatever your background, wherever you are from, whatever your faith or religious belief, you should have the means and opportunity to fulfil your potential. ”*

Labour promises that inclusion would be ‘at the heart’ of its programme for government, committing to ensuring a ‘pathway to economic inclusion’ for all, and ending racism and discrimination in society.

### **Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups**

The Labour Party was the only party to release a separate manifesto on race and faith. The manifesto assessed that there has been a failure across public institutions, including the media, to deal effectively with the rise of racist violence, hate speech and hate crime, and noted that hate crime has doubled in the past five years. A Labour government would ‘take actions to address the causes of hate crime and bring communities together.’

Labour would seek to expand the definition of hate crime to include misogyny and violence against women and girls. They would amend the law to include attacks on places of worship as a specific aggravated offence and strengthen protection for religious communities.

They would develop a ‘comprehensive’ Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community equality strategy to tackle persistent inequalities in housing, education and criminal justice.



They seek to eliminate racial inequality from the economy, noting that in some public services the ethnic minority pay gap is 37%. They would tackle racial discrimination in the criminal justice system – including the overrepresentation of young Muslim men in the prison population and BAME children in youth custody.

The manifesto pledges a new government Department for Women and Equalities, responsible for assessing the equality-impact of policies and laws, and a National Women’s Commission as an independent advisory body. There is a specific pledge to close the gender pay gap by 2030. The Labour Party would ratify the Istanbul Convention on domestic abuse and the ILO Convention on Violence and Harassment at work.

On LGBT+ issues, Labour would eliminate undefined ‘areas of discrimination’ in law; reform the Gender Recognition Act to introduce self-declaration for trans people; and make sure that services aimed at the homeless are tailored to LGBT+ people.

### **Preventing domestic violent extremism**

Labour commits to reviewing the Prevent programme to ‘assess its effectiveness and potential to alienate communities.’ It would ‘consider alternatives including safeguarding programmes to protect those vulnerable to the recruitment propaganda and ideologies of the far-right and others who promote terror as a political strategy.’

Labour promises an independent review into the threat of far-right extremism; other extremism is not discussed.

### **Upholding human rights**

Labour promise to protect and uphold human rights. They would defend the Human Rights Act and incorporate the International Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination into British law.



## Attitudes towards refugees and migrants

The manifesto promises to end the hostile environment and create an immigration system ‘built on’ human rights. Once in the UK, refugees would have the right to work, to access public services, and would be treated ‘humanely’ by government at all levels.

Labour would end the deportation of family members of those entitled to be here and keep families together.

Yarl’s Wood and Brook House, two detention centres, would be closed, with the savings put towards supporting survivors of modern slavery, people trafficking and domestic violence.

The party will ‘end the injustices’ of the Windrush scandal, and provide ‘fair compensation’ to those who have suffered.

## Promoting social cohesion through education

Labour is one of the only parties that sets out an education-based approach to preventing prejudice and identity-based violence. The Emancipation Educational Trust would ensure that the curriculum covers subjects including black history, slavery and its legacies. They commit funding for schools to deliver mandatory LGBT+ inclusive relationships and sex education.

*“Understanding the breadth of Britain’s history is crucial to tackling the injustices and racism in our society and around the world that persist today”*

The Race and Faith manifesto commits Labour to reviewing the underrepresentation of BAME teachers in schools within the first month of government, and to develop a strategy to recruit and retain BAME teachers. There is a further commitment to work with different groups, including community groups, local authorities, and schools, to tackle the uneven rates of exclusion of young people from BAME backgrounds.



## The Liberal Democrats prevention at home

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*[For a] free society where every person's rights and liberties are protected and where the contribution of migrants to our society is celebrated. A plan for a world where everybody's rights are respected and society is fair and diverse; a plan to allow everyone to get on and live as who they are, free from discrimination.*

”

The Liberal Democrats plan to stop Brexit, believing that this is the best way to address the challenges the UK faces. As stated in the preamble to their constitution, they ‘exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society’.

### **Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups**

The Liberal Democrats set out a detailed approach to tackling hate crime. They acknowledge that hate crimes are rising, and that too many groups of people no longer feel safe.

The manifesto promises to make hate crimes aggravated offences; outlaw caste discrimination; and to provide law enforcement with the ‘resources and training they need’ to identify and prevent hate crimes. They pledge to ‘condemn inflammatory rhetoric’ by those with public platforms.

The Liberal Democrats would provide funding for protective security measures for places of worship, schools and community centres vulnerable to hate crime and terror attacks. The manifesto does not detail how this commitment departs from or adds to the Places of Worship Protective Security Funding Scheme introduced by the previous government.



