



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

# Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Diversity and Equality Report 2017-18

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in response to the Equality Act 2010

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## Foreword

The FCO is committed to equality and continues to increase the diversity of our workforce in the UK and of our representation overseas. Despite the significant progress that we have made, there remains work to do. To help us achieve our ambitious targets we have a Diversity & Inclusion 2020 Strategy with three key priorities: providing further support for talent from under-represented groups; promoting inclusive leadership and management and tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination (BHD).

- > In 2017 the FCO had 59 female Heads of Mission, Post and Governors. We now have 65 (30%), including two job sharing. This year, we appointed Britain's first black female Head of Mission who is a career diplomat, NneNne Iwuji-Eme, and the first woman to be UK Permanent Representative to the United Nations Security Council, Karen Pierce.
- > In February 2018, we held the first FCO Diversity Festival, inspired by the centenary of partial women's suffrage in the UK and the updated Civil Service Diversity Strategy.
- > We developed new guidance for Transgender staff and their managers and have introduced diversity objectives for all SMS staff.
- > In spring 2018, our University Roadshow and pilot Schools Roadshow engaged with around 1,900 students across the UK to talk about a diplomatic career, the majority from diverse and Widening Participation backgrounds (under-represented groups).
- > For its commitment to staff wellbeing, the FCO received a Silver award from Mind. Highlights over the past year include developing a Wellbeing Strategy, first-hand articles from senior leaders, and expanding the network of mental health first aiders.
- > The Business and Community Diversity Benchmark awarded the FCO Gold for Race and Silver for Gender. We also increased our ranking in the Stonewall Equality Index and, for the first time this year, entered the new Social Mobility Employer Index.

Celebrating 100 years of Votes for Women event at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in London, 7 February 2018.



# Introduction

This report is part of the FCO's response to the Equality Act. It is intended to offer data on the equality impact of the FCO's employment practices and activities.

The Equality Act 2010 creates a public sector equality duty to:

- > Consider how different people will be affected by our activities.
- > Deliver services which, while efficient and effective, are accessible to all and meet diverse needs.
- > Fulfil our requirement to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people (both employees and others) who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

Protected characteristics covered by the equality duty are:

- > age
- > disability
- > gender reassignment
- > marriage and civil partnership
- > pregnancy and maternity
- > race (embracing ethnic or national origins, colour and nationality)
- > religion or belief
- > sex
- > sexual orientation

Note: The FCO has not incurred the expense of collecting data specifically for the purpose of this publication other than staff resource. These are online publications and therefore no additional printing costs have been incurred.

**The majority of data presented represents a snapshot of the FCO as at 31 March 2018.** Where data represents a different time period it is highlighted.

Rainbow flag flies on the Foreign Office building in London, 17 May 2018 for International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia.



# Section 1—The FCO’s employees

The FCO has two different categories of employees. The UK Diplomatic Service and other Home Civil Servants working for the FCO are known collectively as *UK-Based staff*. These staff undertake a range of jobs during their careers both in the UK and at diplomatic posts abroad. The second category of FCO employees are hired to perform specific functions at individual posts abroad and are known as *Local Staff*. It is unusual for these employees to transfer between diplomatic missions or to work in the UK. The majority of FCO employees are Local Staff.

The diversity data in this report does not include FCO Services or Wilton Park, Executive Agencies of the FCO.

Both UK-Based and Local Staff are graded into a hierarchy as follows:

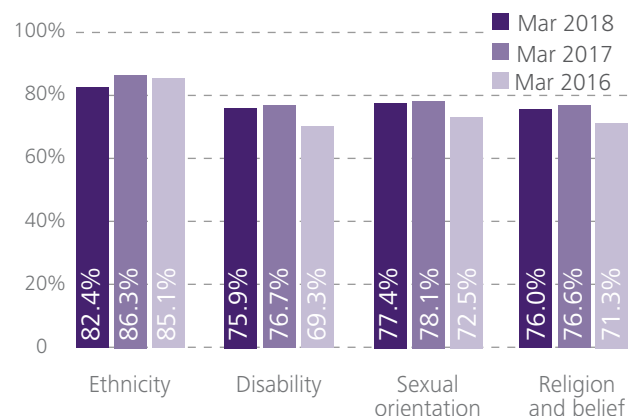
Generic UK Civil Service Grade	Foreign Office Grade	
	UK-Based Staff	Local staff
Senior Civil Service (SCS)	Senior Management Structure (SMS)	SMS(L)
Grade 6	D7	D7(L)
Grade 7	D6	D6(L)
Senior Executive Officer	C5	C5(L)
Higher Executive Officer	C4	C4(L)
Executive Officer	B3	B3(L)
Administrative Officer	A2	A2(L)
Administrative Assistant	A1	A1(L)
Non-Professional function	N/A	S1-S3

this personal information, it is possible for individuals to record on the database that they do not wish to declare.

Local Staff are able to record their ethnicity, disability status, flexible working patterns and caring responsibilities but we do not require them to do so. This is due to sensitivities linked to the recording of some characteristics in a number of countries. Recording rates amongst Local Staff are therefore far too low to enable us to report on the representation of different groups. As a result, data on gender is included in this report, but not data on other diversity characteristics. However, the diversity of our Local Staff, who come from countries and communities around the world, is something we celebrate.

The recording rates amongst UK-Based staff, including those who have stated that they do not wish to declare are as follows:

FCO UK staff diversity reporting rate



## Recorded data

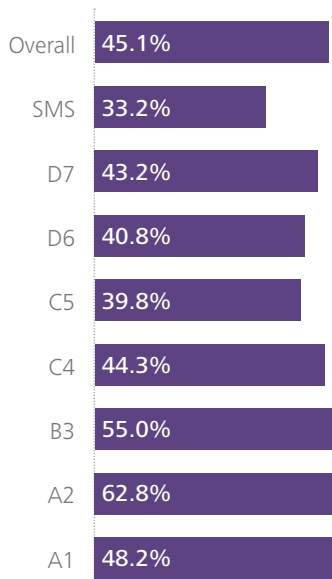
The FCO collects and holds human resources data on a centralised Management Information (MI) system. The gender and age of all staff is automatically recorded on this database, as is maternity leave when taken. UK-Based staff are asked to add information about their ethnicity, disability status, flexible working patterns, sexual orientation, religion or belief and caring responsibilities. Supplying this data is voluntary. Although the FCO encourages staff to supply it, it is not mandatory and reporting rates vary by characteristic. To protect the privacy of staff who do not wish to record any of

## Profile of the workforce

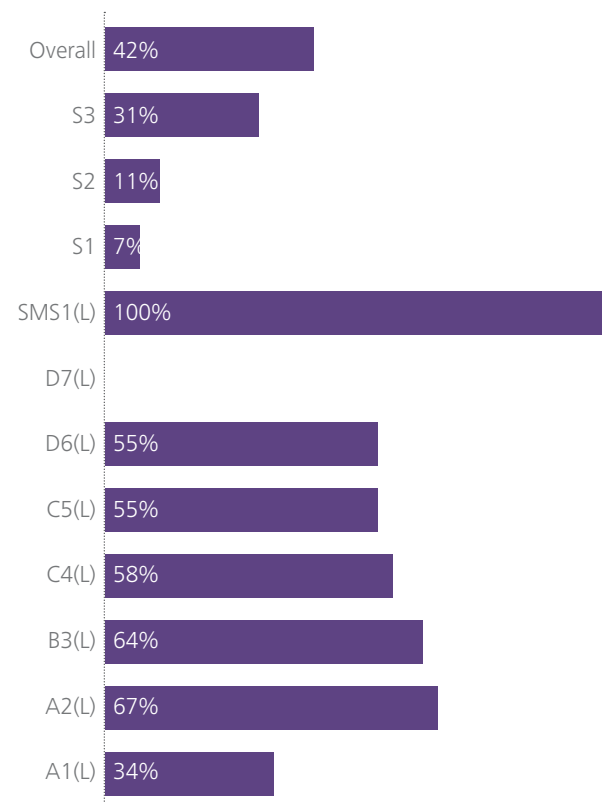
### Gender profile of the workforce

The FCO employs around 12,500 staff, a third of whom are UK-based and two thirds Local Staff.

