



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Diversity and Equality Report 2018-19

In response to the Equality Act 2010

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Foreword

To be the best it can possibly be, the FCO needs the skills of a truly diverse workforce. We must make the most of our talent and ensure every member of staff achieves their full potential. The FCO's management board is committed to ensuring that everyone plays a role in embedding diversity and inclusion into every part of our work. This is essential if we are to deliver excellent foreign policy and diplomacy in a diverse and changing world.

We have recruited on a scale unprecedented in recent years to support our ambitious diplomatic uplift in London and across our global network. This has been an opportunity to increase the diversity of our organisation. Of the 113 Higher Executive Officers and Executive Officers directly appointed this year, 68% were women and 21% Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME). To ensure we continue to attract high-potential candidates from BAME and lower socio-economic backgrounds, our student outreach campaign involved 13 University Roadshow events across the UK, meeting around 800 students.

Despite making significant progress, there remains work for us to do. To help us achieve our ambitious targets, the Diversity and Inclusion 2020 Strategy establishes three key priorities: providing further support for talent from under-represented groups; promoting inclusive leadership and management; and tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination (BHD). The strategy sets out how we plan to reach our ambition of an inclusive FCO, in which all staff are valued and contribute to the best of their abilities. We believe that the better our workforce reflects the diversity of the country we represent, the stronger an organisation we will be.

- The FCO remains committed to equality and continues to increase the diversity of its workforce in the UK and of its representation overseas. As of 31 March 2019, the FCO had 61 female Heads of Mission, Post and Governors (31%). In order to promote a diverse talent pipeline through the FCO, this year we are sending our most diverse cohorts to the Civil Service Talent Schemes. The FCO Future Leaders Scheme (Band D) cohort is 78% female and 33% BAME. The Senior Leader Scheme (SMS1) cohort is 60% female.
- In 2018–19, with a strong drive from the BAME staff network, we put a particular focus on race, including at board level. We looked at ways to translate our recruitment successes into fair opportunities and to support BAME talent through the organisation.
- The FCO is leading the way on support to carers. In 2018, the rest of the Civil Service adopted the FCO's model by introducing a Civil Service Carers' Charter and a Carer's Passport scheme.
- In March 2019, we developed a new policy for transgender staff in close consultation with FLAGG, the FCO's LGBT staff association. The policy was praised by transgender colleagues as "an important step on the road to putting the FCO at the forefront of trans-friendly employers". We also developed a new LGBT training pack in consultation with leading LGBT rights organisation Stonewall to raise awareness of the issues that LGBT staff face and increase confidence in the use of respectful terminology.



FCO Women at the Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion awards in October 2018 where the cross-government group for the suffrage centenary were shortlisted.

Introduction

This report is part of the FCO's response to the Equality Act 2010. It is intended to offer data on the equality impact of the FCO's employment practices and activities.

The Equality Act 2010 established a public sector equality duty, which came into force in April 2011. The public sector equality duty obliges public authorities to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by, or under, the Equality Act 2010
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

Protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 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. Moreover, as an online publication, no printing costs have been incurred.

The majority of data presented in this report is correct as at 31 March 2019. Where data represents a different time period, it is highlighted.



Her Majesty's Ambassador to Turkey, Sir Dominick Chilcott, and Gavin Thomas, Chair of the FCO's Wellbeing Network staff association. In February 2019 on Time to Talk / Time to Change Day, Sir Dominick signed the Time to Change pledge to raise greater awareness of mental health issues at work.

Section 1 – The FCO’s employees

The FCO has two different categories of employees. The first category is UK-based staff, comprising UK Diplomatic Service and Home Civil Service staff working for the FCO. UK-based 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 staff hired locally to work in UK missions overseas and are known as local staff. It is unusual for these employees to transfer between diplomatic missions or to work in the UK. Approximately two-thirds 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.