Regarding gender, the manifesto proposes a ‘complete reform’ of the Gender Recognition Act that would remove the requirement for medical reports, scrap the fee, and ‘recognise non-binary gender identities’. There is also a proposal to introduce an ‘X’ gender option on passports, and extend equality law to cover gender identity and expression.

There are several policies aimed at improving the rights of the LGBT+ community. Pledges include a question on LGBT+ status in the 2021 census in order to improve population data, a review on the basis of evidence of practices aimed solely at LGBT+ people, such as blood donations, addressing inequalities in pensions law for those in same-sex relationships, and requiring schools to introduce gender-neutral uniform policies.

The manifesto also makes commitments aimed at reducing violence against women and girls, and at improving the protection and rights of domestic violence victims. These include ratifying the Istanbul Convention; introducing a statutory definition of domestic abuse that includes effects on children; increasing the number of refuges and rape crisis centres; and the establishment of a national rape crisis helpline. Local authorities would have the ‘duty and funding’ to support survivors of abuse. The Liberal Democrats propose special measures for survivors in all courts, and the prevention of direct cross-examination of survivors by their abusers.

On disability rights, there are pledges to increasing accessibility to public places, including setting a standard for accessible cities.

The Liberal Democrats commit to reduce overrepresentation of people from BAME backgrounds in the criminal justice system, including a principle of ‘explain or reform’, requiring the system to explain disparities between ethnic groups, or reform to address them. They also commit to stopping the ‘disproportionate’ use of Stop and Search.

### **Preventing domestic violent extremism**

There are no specific provisions for preventing or responding to domestic violent extremism in the manifesto.



## Upholding human rights

The Liberal Democrats make a commitment to champion the UK Human Rights Act and the European Convention on Human Rights, as well as a pledge to establish a 'general corporate duty of care' for the environment and human rights for businesses to follow. They promise to decriminalise and improve access to abortion across the UK.

EU citizens who have lived in the UK for five years or longer would be given the right to stand for office and vote in UK elections and referendums, which could reduce marginalisation as a result of Brexit.

## Attitudes towards refugees and migrants

The manifesto says that the hostile environment has 'unacceptably trampled' on people's rights and people are still discriminated against on the basis of their gender, race, age, sexuality, gender identity, religion or whether they are disabled. It pledges to end the hostile environment and plans to 'take powers away' from the Home Office, and to end indefinite detention for asylum seekers.

On asylum, there are promises to offer asylum to those forced to flee because of their sexual orientation; to never refuse an LGBT+ applicant on the basis that they could be discreet; and to move asylum policy-making from the Home Office to the Department for International Development (DfID). Safe and legal routes to sanctuary are promised for 10,000 vulnerable refugees, as well as 10,000 unaccompanied refugee children from elsewhere in Europe, over the next ten years.

Asylum seekers would have the right to work three months after they have applied; public health services would be provided to people from the moment they arrive in the UK, free basic English lessons would be provided for refugees; and community-sponsorship projects for refugees would be funded. Specifically, community groups who develop innovative and successful ways of promoting social cohesion would be 'rewarded'.



## The Green Party prevention at home

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*Our Green plan will confront racism, antisemitism and prejudice, including from an early age through a broader and decolonialised curriculum in school, focussing on histories and role models from a diverse range of ethnicities and religions.*

”

The Green Party seek to ‘transform society and end discrimination.’ Community and the devolution of power is a thread that runs throughout the manifesto. They wish to ‘create an environment where everyone feels fulfilled in worthwhile employment’, and believe that ‘everyone should have a safe, affordable and warm place to call home.’

### **Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups**

The party criticises the Home Office for creating a ‘decades-long’ hostile environment for BAME and other minority communities. The manifesto pledges to establish a cross-government strategy tasked with tackling ethnic inequalities. They also pledge to create new support for entrepreneurs and small business owners from BAME backgrounds. Finally, they commit to making ‘Windrush day’ a bank holiday to celebrate migration’s contributions to the UK.

The Greens would make misogyny a hate crime across the UK. Through funding and training, they would also increase the police’s capacity to deal with domestic violence. The manifesto notes that an intersectional approach that recognises the groups of women who are most at risk is required to tackle hate crime.

The manifesto makes a number of commitments regarding disabled people, including supporting councils to improve their housing, and providing a supplement to their proposed Universal Basic Income for people with disabilities.



## **Violent Extremism**

The Greens seek to 'replace Prevent' with community cohesive policing which 'engages rather than antagonises' BAME communities and addresses concerns about the use of stop and search powers. There are no further references to tackling violent extremism in the manifesto.