*Proportion of female UK-Based staff by grade*

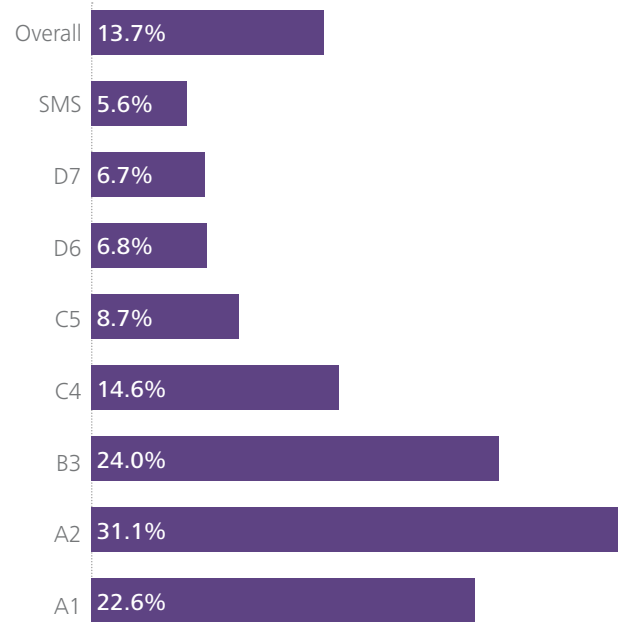


*Proportion of female Local staff by grade*



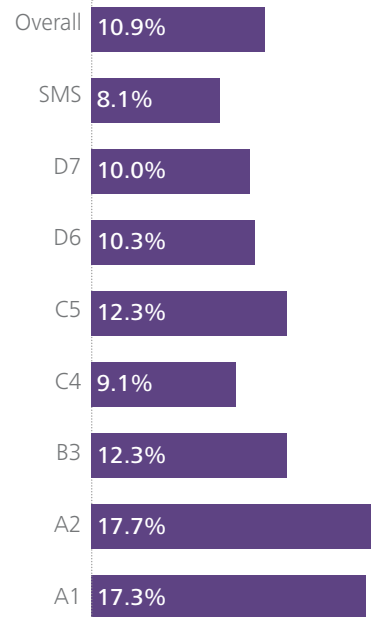
### Ethnic profile of the workforce

*Proportion of BAME UK-Based staff by grade*



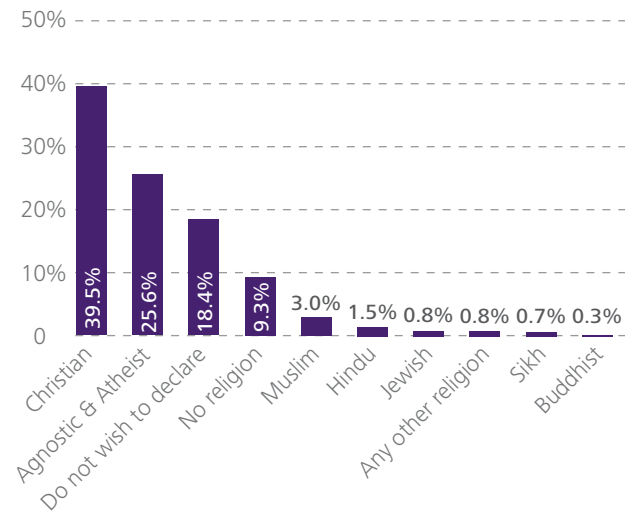
### Disability profile of the workforce

*Proportion of disabled UK-Based staff by grade*



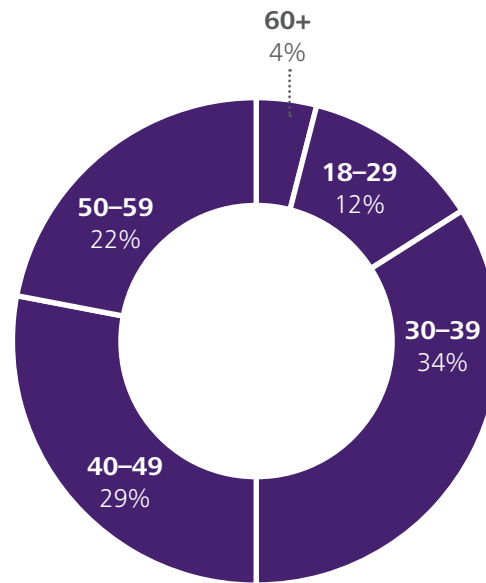
## Religion and belief profile of the workforce