In comparison to the UK Civil Service, UK-based and local staff are graded as follows:

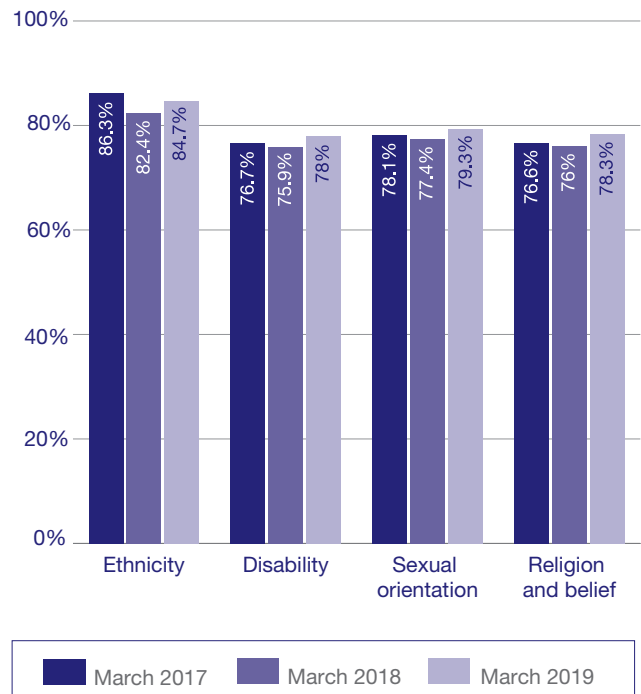
Generic UK Civil Service Grade	Foreign Office Grade	
	UK-based staff	Local staff
Senior Civil Service (SCS)	Senior Management Structure (SMS)	SMS (L)
Grade 6	D7	D7 (L)
Grade 7	D6	D6 (L)
Senior Executive Officer	C5	C5 (L)
Higher Executive Officer	C4	C4 (L)
Executive Officer	B3	B3 (L)
Administrative Officer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

Recorded data

The FCO collects and holds human resources data on a centralised HR management information 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 provide information about their ethnicity, disability status, flexible working patterns, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and caring responsibilities. Although the FCO encourages staff to supply this data, it is not mandatory and reporting rates vary by characteristic. To protect the privacy of staff who do not wish to record any of this personal information, it is possible for individuals to record on the database that they do not wish to declare.

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

FCO UK-based staff diversity reporting rate



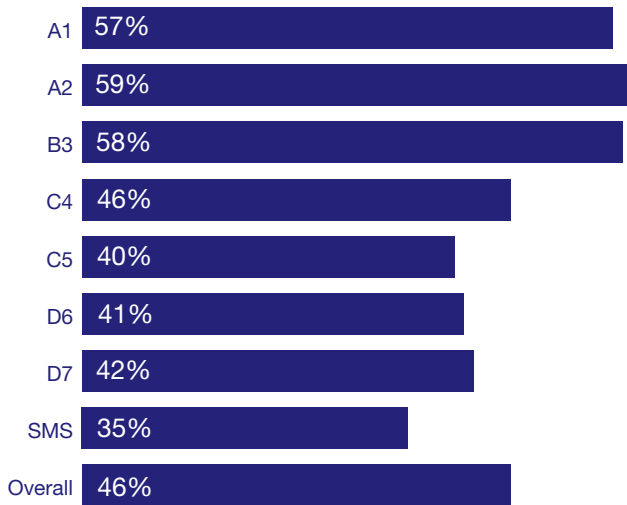
As with UK-based staff, local staff can also record their ethnicity, disability status, flexible working patterns and caring responsibilities on a voluntary basis. However, recording rates among local staff are too low to allow us to capture and report on data other than for gender. The diversity of our local staff, who represent countries and communities from across the globe, is nonetheless something we celebrate.