## **Upholding human rights**

The Greens would replace the Home Office with a Ministry for the Interior – responsible for domestic security, with 'full regard to human rights and the needs of diverse communities' - and a Ministry for Sanctuary, responsible for enforcing migration rules with 'compassion', and 'due regard' for human rights.

They would retain the Human Rights Act, reaffirm the UK's commitment to the European Convention on Human Rights, and fully embed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) into UK law.

## **Attitudes towards refugees and migrants**

The Greens pledge to reduce migration in the long term, through EU policies, while maintaining Freedom of Movement in the EU. The Greens would end the hostile environment 'which puts migrants, from the EU and further afield, at risk and increases racism and anti-immigrant sentiment.' This would include ending indefinite detention, closing immigration detention centres, and 'ending the culture of abuse and violence that has prevailed in them.' They would 'immediately suspend all deportation flights and allow refugees to live freely, with a right to work, whilst their applications are considered.'

## **Promoting cohesion through education**

The manifesto sets out a commitment to tackle prejudice, racism and discrimination through education and promises to train staff in spotting sexual harassment and bullying; to confront prejudice through a broader curriculum focussing on histories and role models from a range of ethnicities and religions; and to better support PSHE lessons in schools, including ending the optout of LGBT+ inclusive PSHE lessons.



## The Brexit Party prevention at home

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*The way the political Establishment has conspired to frustrate democracy over Brexit has highlighted the need for fundamental political reform.*

”

The Brexit Party ‘Contract’ makes few specific commitments to improve or uphold existing commitments to prevent and protect groups from identity-based violence.

### **Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups**

There are no specific provisions on social cohesion; preventing hate crime or violent extremism; or the party’s position on human rights more broadly. The contract does not address social divisions in the country, acknowledge the polarising effect the Brexit debate is having, nor set out proposals for how the party would bring the country together.

The Brexit party promises to bring focus to combatting ‘violent crime, robbery and burglary, rather than enforcing restrictions on free speech.’ A downgrading of police attention on existing legal parameters on free speech could impact effective implementation of hate speech laws.

### **Attitudes towards refugees and migrants**

On migration, the contract promises that withdrawing from the EU would enable the UK to ‘crack down’ on illegal immigration, and ‘stop the human tragedy’ associated with human trafficking. No details are provided on how the prevention of human trafficking would be pursued. There is a promise to reduce annual immigration, and ‘address wage stagnation’ and ‘the skills gap’ by introducing a points system blind to ethnic origin. A commitment is made to provide a ‘humane welcome’ for ‘genuine’ refugees.



## The Scottish National Party prevention at home

“ *Wherever you come from, if you have chosen to make Scotland your home, the SNP’s message is simple - we welcome you and we want you to stay* ”

The SNP pledges that an independent Scotland would build a fairer, more inclusive society - where everyone feels valued, human rights are respected and they ‘properly support’ their most vulnerable people.

### Addressing hate crime and protecting vulnerable groups

While the SNP note the importance of working with communities to ensure relevant concerns are addressed, the manifesto does not set out an approach to hate crime or protecting minority and marginalised groups. They have laid out comprehensive policies to tackle hate crime elsewhere.

The manifesto pushes for ending age discrimination, and closing the gender pay gap. For the latter provision, a fine would be introduced for businesses that fail to meet an agreed Equal Pay Standard.

The SNP commit to challenging all forms of racism and bigotry, and oppose the ‘Rape Clause’, which forces women to disclose they have been raped to access benefits. They would continue to seek a clear timetable on ratification of the Istanbul Convention on domestic violence and violence against women.

### Upholding human rights

The SNP oppose any attempts to scrap the Human Rights Act, and efforts to withdraw from the European Convention on Human Rights.

## Preventing domestic violent extremism

The SNP does not make specific provisions for preventing domestic extremism.

## Attitudes to refugees and migrants

The SNP opposes the ‘hostile environment’ of the immigration system, would ‘stand firm’ against the demonisation of migrants, and seeks to prevent another Windrush scandal. The SNP would demand that an independent body rather than the Home Office make decisions on asylum applications; that a ‘fair asylum system’, without detention for those claiming asylum, is brought in; that the Dubs scheme for unaccompanied children is reintroduced; and that rules around family reunification are extended, without specifying how.

They also call for the creation of safe and legal routes for people to find protection in the UK, and the right to work for asylum seekers.

The SNP would call on the UK government to take 10,000 people per year under the Syrian Vulnerable Person resettlement programme, in line with recommendations from the UNHCR. There is a further call to commit to long term refugee resettlement beyond 2021.

The SNP seek an end to the EU citizens application fee for settled status; would uphold freedom of movement; and would oppose plans to introduce a minimum salary threshold for those entering the UK.

The manifesto states that an independent Scotland would safeguard and strengthen the rights of EU nationals, although it makes no specific provisions for this.