Proportion of UK Based staff by Religion and Belief



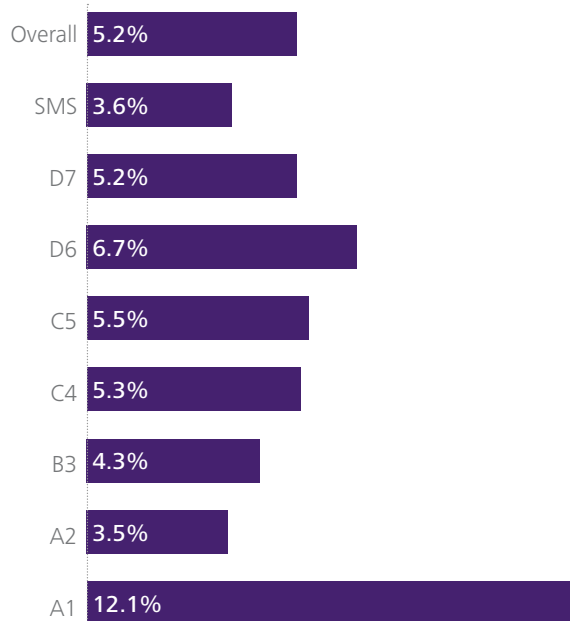
## Age profile of the workforce

UK-Based staff profile by age

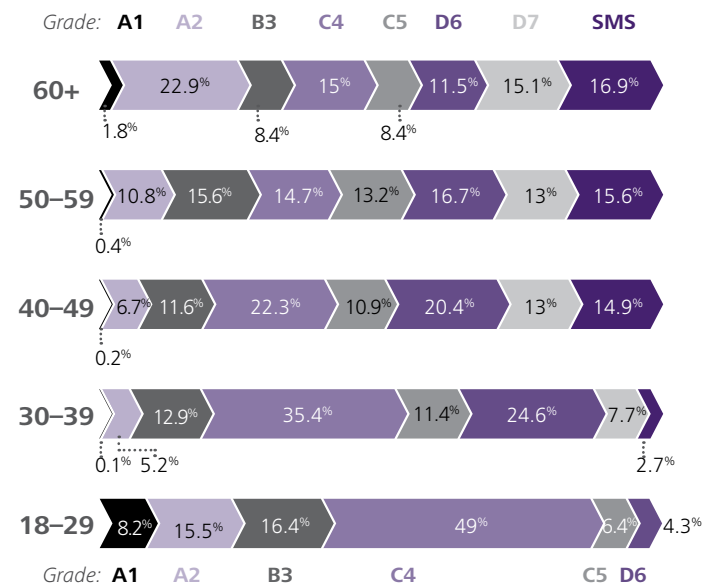


## Sexual orientation profile of the workforce

Proportion of LGBT UK-Based staff by grade

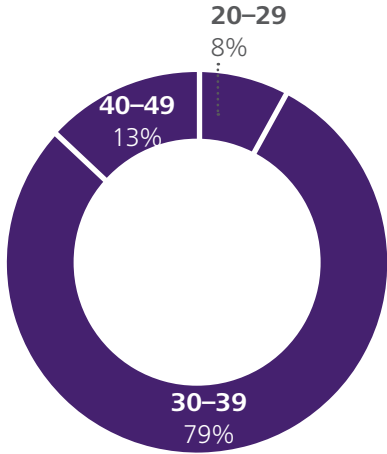


UK-Based staff profile by age and grade

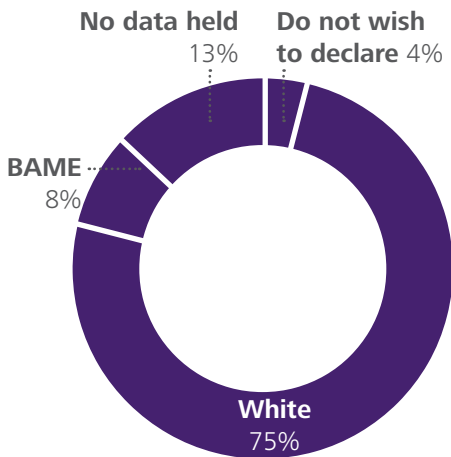


## Maternity and adoption leave profile

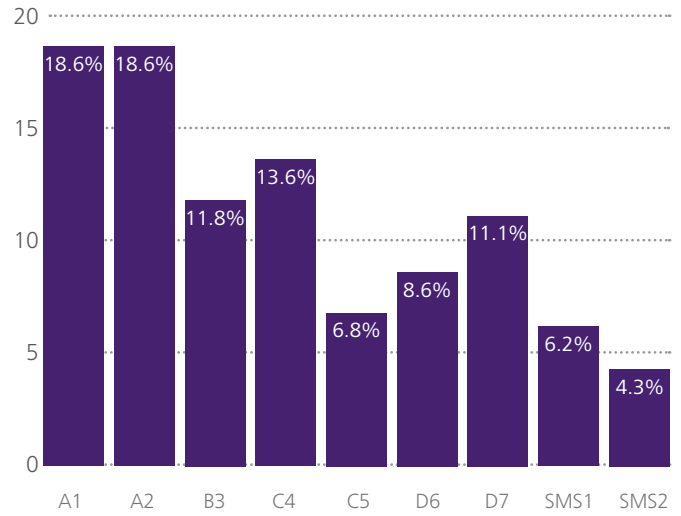
Maternity and adoption leave profile by age



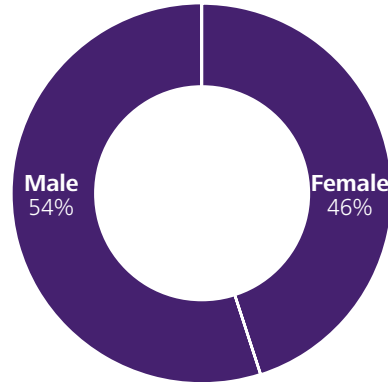
Maternity and adoption leave profile by ethnicity



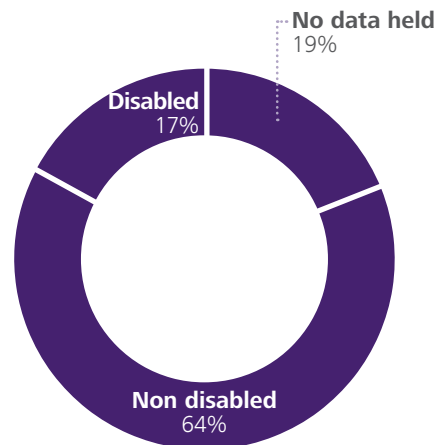
UK-Based staff leavers by grade



UK staff leavers by gender



UK-Based staff leavers by disability

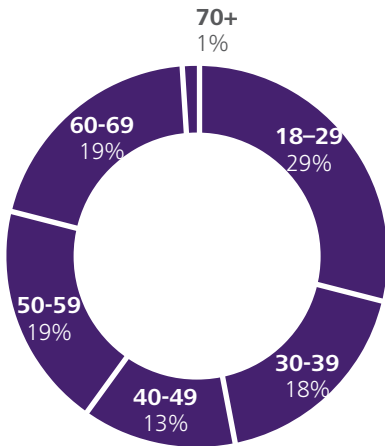


## Staff Retention

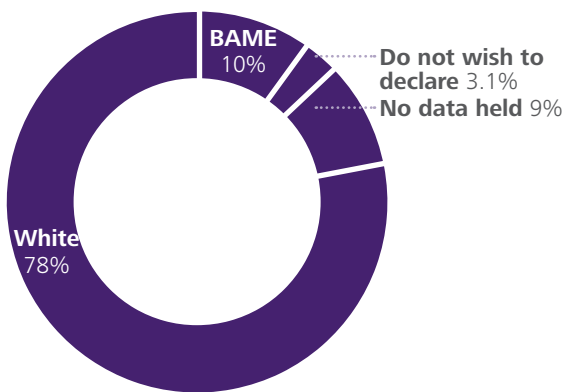
The figures below show the grade, gender, ethnicity, disability and age percentage breakdown of staff that left the organisation due to retirement, resignation, termination of employment, or through career breaks, permanent transfers to other government departments or due to death in service. 3.5% of FCO employees left between 01 April 2017 and 31 March 2018.



UK staff leavers by age



UK staff leavers by ethnicity



## Recruitment

The FCO seeks to recruit talented British nationals from all backgrounds and from across the UK. We want to ensure that we are the best Diplomatic Service we can be and that we represent as effectively as possible the country we serve. In 2017-18, our recruitment focus was on the Diplomatic Service Fast Stream and other business critical roles. We are following and implementing the Civil Service Recruitment Principles of fair and open competition. For the recruitment of Local Staff in our overseas Missions, we aim to appoint the best candidate subject to local restrictions and employment law and recruitment campaigns are open to all.

## Progress in 2017–18

### Fast Stream and other specialist recruitment

- > In 2017-18, the FCO recruited 31 specialists across the grades and 52 Fast Stream policy entrants (via the Diplomatic Service scheme and the Diplomatic Service Economist scheme).
- > 59% of Fast Stream entrants were female, 24% reported a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) background, and 12% reported a disability. Of the 2016 intake, 52% were female, 14% were BAME, and 7% disabled.
- > The FCO also recruited 9 Executive Officers through the Direct Appointment Scheme. These individuals applied for the 2017 Fast Stream but narrowly missed the minimum entry standard. They were deemed suitable for Executive Officer roles and recruited on that basis. 67% of DAS candidates were female, 38% were BAME, and 25% reported a disability.