Profile of the workforce

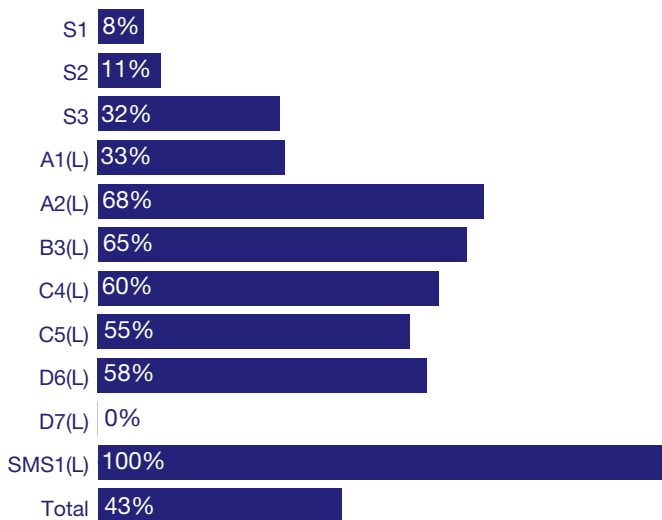
The FCO employs around 13,000 staff in total, roughly one-third of whom are UK-based and two-thirds local staff.

Gender profile of the workforce

Proportion of female UK-based staff by grade

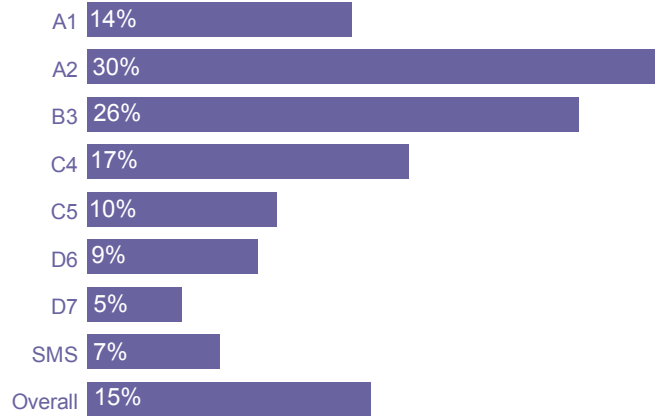


Proportion of female local staff by grade



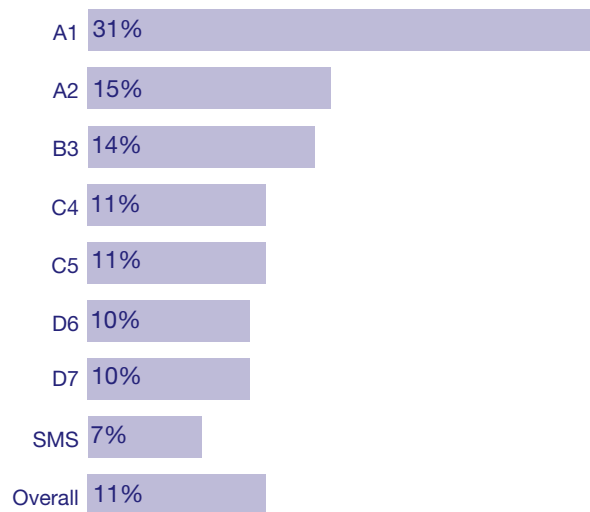
Ethnic profile of the workforce

Proportion of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) UK-based staff by grade