The SNP makes a general commitment to an asylum and immigration system geared to Scotland’s needs, built on ‘fairness and human rights’. They welcome regional rural immigration pilot projects, as recommended by the UK Migration Advisory Committee.



## Plaid Cymru prevention at home

“ *‘Our country, our communities, and the best interests of our nation are always our first and foremost priority.’* ”

Plaid Cymru believes in a fair and just society where everyone is treated equally and enjoys the same rights. The manifesto contains several commitments to the rights of refugees.

### **Addressing hate crime and vulnerable groups**

The manifesto makes several commitments that would improve the prevention of identity-based violence against vulnerable groups, including intersectional approaches to protection. For example, in addition to continuing their campaign for robust legislation on domestic abuse, Plaid pledges to tailor support to those from BAME and migrant communities who are victims of domestic abuse. On hate crime, Plaid would work with Police and Crime Commissioners to ensure all hate crime, including online abuse, is treated as a serious offence.

Plaid commit to engage with a broad spectrum of communities to combat ‘Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, anti-migrant sentiment, and all forms of racism and bigotry in politics, on the streets, and in our media’, as well as working to increase participation of minorities and women in politics and public life. Plaid’s racism and hate crime strategy includes preventative commitments to address ‘underlying socio-economic challenges faces by BAME communities’. They pledge to provide funding for English and Welsh language tuition for these communities to ‘encourage successful integration in Welsh society’.



Plaid would include neuro-divergence and gender identity as protected characteristics under the Equalities Act. They commit to supporting the reform of the Gender Recognition Act to introduce a streamlined, de-medicalised process.

### **Preventing domestic violent extremists**

There is no mention of domestic violent extremists in the Plaid manifesto.

### **Attitudes towards refugees and migrants**

Plaid repeats their 2017 position that Wales should become a nation of sanctuary for refugees fleeing war and oppression and commits to helping refugees and asylum seekers to integrate into Welsh society. The manifesto makes the case for assuming responsibilities to provide aid and support for those fleeing war or persecution. They advocate for a more 'humane approach' and 'greater solidarity' with refugees, including those crossing the Mediterranean. They do not set out specific policies, but migration is not a devolved issue.

Predicated on continued membership of the EU, Plaid says it would 'lead the call' for an EU migration policy based on solidarity – a 'fair allocation' of asylum seekers across all member states.

# Brexit & preventing identity-based violence at home: Why is no one talking about bringing the country together?

Whether the UK does or does not withdraw from the European Union, and under what terms, is of immense significance. But the manner in which the Brexit impasse is overcome is as important to the UK's success and cohesion as the outcome.

The country feels more divided than ever before. Our polling shows that a majority of both Leave and Remain voters see 'the other side' as a threat to the success and prosperity of the UK.

Despite acknowledgement throughout the election campaign from all parties that the issue of Brexit has created new and exacerbated existing social divisions across the country, no party sets out a vision to bridge this cleavage.

Whatever the outcome of the general election, Protection Approaches judges that it would be a mistake to wait for social tensions to escalate further. Social cohesion is not just 'nice to have' but must be a fundamental tenet of contemporary British stability and security. The country must be brought back together.

## **What the parties say:**

The Brexit Party and the Conservatives are campaigning to leave the EU as a matter of priority. The Brexit Party believe acting on what they refer to as the 'biggest popular mandate in British history' is essential to the restoration of faith in British democracy. The Conservatives believe 'getting Brexit done' will 'unleash the potential of our whole country'.

Neither party acknowledge those who wish to remain in the EU, nor do they set out a vision for bringing the country together. However, the Conservatives do promise to support activities, traditions and events that 'bring communities together'.

Labour is committed to giving the electorate ‘the final say’ on Brexit through a second referendum on whether to accept their re-negotiated withdrawal agreement or remain in the EU. While the Labour Party sets out a comprehensive strategy for tackling and preventing prejudices against BAME, LGBT+, women, disabled people, and newcomers to the UK, it presents no strategy for healing Brexit divisions or tackling the online and offline harms that stem from political polarisation.

Stopping Brexit is front and centre of the Liberal Democrat manifesto and election campaign. However, social and political divisions that were exposed and fuelled by the 2016 referendum - as well as those that have emerged since - are not discussed. No strategy to unite the country or mitigate anxieties felt by those who still wish to leave the EU are set out.

The Green Party believes the outcome of the Brexit referendum has been ‘difficult, dangerous, and divisive’. They have committed themselves to a vision of ‘international bridges, not walls’ as well as the formation of a democratic EU that ‘delivers on social rights and opportunities for all its citizens’. However, they do not set out a domestic vision to bridge the Brexit divide.