### Band A (Administrative Officer)

- > In 2017/18 the FCO exceptionally recruited 13 Band A staff to work in the Legalisation Office at the Corporate Services Centre in Milton Keynes and the Consular Global Response Centre in London.
- > Of the new Band A recruits, 31% were women, 8% declared as BAME and 15% reported a disability.

### Apprenticeships

- > In 2017-18, the FCO recruited 21 apprentices via external recruitment and the Civil Service Fast Track and the Government Communication Service Apprenticeships Schemes.
- > Of the new recruits, 57% were women, 19% declared as BAME and 5% reported a disability.
- > The centrally run apprenticeships campaigns were advertised on the Civil Service Fast Track and the Government Communication Service apprenticeships websites. The FCO’s campaign was advertised through the Milton Keynes College website, the National Apprenticeship Service website, and the FCO website.

### Interns

- > Our work experience schemes encourage individuals to experience life at the heart of the UK Government and consider the FCO as a future employer. In addition to our Graduate Internship, we participate in schemes that are managed centrally by Civil Service Resourcing and other Government Departments, including those directed towards individuals from under-represented groups.
- > In 2017, our FCO Graduate Internship Scheme provided 44 placements of up to 9 months. Another 25 interns worked in the FCO for up to nine weeks through the centrally managed Summer Diversity Internship Programme (SDIP). This resulted in our interns being 52% female, 38% BAME and 10% reporting a disability. We also participated on the centrally administered Early Diversity Internship Programme (EDIP) for first year undergraduates, providing 5 placements for a one week period.
- > In early 2018 the FCO took part in another scheme managed by the Department for Education called the Foreground (Care Leavers) Internship Scheme, welcoming 3 interns on a 12 month placement.
- > We have continued to run the Fast Stream 'Fast Pass' that allows Graduate and Summer Diversity interns to bypass the first stage of the Fast Stream application process. As our intern cohorts are more diverse than our current Fast Stream intake, this helps maximise the potential diversity of the Fast Stream cohort.

## Experience of working in the FCO as an Intern

"I began my graduate internship just two days after having finished my Masters' dissertation, with no inclination of what was to come next. I was fortunate enough to be placed in the Policy Unit, surrounded by supportive colleagues who were determined to make my time there as fulfilling as possible. Far from my slightly old-fashioned understanding of an intern's role, I was immediately given real responsibilities and relied upon as an important cog in the Policy Unit team. My main tasks involved assisting with the corporate reporting structures of the FCO. In addition, I was encouraged to write Policy pieces and pursue developmental opportunities at every turn. On top of my core duties, the FCO offers a near-constant

drip-feed of interesting, additional work for those who are willing to look. I have volunteered in Private Office, spoken at secondary schools on outreach visits, attended an FCO-PwC pilot scheme and studied Italian.

I have been privileged to work in an environment with so many talented colleagues who are always happy to share their knowledge, particularly if you offer to buy them coffee. I would strongly encourage anyone with an interest in the UK's role within an increasingly complex international context to apply for this position."

- Cal Westaway, Durham University:  
*Defence, Development and Diplomacy*

## Outreach

- > The FCO's Outreach Programme seeks to enhance the diversity of our recruitment. This year our University Roadshow engaged with Universities across the UK with high proportions of students from BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) and Widening Participation backgrounds. Over 40 members of staff from across the organisation got involved to tell their FCO story.
- > We increased our engagement with BAME students outside of London by 9.2% compared to our 2015-16 Roadshow.
- > We held an event for around 200 students from BAME and Widening Participation backgrounds studying at London Universities. The event was opened by the PUS and hosted jointly by the Director for Diplomacy 2020 and the FCO's BAME Network.
- > The FCO also piloted a Schools Roadshow across the UK, engaging with more than 600 school-age students. Over half of the schools we visited had greater than 20% eligibility for Free School Meals.

## Experience of the FCO's Outreach Programme

"I attended the University Roadshow Tour in 2016 as I was finishing my undergraduate degree. Learning about the FCO from people with similar backgrounds and experiences to my own convinced me it was worth applying for, whereas previously I had discounted myself from being in with a chance. Now in my second year in the FCO, after getting a place on the Diplomatic Fast

Stream, I have seen the continued importance senior management puts on diversity and equality: highlighting successes whilst recognising where there is still more to be done. Knowing how influential FCO outreach work was for my decision to apply for the FCO led me to join Foreground, the FCO staff association focused on socio-economic diversity. This year I went back to the University Roadshow Tour, but as a presenter where I shared my own experiences of working here.”

- Catherine Struthers, Diplomatic Fast Stream

## Equality of Pay

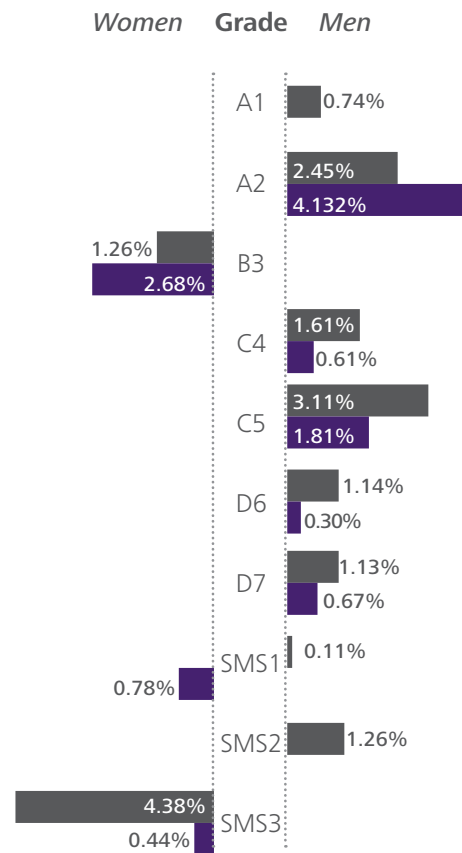
FCO pay, for both UK and local staff, is determined by a range of factors including grade, performance, and length of time in employment. As part of the FCO’s commitment to putting equal pay in practice, regular monitoring of the impact of pay practices is carried out, including Annual Equal Pay Audits and reviews.

## Gender

FCO employees are paid according to standard scales which apply equally to all staff. The table below illustrates that the comparison by delegated grade shows pay gaps between 0% and 1.26%. This is mainly explained by seniority of staff and/or length of service in the grade. Primarily as a result of the public sector pay cap, all those who have joined the FCO or become senior managers in the last eight years (which includes an increasing proportion of women) have remained at the bottom of the pay scale for their grade.

*Note:* The FCO has published a Gender Pay Gap Report for 2017 to 2018, in line with new Government legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. The data in this Gender Pay Gap Report reflected a range of factors.

Mean and median ordinary gender pay gap by grade



## Ethnicity

The table below is using the data based on those who have reported their ethnicity. The comparison by delegated grade shows pay gaps of between 0% and 4.79%. The workforce comparison data shows that this is because of the smaller proportion of disclosed BAME staff at more senior grades. At the time the pay cap was introduced, the FCO was significantly less diverse than it is now. As a result of the public sector pay cap, all those who have joined the FCO or become senior managers in the last eight years (which includes an increasing proportion of BAME staff) have remained at the bottom of the pay scale for their grade. Small improvements have been due to a more diverse group of staff securing promotions, raising the average at that level.