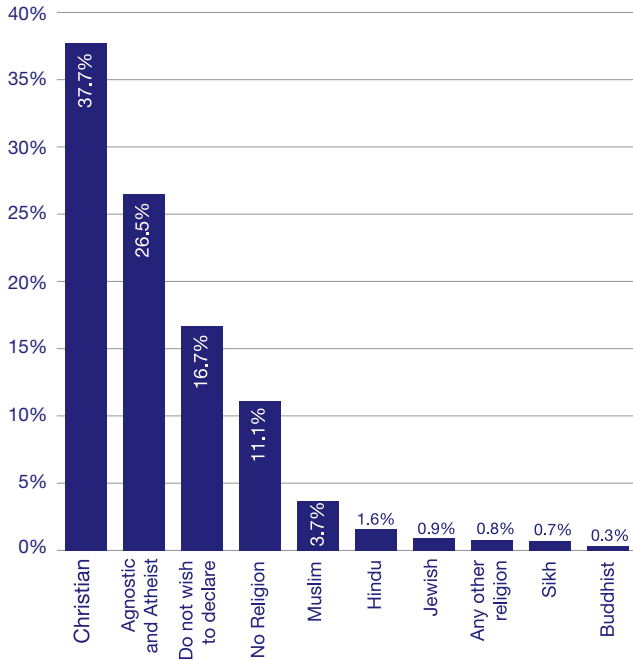
Disability profile of the workforce

Proportion of disabled UK-based staff by grade



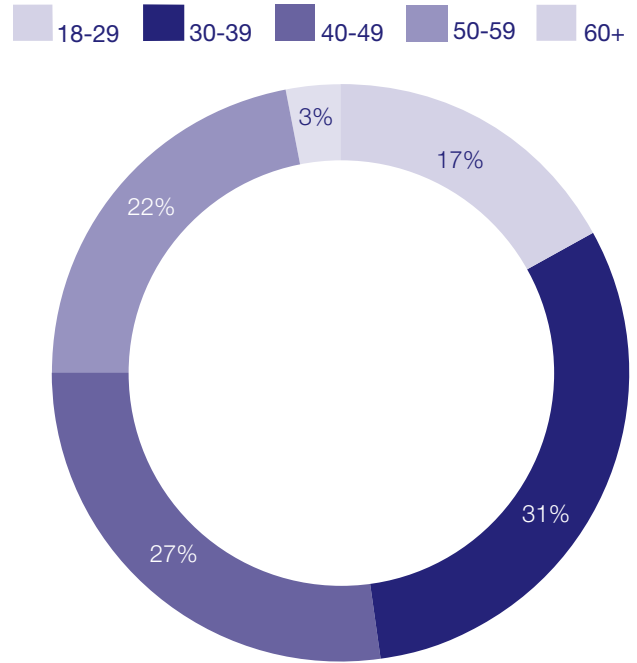
Religion and belief profile of the workforce