Plaid Cymru believe ‘Brexit is not merely an economic problem – it is ripping away rights from millions of people’ They seek to stop Brexit on the basis that many jobs in Wales and the country’s place in Europe depends on EU membership. While noting the impact the Brexit deadlock is having on the thousands of EU citizens living in Wales, Plaid set out no strategy to address social and political divisions in Wales or within the Union.

The SNP believe Brexit is responsible for ‘destroying the idea of the United Kingdom as a partnership of equals’, has exposed ‘Westminster’s dysfunctionality’, and that Scotland’s overwhelming vote to ‘remain’ has been ignored. The SNP do not set out a vision to address divisions within the Union but set out a vision for an independent Scotland.

Preventing  
identity-based violence  
abroad



## Summary and trends

All parties except the Brexit Party are moving, although in different ways, towards a more joined up approach to foreign policy. Labour, SNP, Plaid Cymru, and the Liberal Democrats all commit to pursuing greater coherence between Britain's trade policy and its wider international responsibilities. Building upon 2017, we continue to see growing support for a review of the UK's arms sales policy.

There is near consensus on the need to prioritise a joined-up approach on the prevention of mass atrocities abroad, signalling an important shift. The Greens, the SNP, the Liberal Democrats, Labour and the Conservatives all responded to an open letter sent by members of the UK Civil Society Atrocity Prevention Working Group. The Conservatives, Labour, and the SNP make explicit commitment to cross-party working in the next parliament. Labour, SNP and the Lib Dems will assess the feasibility of a cross-cutting prevention analysis unit.

With the exception of the Brexit Party, all parties commit to the 0.7% of GNI spend for Overseas Development Assistance. All parties except the Conservatives and the Brexit Party support the continuing independence of the Department for International Development.

Labour, the Conservatives, Lib Dems, Greens, and SNP all set out commitments to internationalism and support for multilateralism and international organisations remains strong.

Never before has climate change and the environment featured so much in a general election. And yet no party identifies in their manifesto the growing threats climate change and its consequences pose to the security of populations and identity groups around the world. Likewise, no party commits to a conflict-sensitive or identity-based violence-sensitive approach to climate change and its consequences.

In contrast to previous elections, there is very little attention given by any party to violent extremism abroad.



## The Conservative Party prevention abroad

“

*The strength of the Armed Forces, our alliances with like-minded democracies and our willingness to act are all reasons for the UK to hold its head high. So too is our work in promoting international development and fighting climate change – both issues on which the Conservative Party and Conservative Governments have driven the agenda forward.*

”

‘After Brexit’, the Conservatives commit to ‘an outward-looking country that is a champion of collective security, the rule of law, human rights, free trade, anti-corruption efforts and a rules-based international system

### **International development**

The Conservatives commit to maintaining the 0.7% of GDP spend on overseas development aid, but do not explicitly guarantee an independent Department for International Development.

The party makes two broad commitments to the prevention of, and protection from, identity-based violence abroad. The first is to ‘support marginalised communities in the developing world, hosting the UK government’s first ever international LGBT conference.’ The second is to protect those persecuted for their faith and implement the Truro Review of Persecuted Christians recommendations.

There is a broad statement of pride for the UK’s work in ‘war-torn or divided societies’, signalling an acceptance of the risk that divisions can have in a country.

There are no specific pledges on supporting international efforts to help refugees.



There is a specific pledge to support the planned construction of the Holocaust memorial, in the section on “promoting our values”.

### **Preventing and protecting populations from mass atrocities**

The Conservatives state that ‘genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity are issues we must tackle.’ They will ‘continue to champion the atrocity prevention agenda and work to build cross-party agreement’ on ways in which we can tackle the challenges we face.’

*“These are matters of conscience, not partisanship. This is an issue of priority for the Conservative Party but it is not an issue owned by the Conservative Party.”*

‘To maintain Britain’s global leadership role,’ the Conservatives commit to continue to working across party and politics and with civil society organisations.

### **Championing human rights abroad**

The manifesto pledges to ‘champion’ freedom of expression and tolerance, in the UK and overseas. There are further promises to develop an independent Magnitsky-style sanctions regime for punishing human rights violators, as well as to continue campaigns on international media freedom and eradicating modern slavery.

### **Connecting trade with international responsibilities**

The Conservatives lay out principles for trade talks, but neither human rights nor controls on arms sales are included in these principles.



## The Labour Party prevention abroad

*“ The responsibility to prevent all kinds of discrimination and identity-based violence is, and must always be, a shared one that stretches from our local communities to the other side of the world. ”*

Labour wants to promote peaceful solutions to conflicts and tackle risks arising from poverty, natural catastrophes, and population displacements. They place emphasis on prevention rather than response and moves towards a whole of government approach to foreign policy.