Grade	Average Minority Ethnic Pay	Average White Pay	% Average Pay gap
A1	£19,041	£19,041	0%
A2	£21,378	£21,090	+1.37%

Grade	Average Minority Ethnic Pay	Average White Pay	% Average Pay gap
B3	£24,916	£25,414	-4.79%
C4	£29,673	£29,957	-0.95%
C5	£36,028	£36,706	-1.85%
D6	£49,131	£49,298	-0.34%
D7	£59,454	£59,631	-0.3%
SMS1	£69,019	£69,265	-0.36%
SMS2	£90,938	£90,876	+0.07%
SMS3/4	£111,447	£130,830	-14.82%

### Staff Engagement Survey

As with staff in all Civil Service Departments, all FCO staff can take part in a Staff Engagement Survey (SES) in October each year. The 2017 SES had an 86% response rate, a 2% increase from the previous year. The FCO’s overall engagement score (based on five questions which show how positive, attached and motivated staff feel) was 70%, 9 points higher than the Civil Service average. The FCO’s inclusion score and fair treatment score was 79%, 3 points above the Civil Service average.

As part of the survey, staff are also asked if they have been subjected to bullying/harassment or discrimination (BHD) at work in the previous year. Reports of bullying and harassment remained at 13%, and the discrimination figure increased from 15% to 16%. Civil Services averages are 11% for bullying and harassment and 12% for discrimination.

The under-represented groups are more likely to report BHD than the majority groups, in particular staff with a disability or LGBT (for bullying or harassment).

The results shown below are broken down by age, gender, disability status, sexual orientation and ethnicity. However, some staff did not supply this demographic data, which means that the disaggregate data can appear in some cases to be incompatible with the overall results.

	Reported discrimination			Reported bullying or harassment		
	2017	2016	2015	2017	2016	2015
<b>Overall</b>	<b>16%</b>	15%	14%	<b>13%</b>	13%	12%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	13%	13%	11%	11%	11%	9%
Female	16%	15%	14%	14%	12%	12%
<b>Disability</b>						
No	14%	13%	13%	12%	12%	11%
Yes	26%	25%	21%	19%	18%	18%
<b>Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic</b>						
Non BAME	13%	12%	11%	11%	11%	9%
BAME	16%	15%	14%	14%	13%	12%
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>						
Straight	12%	13%	12%	12%	12%	11%
LGBT	21%	16%	17%	21%	17%	14%
<b>Age</b>						
20-24	16%	11%	11%	15%	12%	13%
25-29	16%	15%	13%	14%	14%	12%
30-34	17%	16%	13%	14%	13%	12%
35-39	16%	15%	13%	12%	12%	11%
40-44	11%	12%	12%	11%	12%	9%
45-49	14%	15%	11%	12%	11%	9%
50-54	12%	12%	12%	11%	11%	10%
55-59	11%	9%	9%	10%	10%	8%
60-64	10%	8%	7%	9%	6%	4%
65+	12%	8%	2%	17%	8%	8%

### FCO Diversity Policy and Engagement

The FCO continues to increase the diversity of our workforce in the UK and of our representation overseas. This includes visible diversity but also the need to promote diversity of thought, skills and background.

We have targets for the diversity of our Senior Management Structure (SMS) to be achieved by October 2019. Performance against these targets can be seen below:

Target	2019 target (% SMS)	31 March 2017	31 March 2018
Female	39%	30%	33.2%
BME	7%	5.6% (based on 94.4% SMS recording rate)	5.6% (based on 92.6% SMS recording rate)
Disabled	7%	7.0% (based on 72.6% SMS recording rate)	8.1% (based on 76.3% SMS recording rate)

Target	2019 target (% SMS)	31 March 2017	31 March 2018
LGBT	6%	3.9% (based on 75.1% recording rate)	3.6% (based on 78.2% recording rate)

In February 2017 the FCO Board agreed three Diversity and Inclusion priorities in a new Diversity and Inclusion 2020 Strategy. We are making progress against all:

- > **A diverse talent pipeline.** Levelling the playing field by providing further support for talent from under-represented groups. We have used a map of our talent pipeline to target interventions, including through promoting talent schemes and guidelines for writing inclusive job-specifications. Our Outreach Programme has reached out to potential applicants from a wider talent pool by engaging with students from Widening Participation backgrounds.
- > **Tackling Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (BHD):** The 2017 Staff Survey results show that bullying and harassment remains at 13% and that discrimination has increased from 15% to 16%. We have undertaken targeted intervention at our 30 posts and departments with the highest BHD scores including a two day conference on tackling BHD for the Deputy Heads from these posts and departments. We also ran an internal communications campaign, 'Taking Action Together' to help raise awareness of BHD and help all staff to prevent and tackle it. We have introduced Learning & Development initiatives, including a new programme for First Response Officers to support regional collaboration and networking and a 'Confident Manager's Programme' course to promote inclusive working practices through managers and help them to tackle BHD issues.
- > **Creating an Inclusive Culture:** Driving real change in leadership and line manager capability and behaviour on diversity. Most SMS staff have undertaken face-to-face diversity training and we have introduced a diversity and inclusion objective for all SMS staff. Learning & Development schemes, including leadership offers from external organisations such as Stonewall, continue to support talented colleagues to become inclusive leaders and role models. We encourage all staff to raise participation in Diversity and Inclusion through our Outreach Programme.

## Disability Policy and Support in the FCO

In October 2016, the FCO were awarded Silver accreditation by the Business Disability Forum (BDF) following completion of their disability benchmark. This placed the FCO as one of the best-ranked Ministerial departments on the BDF Roll of Honour. The FCO were awarded Disability Confident Employer status in November 2016 and Disability Confident Leader status in March 2017 under the Department for Work and Pensions (DWPs') newly launched Disability Confident Scheme.

Disability support for UK based staff is provided by the Disability Policy & Support Team (DPST). When required, the DPST seek advice from the Civil Service Workplace Adjustment Service (CSWAS) and use the services of a variety of disability providers for the provision of expert disability assessments and advice.

Terms and conditions for Local Staff working at FCO Posts abroad are governed by local law but advice and support on disability policy issues is also available to Post.

Disabilities disclosed by UK-based staff cover a broad range of conditions, including neuro-diverse conditions (e.g. Dyslexia, Dyspraxia & Asperger's), mobility issues and hearing or visual impairments. The provision of workplace adjustments for disabled staff can include an expert disability assessment; the supply of specialised office equipment and/or provision of IT software and hardware and appropriate training. More general awareness training and support is also available to disabled staff, their managers and (where appropriate) team colleagues. Staff who are profoundly deaf or with a significant hearing impairment can additionally request the support of qualified British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters & lip speakers.

The FCO supports the promotion of good mental health and hosted the very first Civil Service Mental Health Conference in June 2018. We also have an ongoing programme to train Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA). We aim to train 200 staff by the end of March 2019 and are on track to meet this target with approximately 160 staff trained so far. In addition to MHFA training, the FCO is also rolling out Wellbeing training to all SMS/SCS officers.

The FCO is also a member of the Business Disability Forum (BDF), a not-for-profit member organisation

that makes it easier and more rewarding to employ and do business with disabled people in the UK. Once again, in 2018, the FCO hosted the BDF roundtable meetings, designed to get disability support teams from across Whitehall departments together to hear about the latest developments on disability issues, network and share best practice.

## FCO Staff Associations

The FCO’s Diversity and Inclusion Team and senior management work closely with staff networks and the Diplomatic Service Families Association (DFSFA) to understand and address issues faced by staff. As part of this collaboration we support a group of SMS Champions who provide staff networks with coaching, strategic direction and senior leadership. At Board Level we have a Diversity and Inclusion Champion and a Champion for tackling BHD.

Our staff networks are:

**FCO Women:** It has around 950 members. It continues to hold a range of masterclasses (around 30 in the last year) and events. These events welcome internal and external speakers, helping to empower colleagues with the tools they need to get the most out of their career. FCO Women works closely with other Associations and Government Departments. Events this year which celebrated 100 years of partial women’s suffrage were held jointly with the Department for International Trade (DIT) and the Department for International Development (DIFD) and the Canadian High Commission

and it continued its support for TEDX Whitehall Women (hosted by FCO last year). The suffrage flag has been taken to a number of locations, both by the PUS and the Special Envoy for Gender Equality. Over the last year, it has also matched 74 mentors with mentees. FCO Women contributes actively to policy making towards gender equality both internally (with HRD) and externally. This year, it worked towards a 10 point plan to help achieve the target of 39% women in the SMS by 2019 and to respond to the gender pay gap. It is also contributing to an appropriate internal response following #metoo. FCO Women supports the Gender Equality Unit which leads policy making on international gender parity. The Chair of FCO Women is the first FCO Special Envoy for Gender Equality.

**Religion and Belief Group:** Undertakes a programme of events to raise awareness of the way in which religion impacts the life of staff, and influences the way in which many people see the world. The network manages the FCO’s Multi-Faith Prayer Room and organised a high profile inter-faith panel as part of the 2018 FCO Diversity Festival, featuring former Bishop of London, Richard Chartres and Baroness Uddin. The Chair of the Group received the inaugural ComRes Faith Champion award for her work to support religious literacy in the FCO.

**FLAGG (FCO LGBT+ Staff Association):** FCO Lesbian and Gay Group (FLAGG) was Highly Commended in the FCO Staff Awards for raising the profile of LGBT+ issues in the office. Their work includes developing “Pride Week”, rainbow lanyards, re-launching the LGBT+ Allies Network, and producing the first ever guidance for transgender staff and their managers. FLAGG continues to provide confidential support to LGBT+ officers across the FCO, and has helped to develop staff both

Staff celebrate the Jewish holiday of Sukkhot at King Charles Street



through the Stonewall Leadership course and Allies training and events, including a talk by the Lord Mayor of Westminster on Diversity in Leadership. This is all with the aim of creating a more inclusive and diverse workplace where everyone feels able to bring their full selves to work, and can achieve their full potential.

**BAME Network:** Represents the views of ethnic minority staff at the FCO. They focus their work on (a) celebrating racial diversity in the FCO through their Role Model speaker events and blogs; (b) supporting BAME staff in the FCO with first response services, mentoring and learning sets; (c) engaging the Board, HR and other staff associations so FCO policies are sensitive to the needs of its diverse staff body. They have been heavily involved in this year's Outreach Programme to ensure the FCO continues to represent the changing face of Britain in the years ahead. Their membership is open to all staff and they are passionate about raising awareness and generating dialogue around issues of race and ethnicity in the office.

**Enable (Disability Association):** Changes the profile of people with disabilities in the FCO by helping to raise diversity recording rates. It has given greater visibility on disability issues across the whole organisation. Activities include chairing the Civil Service Disability Network, hosting Civil Service wide events and actively participating in the launch of the Role Model Strategy, (facilitated by the BDF and CS Disability and Inclusion Team). Enable has a global community site with 350 members and regularly blogs internally and externally. By increasing awareness of disabilities, Enable has helped to change working culture, which has contributed to the FCO achieving the Department for Work and Pensions Disability Confident Leader accreditation.

**Diplomatic Service Families Association Carers' Network (DSFA):** Raises awareness in the FCO of the issues faced by those with caring responsibilities, providing advice on how to manage a balance between work and care responsibilities, including when overseas e.g. caring for elderly parents at home. In 2016, the FCO introduced the Carer's Charter setting out the FCO's commitment as an employer to supporting carers in the workplace.

**Flexible Working Network:** Provides advice and support on a wide range of different working options to ensure that individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole can benefit from the FCO's positive approach to

flexible ways of working. The network's committee has champions for different types of flexible working, each with their own personal experience. It works with HR to consider and develop global policy on flexible working.

**Foreground (Social Mobility Network):** The newest FCO Staff Association launched in September 2016 and is open to all FCO employees to champion diversity of background. Foreground's workforce strategy has 4 working groups. These groups: reach out to those from low socio-economic status (SES); champion diversity of background within the FCO; support members who may have faced or be facing barriers to social mobility; and engage with policy to challenge existing barriers to those from low SES. They are a growing network and membership is open to all who are passionate about improving social mobility. They are represented on a cross government network to improve diversity of background across the civil service.

**Parents' Support Network (PSN):** Brought the Mothers' Support Network and Single Parents' Network under one umbrella to: (a) support and provide practical advice to all FCO working parents (including fathers) in the UK and overseas; (b) share experiences of common issues impacting career progression and work/life balance; and (c) advocate change to HR on family-friendly policies including flexible and part-time working, Shared Parental Leave and childcare. The PSN has over 250 members. It has formed a new PSN Committee and on-line Community site for parents to share information and parenting strategy tips. In January it launched a new purpose-built Parent/Baby room to support fathers and mothers in work who are pregnant, breast-feeding or returning to work from maternity/paternity leave or shared parental leave.

**Wellbeing Network:** Offers support, guidance and advice on any issues which affect FCO staff wellbeing. The Network regularly run events to promote good mental health in the workplace and these link to wider campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week, National Work Life Balance Week and Time to Talk Day. The Network also acts as a point of contact and source of information, advising colleagues in the UK and overseas of the various paths available to them for professional support within and outside the organisation. The Network also manages and promotes the staff wellbeing rooms located in FCO buildings in the UK and overseas.

## Section 2—Regard for Equality within the FCO’s Activities

### Foreign Policy

#### Women’s Rights

The FCO has committed to a foreign policy that consciously and consistently delivers for women and girls, with a particular focus on girls’ education. The FCO aims to secure 12 years of quality education for all girls by 2030, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will not only respect their human rights but also help make their societies more peaceful, prosperous and equitable. The joint campaign with DFID and Department for Education seeks to have an impact at the multilateral and bilateral levels. In February 2017, the FCO appointed the first FCO Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper. A dedicated Gender Equality Unit (GEU) was also created in October 2017.

The GEU leads on gender equality and women’s rights, working closely with the FCO Network, other government departments and international organisations / civil society, on issues such as: eliminating violence against women and girls, including harmful practices of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Child and Early Forced Marriage (CEFM); discriminatory laws and practices; and the promotion of gender equality through women’s political and economic empowerment. The FCO supported debates in Parliament to mark International Women’s Day on 8th March. The FCO Special Envoy for Gender Equality was part of the UK delegation at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in New York in March, which secured an outcome document containing strong language on improving labour markets, closing the gender pay gap, ending occupational segregation and addressing the burden of unpaid care work. We secured good language around the majority of UK priorities including modern slavery and participation of National Human Rights institutions. The FCO’s Week of Women in November 2017, in association with the Women of the Future Programme, was aimed at supporting, connecting and inspiring the next generation of female leaders. The FCO hosted a panel

event for Women of the Future, Chevening scholars and FCO staff to discuss female political and economic empowerment and barriers to girls’ right to education.