### **Support for multilateralism**

Labour commits to advocate for human rights at every bilateral diplomatic meeting, and to build support for UN reform - improving the engagement of the General Assembly in decision-making and developing ‘democratisation’ initiatives, and increasing funding for UN peacekeeping operations. They make a more general commitment to use the UK’s influence at the UN to support peace and security worldwide.

### **International development**

Labour’s international programme would be ‘based on’ human rights and gender equality, and internationalism is recognised as being at the core of the Labour movement. There is a planned ‘reset’ of relationships with countries in the Global South.

The manifesto commits fully to a standalone Department for International Development, with an aid budget of ‘at least’ 0.7% of Gross National Income, and a new goal of reducing inequality for all aid spending, alongside goals of poverty reduction and gender equality.



## **Preventing and protecting populations from mass atrocities**

Labour has set out its most detailed policy on preventing mass atrocities, committing to assess the feasibility of a cross-departmental prevention analysis unit 'to ensure a more joined up approach and consistent implementation of British contributions to prevent conflicts around the world.' Building upon the cross-cutting national approach to preventing mass atrocities, Labour would implement a whole of Whitehall strategy and put prevention at the heart of decision making. Labour would work with civil society.

## **Championing human rights abroad**

Labour promises to 'reform the international rules-based order' to secure justice and accountability for breaches of human rights and international law, including the bombing of Syrian hospitals, illegal blockades of Gaza, the use of rape against the Rohingya, and indiscriminate bombing in Yemen. The party commits to reviewing past massacres, and promises to uphold the rights of Chagos islanders, the people of West Papua and Western Sahara, and Tamil and Muslim populations in Sri Lanka.

The manifesto pledges to appoint human rights advisers to work across the FCO and government to prioritise a coordinated approach to human rights. Labour would resume rescue missions in the Mediterranean, try and end the 'horrific camps' in cooperation with the French authorities, and establish safe and legal routes for asylum seekers.

## **Connecting trade with international responsibilities**

All UK trade agreements would be required to be consistent with international humanitarian law, and Labour would 'put an end' to exports that may be used in violation of human rights or international humanitarian law. Government procurement contracts would not be granted to companies that are implicit in serious human rights abuses. Arms sales to Saudi Arabia for use in Yemen, and to Israel for arms 'used in violation of the human rights of Palestinian citizens' would be suspended. A 'root-and-branch' reform of the UK's arms exports regime would prevent British-made weapons from being used to target civilians.



## The Liberal Democrats prevention abroad

“

*Liberal Democrats are committed to the prevention of identity-based violence, from discrimination to violent extremism and mass atrocities. This applies both at home and overseas.*

”

Liberal Democrat international policy would place 'gender equality at its heart, and appears to have moved towards a more joined up approach, including 'trade, aid and diplomacy as well as military cooperation' measures to prevent violent conflicts.

### **Support for multilateralism**

The Liberal Democrat manifesto commits to working with and through multilateral organisations, and to defending them against nationalism and isolationism.

### **Support for international development**

The manifesto makes a firm commitment to defend the 0.7% target for Overseas Development Aid and an independent DfID. They would spend this on poverty reduction, protecting the environment and preventing violent conflict worldwide. They also express intentions to increase the proportion spent on tackling climate change, helping other countries to tackle climate change, and supporting climate refugees. The Liberal Democrats pledge to increase financial support for the 'ongoing refugee crisis'.

They would also pursue 'a foreign agenda with gender equality at its heart'. This would include transforming the position of women through economic inclusion, education, and training;



ensuring the lives of women and girls are not ignored in favour of trade or regional alliances; working to extend reproductive rights and end female genital mutilation; and ending sexual violence in conflict zones. The Liberal Democrats commit to defending and promoting human rights for all, including LGBT+ individuals, as well as those persecuted for their religion or belief. The manifesto proposes a strategy for decriminalising homosexuality around the world, advancing LGBT+ rights, and to appoint an ambassador-level champion for Freedom of Belief.

### **Preventing and protecting people from mass atrocities**

Responding to our letter to all party leaders, Jo Swinson reaffirmed that the Liberal Democrats are strongly committed to preventing atrocity crimes, to supporting a national inquiry on the UK's capabilities and responsibilities to help prevent identity-based violence and mass atrocities abroad, and to supporting a feasibility assessment of a cross-departmental prevention analysis unit.

The Liberal Democrats also state they believe that 'despite efforts to prevent violent conflict, sometimes military intervention is necessary'. For this reason, they push that the UK should only intervene militarily subject to a 'clear legal or humanitarian case, endorsed by a vote in parliament – working through international institutions whenever possible'.