During her visit to Canada in September, the Prime Minister agreed with the Canadian Prime Minister, Justin Trudeau, that they would champion gender equality globally. The Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Working Group, part of the UK-Canada Public Policy Forum, work on: gender and trade; addressing the gender pay gap; ending violence against women and girls; and Women, Peace and Security, including in Iraq, Syria and Ukraine.

In 2017, the UK Government developed the fourth UK National Action Plan (NAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) for 2018-2022 which was launched in January 2018. This sets out how we will meet UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR), 1325 commitments and deliver better protection and empowerment of women in conflict contexts overseas. Consultation with experts from academia and civil society informed the Government’s work on the NAP, as did consultations with civil society in Afghanistan, Burma, Somalia and Syria. The UK also funded an independent evaluation of the 2014-2017 NAP. The revised NAP takes account of feedback from the previous Action Plans, building around seven strategic outcomes and nine focus countries.

The UK continued to work to amplify women’s voices, to increase their participation in conflict resolution, and to support their educational, economic and political empowerment. A Wilton Park event in December on women in mediation brought together mediation experts, many of them women, to build and share knowledge. We promoted the participation of women in political processes and mediation roles in Syria, Somalia, Colombia and Yemen. UK support also provided services for women who suffered sexual and gender-based violence in Syria and strengthened the role of women in the security forces in Somalia. The FCO worked with the Ministry of Defence to launch the WPS Chiefs of Defence Network with Canada and Bangladesh at the Vancouver UN Peacekeeping Defence Ministerial in November. The Minister for Human Rights,



Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, led efforts to do more on gender and preventing / countering violent extremism.

In March 2017, the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) marked its fifth anniversary at an event attended by its co-founders, Lord Hague and Angelina Jolie. The second edition of the International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict was published in March. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon was appointed the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict in June, succeeding Baroness Anelay. The PSVI Team of Experts conducted a number of tasks overseas, including to Bangladesh in response to the Rohingya crisis.

Despite the progress achieved at the UN level and elsewhere within 2017, significant challenges remain. These challenges include: the many different forms of violence against women; securing sexual health and reproductive rights and equal access to education; and achieving gender equality in the workplace and in political and public life. We will continue to address these through diplomatic efforts and targeted programme activity. Between 2016 and 2018 the FCO supported women's rights projects in at least 28 countries with a total spend of over £3,500,000. These included projects focussed on encouraging political leadership, legislative reforms and regional cooperation in order to produce a safer environment for women.

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## Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Rights

The UK Government believes that human rights are universal and should apply equally to all people. We are opposed to all forms of discrimination and we work to uphold the rights and freedoms of LGBT people in all circumstances. We are committed to the principle of non-discrimination on any grounds, including on the basis of sexual orientation and/or gender identity. It is our belief that LGBT people are not asking for special rights, but rather to be accorded the same dignity, respect and rights as all other citizens.

The FCO's work in combatting violence and discrimination against LGBT people forms an important part of our wider international human rights work. We are committed to the 'Leave No One Behind' promise made at the United Nations General assembly in September 2015. Every person should have a fair opportunity in life no matter who or where they are.

We work through our Embassies and High Commissions and through international organisations, including the UN, EU, OSCE, the Council of Europe and the Commonwealth, to promote tolerance and non-discrimination against LGBT people and to address discriminatory laws, in particular those that criminalise same-sex relations.

It is a reality that the authorities of many countries actively persecute LGBT people, with 75 countries continuing to criminalise consensual same-sex relations. Even in countries where consensual same sex relations are legal, many people still face violence and discrimination because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, often as a result of state-sanctioned discrimination, stigma and hate crime, a lack of adequate legal protection and poor enforcement of existing protections. We continue to urge all countries to decriminalise consensual same sex relations and put in place legislation that provides for protection from discrimination for LGBT people—including in the workplace and in the provision of goods and services.

Our Embassies and High Commissions monitor and raise human rights in their host countries. As well as diplomatic lobbying, we encourage UK missions overseas to seek out appropriate opportunities to promote human rights and prevent discrimination, including on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity. In March 2018 HMA Berlin invited Sir Stephen Wall, from Kaleidoscope Trust to both talk to staff in the Germany network about diversity and inclusion and to meet German activists and politicians on the LGBT international rights agenda. A lunch event also included Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, a documentary film-maker, an MP from the Bundestag Human Rights Committee and German civil society. We fly the rainbow flag with pride on the appropriate occasion.

The International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) and Pride celebrations provide an opportunity for a large number of Posts to signal our strong solidarity with LGBT communities worldwide. On Saturday 17th June 2017, 15 UK based staff, including two Ambassadors, took part in the Vienna Pride parade as *Diplomats for Equality*; the UK had drafted the joint statement and actively secured its 30+ co-sponsors.

We introduced consular same sex marriage services in June 2014. In 2017 we performed 184 consular same sex marriages and 25 conversions of civil partnership to marriage in 27 countries.

The UK, a founding member of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC), founded in 2016, joined the ERC's Executive Committee in 2017 to shape and support the ERC's efforts to help secure global LGBT equality. The UK is an active member of the UN's LGBT Core Group and we also support the work of the UN Free and Equal Campaign, stressing the importance of opportunities to discuss, debate and celebrate LGBT equality at the international level.

In 2016-2018 the FCO's Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy provided approximately £1.6million in funding to projects promoting and protecting the rights of LGBT people.

## Rights of Persons with Disabilities

The UK works internationally to counter the discrimination, marginalisation and violence which can disproportionately impact people with disabilities and put them at risk of exploitation.

In 2017 we worked actively at the multilateral level by engaging on disability focused resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council and enabling the participation of activists from UK civil society at the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Human Dimension Committee meeting where they took part in an event on engaging persons with disabilities in political and public life. We mark the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities with events in London and at overseas Posts.

The issue of the rights of persons with disabilities has strong Ministerial support. The UK's delegation to the 10th Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in June, 2017 was led at Ministerial level. This looked at inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organisations in the implementation of the Convention.

In our bilateral work we continued to call for states to sign and ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), using mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review at the UN Human Rights Council.

## Freedom of Religion or Belief

The UK has remained firmly committed to promoting and defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for individuals around the world. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for Human Rights made FoRB a top priority within his human rights portfolio, galvanizing the work of our diplomatic network.

In October 2017, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon launched regular faith roundtables to enhance dialogue with faith leaders and representatives and to draw on their experience to find solutions to international challenges. Topics included Burma, and also the role of women in tackling religiously motivated violent extremism.

We continued to promote FoRB in multilateral fora. For example, at the UN Human Rights Council in March 2018, the UK worked to help maintain consensus on the adoption and implementation of the EU sponsored Resolution on 'Freedom of Religion or Belief' and the Organisation for Islamic Cooperation sponsored Resolution on 'Combating Religious Intolerance'. Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon also highlighted the importance of defending the right to FoRB when he addressed the Human Rights Council in September 2017.

As part of our work to promote FoRB, we continued to raise individual cases of concerns with countries. Examples include:

- > During his visit to Bangladesh in August 2017,—Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon visited the Ahmadiyya Mosque in Dhaka and made a call for religious tolerance.
- > During Pakistan's Interior Minister (Ahsan Iqbal)'s visit to the UK in February 2018, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon raised our concerns about FoRB and the protection of minority religious communities.
- > During his visit to Iraq on 2nd-4th March 2018, Lord Ahmad met with representatives of the Yezidi and Christian communities to discuss the challenges they currently face.

In promoting respect through education, we supported a number of FoRB projects through our Magna Carta Fund for Human Rights and Democracy. One example included a project to support secondary school teachers in the Middle East and North Africa region to teach about FoRB.