The Liberal Democrats plan to focus on the 'diplomatic priorities' of the responsibility to protect, and to establish new tests to ensure that UK action has regional support, a reasonable prospect of defined success, and a sound legal and humanitarian case.

### **Connecting trade with international responsibilities**

The Liberal Democrats would control arms exports to countries with poor human rights records, specifically suspending arms sales to Saudi Arabia. A European Magnitsky Act would be introduced, by working with European partners, to enable sanctions against human rights violators.



## The Green Party prevention abroad

“

*Green MPs will work to prevent mass atrocities, holding governments to account when they turn a blind eye to global suffering. We will not stop until a peaceful, ecologically sound world is established – free of exploitation and abuse.*

”

The Green Party considers itself as part of a global family of Green Parties who put peace, non-violence and ecology at the heart of their political outlook.

### **Support for multilateralism**

The Greens want the UK to be a ‘leading force for good’ in the world and to be the ‘country that brokers peace’ and tries ‘to resolve the refugee crisis’, and to support the UN Sustainable Development Goals as a priority.

The manifesto commits to increasing spending on overseas development assistance, from 0.7% to 1% of Gross National Income, and make the Climate Emergency and tackling poverty the priorities of that budget.

The Greens call for the UK government to ‘redouble’ its efforts to address development challenges stemming from climate change. These challenges are not laid out in detail, nor is a link drawn between climate change and mass atrocities, or conflict.

### **Preventing and protecting populations from mass atrocities**

The Greens would seek to introduce ‘a new law on Universal Jurisdiction, to make it easier to prosecute those committing genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, wherever



wherever these crimes take place.’ Further details are not provided. A statement obtained from the Green Party by Protection Approaches pledged that Green MPs ‘will work to prevent mass atrocities, holding governments to account when they turn a blind eye to global suffering.’

### **Championing human rights abroad**

The Greens set out clear commitments to international law and the principles of self-determination to ‘resolve long-running conflicts, illegal occupations, and human rights violations’ - although specific examples are not given. The manifesto outlines a guarantee for the rights of indigenous and native people – specifically their autonomy, land rights and human rights.

The manifesto pledges to reform European refugee policy, placing great focus on ‘principles of humanity and compassion’. They also pledge to re-establish a European sea-rescuing mission, and to press for a review on the safety of all migrants travelling to and across Europe.

There is a specific pledge to create a new international ‘ecocide’ law to prosecute crime against the natural environment.

### **Connecting trade with international responsibilities**

The manifesto sets out a commitment to ‘close down the government’s arms sales activities and to end all subsidies and support for the UK’s arms industry export activities.’ All trade deals would be ‘explicitly’ subject to tests to ensure that they ‘maintain and enhance’ environmental and human rights commitments. Parliament would be granted a vote on all trade and investment agreements.



## The Brexit Party prevention abroad

“

We want to cancel HS2, save 50% of the foreign aid budget and save another £13bn a year in payments to the EU.

”

Brexit Party positions on foreign, trade, and international development policy in the ‘contract’ are limited.

The party supports the 2% GDP contribution to NATO. Beyond a pledge to promote a global tree planting initiative at the UN, support for multilateral rules-based organisations is not explicit.

Their key international policy is to ‘save’ 50% of the foreign aid budget to form part of a Brexit dividend. This would take the UK aid spend far below the 0.7% commitment, restricting the remit, budget, and programmes of the Department for International Development. This drastic reduction would inevitably reduce British contributions to the prevention of identity-based violence, including violent extremism and mass atrocities, and reduce the UK’s capacity to help protect the world’s most vulnerable populations. It would also reduce British influence in the world.

There are no specific provisions in the ‘contract’ to help prevent mass atrocities, address violent extremism abroad, protect human rights, or for an ethical trade policy.



## The Scottish National Party prevention abroad

*“ We will call on the UK government to commit to introducing mechanisms to prevent identity based violence and mass atrocities. ”*

The SNP hope to maximise the role Scotland plays in addressing the world’s challenges including poverty, justice and inequality. They are the only party that makes an explicit commitment to preventing identity-based violence and mass atrocities in their manifesto.

### Support for multilateralism

The SNP sets expectations for the UK government to ‘participate fully in international institutions, respecting their role and working with them for peace’. More specifically, the SNP would push for action on women in peacebuilding, supporting UN Security Council resolution 1325, noting implicitly the important role played by vulnerable groups in peacebuilding.

### International development

The manifesto promises continued support for the Department of International Development and the 0.7% of GNI spend on overseas development assistance, noting specifically that the funds are not to be spent on projects other than humanitarian aid.