We also re-launched our religion and diplomacy training offered to all staff in partnership with the London



The FCO in London is illuminated in red to support Anti-Slavery Day, 2018.

School of Economics Faith Centre. This was part of our commitment to help staff understand the key role that religion plays in shaping foreign policy. To supplement this training, we also ran a series of lunchtime seminars throughout the year, containing topics such as ‘Catholic Social Teaching’ by Dr Anna Rowlands.

## Racism

Tackling all forms of racism including racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance remained an important part of the UK government’s work on human rights. The UK has continued to work through multilateral organisations, including the United Nations (UN) to address these issues.

The UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination continued to underpin international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate racism. Through the UN, we worked to encourage the international community to focus on strengthening national, regional and international legal frameworks, in order to make a reality of the protections contained in the Convention.

In our ongoing commitment to tackle antisemitism, we remained an active member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) and we worked to encourage other states to consider adopting the working definition of antisemitism, agreed by IHRA in 2016, for their domestic use. We welcomed the

decisions by a number of countries including Austria and Bulgaria to adopt the working definition.

Through our multilateral and bilateral work, the UK will continue to work with the international community to stand together against intolerance in all its forms and to tackle discrimination and promote equality of opportunity for all individuals.

## Consular service

The FCO Consular Service offers assistance to British nationals in difficulty abroad.

In our customer charter, we commit to: “be professional, non-judgemental, polite and helpful to you whatever your gender, race, age, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, religion or belief.”

Our travel advice and information for travellers, available online, aims to help all British people travel safely. Our advice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) travellers was reviewed in 2017 to help LGBT travellers research laws and local attitudes in their destination country and plan for a safe and enjoyable trip. We have tailored advice for disabled travellers, solo women travellers and travellers with mental health needs. We promote our advice through a number of events.

In financial year 2017/18, our Consular contact centres handled 350,000 telephone enquiries and

consular staff provided support in more than 22,000 consular cases. In 2017 we introduced a change to the FCO switchboard to enable callers to speak to a consular officer more quickly. Consular staff are trained to provide high quality assistance tailored to the needs of the individual. This includes mandatory unconscious bias training as well as specific training to support customers with mental health needs.

The FCO collects data on the age and gender of those it provides services to (but not ethnicity or other protected characteristics). The table below shows the top five highest volume case types and number of Emergency Travel Documents issued in FY 2017/18, by demographic

### Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Travellers

We introduced consular same sex marriage services in June 2014 and provide the service in 25 countries. In 2017 we performed 184 consular same sex marriages and 25 conversions of civil partnership to marriage.

The British Government can consider approaching the local authorities if LGBT prisoners are not

*Highest volume case types and number of Emergency Travel Document (ETDs) issued in FY 2017/18, by demographic*

Age	Arrest/ Detention	Death	Hospitalisation	Victim of Crime	Welfare	ETDs
<b>Male</b>						
0-15	17	35	67	13	26	1,468
16-30	1,469	145	369	144	589	6,185
31-50	1,888	361	471	127	844	6,109
51-64	682	772	505	62	512	(51+) 4,447
65+	191	1,514	768	35	422	-
Unknown	117	67	81	35	137	-
<b>Female</b>						
0-15	10	21	47	14	18	1,480
16-30	286	55	246	328	403	3,950
31-50	297	114	226	225	598	3,135
51-64	96	203	203	79	234	(51+) 3,248
65+	20	488	411	30	206	-
Unknown	9	20	64	31	97	-
<b>Gender undisclosed</b>						
0-15	0	1	1	1	5	-
16-30	63	6	17	23	39	-
31-50	83	18	27	13	64	-
51-64	25	31	17	5	21	-
65+	9	79	41	3	20	-
Unknown	25	22	25	10	52	-

treated in line with internationally accepted human rights standards. This may include lobbying against discrimination on the grounds of gender or sexuality, requesting appropriate medical treatment and raising concerns about the safety of any prisoner.

### Forced Marriage Unit

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office Unit that provides assistance in cases of forced marriage in the UK and consular cases involving British people overseas, including dual nationals. Forced marriage has been a crime since June 2014. It is a serious abuse of human rights and a form of domestic abuse. Where children are involved, it is child abuse. Our staff are trained in the specific issues relating to victims who are LGBT or who have a disability and provide tailored assistance in these cases.

The FMU runs a targeted outreach programme, which raises awareness of forced marriage and related issues with statutory agencies including police, social services and health professionals alongside general broader work to raise awareness with potential victims. FMU

statistics suggest that young people aged between 16 and 25 are most at risk of being forced into marriage.

In 2017, the FMU gave advice or support related to a possible forced marriage in 1,196 cases. Since 2012, the FMU has provided support to between 1,200 and 1,400 cases per year. FMU's statistics do not represent the prevalence of forced marriage in the UK.

- > Where the age was known:
  - 16% of cases involved victims aged 15 and under
  - 14% involved victims aged 16-17
  - 18% involved victims aged 18-21
  - 12% involved victims aged 22-25
  - 10% involved victims aged 26-30
  - 7% involved victims aged 31-40
  - 4% involved victims aged 41 or over
  - 17% involved a minor whose age was not known.
- > 80% of cases involved female victims and 20% involved male victims.
- > The FMU has handled cases involving more than 90 countries. In 2017 these included: Pakistan (37%), Bangladesh (11%), Somalia (8%), India (7%), Afghanistan (2%), and Egypt (2%). 10% of cases were domestic and had no overseas element.
- > Within the UK the regional distribution was: London 29%, West Midlands 14%, Yorkshire and the Humber 13%, North West 12%, South East 7%, East Midlands 6%, East 3%, North East 3%, South West 3%, Scotland 2%, Wales 1%. The region was unknown in 7% of cases.
- > 12% of cases involved victims with disabilities.
- > 2% of cases involved victims who identified themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT).

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## Digital transformation of consular services making them more accessible

Since 2014, the FCO has transformed its public services, from paper forms to digital services which we have made as accessible as possible. In 2016, we launched global online applications for Emergency Travel Documents (ETDs) and Legalisation & Documentary Services. In 2017, we expanded the ETD service to

allow children's applications to be submitted online. In financial year 17/18 over 21,000 applications for Emergency Travel Documents were made online: 72% of the total issued. Over 1,200 of these were for children. Of all payments, 30% were made online.

We test the words we use on forms to make sure they are easy to understand. We test the forms with people with different levels of computer skills and disabilities, with the FCO's disability Staff Association Enable, and in specialist testing centres around the country. Finally, our contact centre staff are always at the end of a telephone to help people filling in the digital forms, either with specific issues or, in some cases, asking people the questions on the form and filling it in on their behalf. The services are significantly simpler and quicker to use than the old paper forms, making consular services easier to access for everyone.

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## Consular Services in the EU and EFTA States

Ahead of the UK leaving the European Union (EU), the FCO is supporting British people living, working and travelling in the EU and European Free Trade Association (EFTA) states. Through a communications campaign, launching in Autumn 2018, the FCO aims to ensure British people have clear and timely information about their rights and how to access them after the UK leaves the EU. The FCO is commissioning research into how best to reach the diverse population of British people living in the EU and EFTA states, including those who are not able to access information online or who may be particularly affected by any changes to their rights and status.



Foreign &  
Commonwealth  
Office

**Foreign & Commonwealth Office**

King Charles Street

London

SW1A 2AH

[gov.uk/fco](https://www.gov.uk/fco)