The SNP also pledges explicit support for the UN’s sustainable development goals, promising that its MPs would ‘continue to press’ the UK government to act, on the basis of the goals, to tackle global challenges.



## Preventing and protecting people from mass atrocities

The SNP are clear that only ‘it is only through a truly cross-departmental approach that the UK Government can recognise, flag and prevent the causes of identity-based violence before it has a chance to take root in societies across the world - at home and abroad.’ To this end, the SNP support the establishment of a cross-departmental prevention analysis unit and will continue to call on the UK Government to integrate the commitment to prevention of identity-based violence, from discrimination to violent extremism and mass atrocities, across all relevant portfolios and departments. Like Labour and the Conservatives, the SNP see the issue as one that stands above party lines.

The manifesto also includes specific commitments on a number of current international situations of concern including supporting the people of Hong Kong, the Rohingya and Kurdish peoples, and Kashmir.

## Human Rights

The manifesto commits the SNP to supporting an inquiry into how small nations and devolved administrations can support the international ruled-based order - including in relation to climate change, human rights, and peace-making.

The manifesto also pledges to aim for reform of the detention and asylum system for LGBT+ individuals escaping countries where their sexuality is criminalised – specifically removing demands for ‘proof’ of sexuality or gender identity.

## Connecting trade with international responsibilities

The SNP commits to continuing its policy of urging the UK government to halt all military support and arms sales to regimes committing human rights violations, and those that violate international humanitarian law. The party specifies its opposition to lethal autonomous weapons, saying these should be banned under international law.



## Plaid Cymru prevention abroad

“ We must take a more humane approach and show greater solidarity with refugees, including those crossing the Mediterranean in precarious circumstances. ”

Plaid Cymru wants to see Wales as part of a global community that works together to keep itself safe and secure. However, there is little detail on the party's values or policy pledges regarding international development, the prevention of identity-based violence abroad, or the protection of vulnerable groups.

There is no commitment to the prevention of mass atrocities or the responsibility to protect in the manifesto.

Plaid Cymru believes that any decision to go to war, with the exception of obeying binding international treaties, should require the support of all four nations of the Union, and that a vote should be held in the Senedd prior to any UK-supported military intervention in foreign affairs.

There are no specific provisions for upholding or expanding human rights abroad in the Plaid manifesto.

Plaid explicitly connects future trade deals undertaken by the UK to the maintenance of environmental standards and human rights commitments. They argue there should be specific protections for 'vital global ecosystems and habitats', as well as for indigenous people.

## The climate crisis and preventing identity-based violence: why is no party connecting the dots?

The climate crisis is addressed by all the parties. Never before has climate change and the environment featured so much in a general election. And yet no party identifies in their manifesto the growing threats climate change and its consequences pose to the security of populations and identity groups around the world. Likewise, no party commits to a conflict-sensitive or identity-based violence-sensitive approach to climate.

The Green Party offer the most comprehensive approach to tackling the climate crisis including a vision of ‘renewing almost every aspect of life in the UK’. They propose a ‘Green New Deal’ that builds on the party’s commitment to global justice and hope to ‘help the majority of the world’ adapt to climate change and support human well-being.

However, the Greens fall short of explicitly connecting the consequences of climate change with the increased immediate and long-term risks of identity-based violence, including mass atrocities, violent extremism, terrorism, and conflict. As a result they do not commit to integrating an approach of identity-based violence prevention to their climate policy.

Labour also promises a Green New Deal and describes the impact of climate change on the Global South as the ‘greatest injustice of today’. Despite committing to prioritise climate diplomacy in their foreign policy by promoting policies to tackle the crisis at global institutions such as the UN and the Commonwealth, Labour do not set out an intersectional approach that would connect cross-cutting agendas.

The SNP and Liberal Democrats acknowledge the climate crisis will disproportionately impact the world's poorest. The Liberal Democrats plan to increase the proportion of the aid budget committed to tackling climate change and environmental degradation. They also hope to help countries limit the impact of climate change and to support climate refugees.

However, while the SNP and Liberal Democrats acknowledge the impact of climate change on marginalised groups, neither party set out how their approach to the crisis would be conflict or identity-based violence sensitive.

The Conservative manifesto highlights UK leadership on international development and fighting climate change as two issues on which the Conservative Party and Conservative Governments have driven the agenda forward. However, despite committing to fight climate change and protect the environment as international issues, they do not set out how they would integrate this policy across other agendas or how they would apply a conflict or identity-based violence sensitive approach to its implementation.

The Brexit Party and Plaid Cymru make environmental and climate commitments but do not connect the agenda with international development, conflict and atrocity prevention, or the impact the climate crisis has on vulnerable identity-groups.