Proportion of UK-based staff by religion and belief



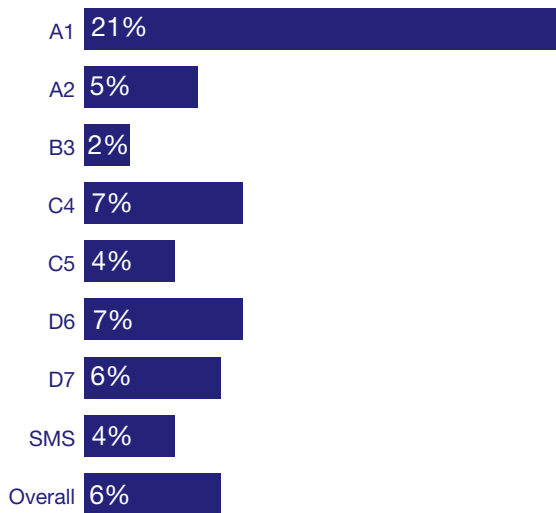
Age profile of the workforce

UK-based staff profile by age



Sexual orientation profile of the workforce

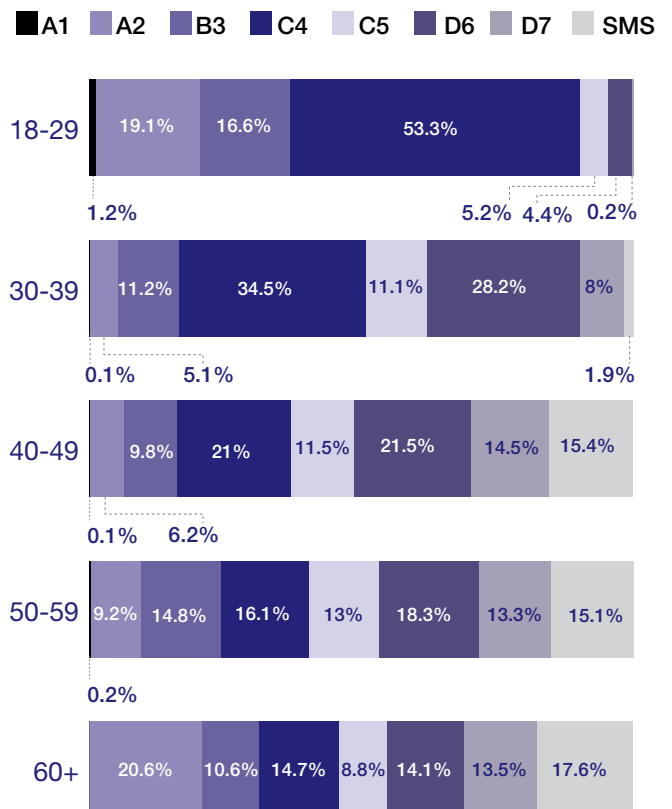
Proportion of LGBT UK-based staff by grade



UK-based staff profile by age and grade

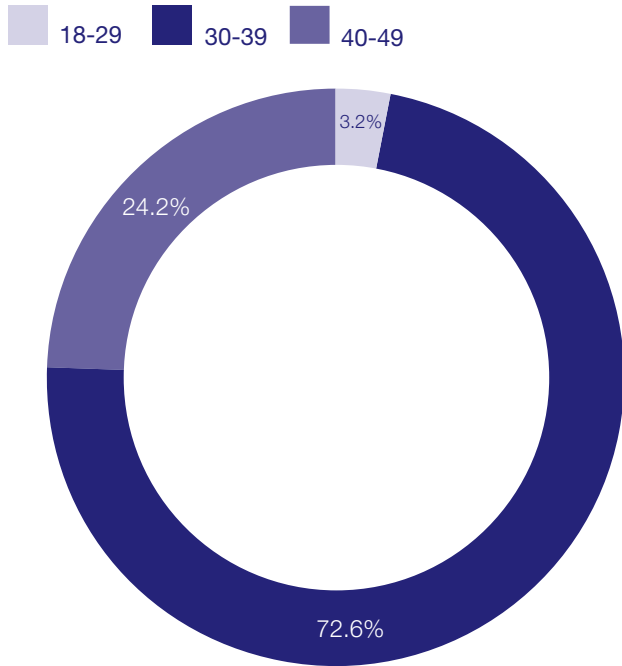
(E.g. 13% of those aged 50-59 are in the C5 grade; not 13% of C5s are aged 50-59)

Grade:

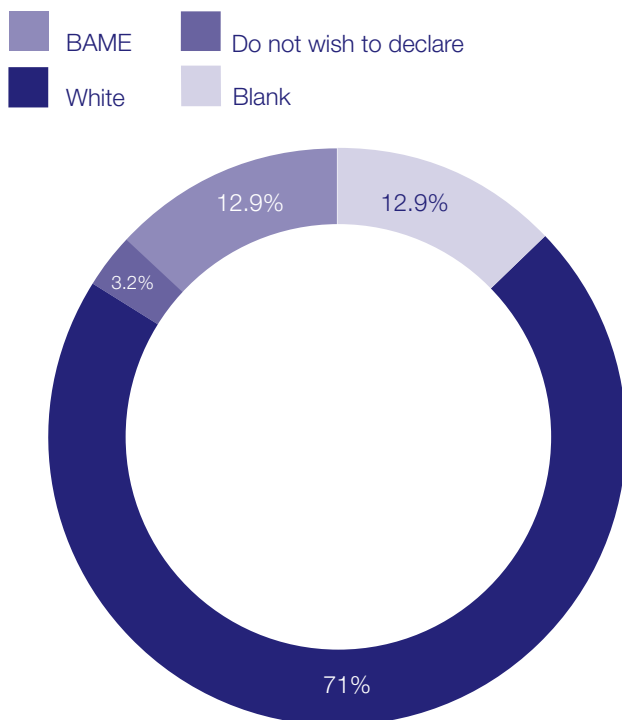


Maternity and adoption leave profile of the workforce

UK-based staff maternity and adoption leave profile by age



UK-based staff maternity and adoption leave profile by ethnicity



Recruitment

For its UK-based staff, 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 truly represent the country we serve. In 2018-19, our recruitment focus was on the Diplomatic Service Fast Stream and business critical roles including EU Exit and Global Network uplift roles. We follow and implement 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. Recruitment campaigns are run in accordance with the principles of fair and open competition.

Progress in 2018-19

Fast Stream and related recruitment

In 2018-19, the FCO recruited 36 specialists across the delegated grades and 63 Fast Stream policy entrants (via the Diplomatic Service scheme and Diplomatic Service Economist scheme).

2018-19 Fast Stream cohort profile

Female	49.2%
BAME	17.5%
Disabled	14.3%
LGBT	15.9%

The FCO also recruited 66 Higher Executive Officers (HEOs) and 47 Executive Officers (EOs) through the Direct Appointment Scheme (DAS). These individuals applied for the 2018 Fast Stream but were not successful in securing a place on that scheme. They were, however, deemed good candidates suitable for either HEO or EO roles and were recruited on that basis.

2018-19 Direct Appointment Scheme recruits profile

Female	67.9%
BAME	21.4%
Disabled	11.6%
LGBT	6.2%

Additional recruitment

Additional recruitment undertaken during 2018-19 includes:

65 HEOs recruited via the Cabinet Office-run Policy Professional external recruitment campaign

Female	52.3%
BAME	23.1%
Disabled	10.8%
LGBT	6.2%

77 Administration Officers

Female	56.4%
BAME	46.2%
Disabled	7.7%
LGBT	5.1%

9 Finance Directorate Administration Officers

Due to the small size of this group, diversity data has not been provided in order to protect staff anonymity.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a key part of the FCO's external recruitment cycle. In line with government strategy, we are committed to developing and broadening our apprenticeship programmes. Our target (shared with our Executive Agencies, FCO Services and Wilton Park) is to ensure that apprentices account for 2.3% of our combined workforces in England, achieving Civil Service targets for public departments. In 2018-19, the FCO contributed 62 apprentices in order to achieve our combined target.

The FCO recruited apprentices via a number of routes in 2018-19: through our own external recruitment as well as through the Civil Service Fast Track and Government Communication Service schemes. These campaigns have yielded 50 business administration apprentices, 3 communications apprentices, 2 finance apprentices and 7 HR apprentices (the latter support the FCO's Corporate Services Centre).

The profile of our 2018-19 apprentices as at 31 March 2019 was

Female	48%
BAME	21%
Disabled	9%
LGBT	9%

Interns

Our work experience schemes encourage undergraduates and graduates from all backgrounds to experience life at the heart of the UK government and consider the FCO as a future employer. In 2018-19, we offered 110 internships, representing a 27% increase on the previous year. 66 interns undertook placements of up to 9 months (Graduate Interns), with a further 25 benefitting from 6-week placements as part of the Summer Diversity Internship Programme. The Summer Diversity Internship Programme targets individuals from under-represented groups and is managed centrally by the Government Recruitment Service. The FCO manages its own annual Graduate Internship Programme, which is open to graduates from all backgrounds.

In 2018-19, the profile of our graduate interns was

Female	53%
BAME	23%
Disabled	14%
LGBT	10%

Experience of working in the FCO as an intern

“I have completed two internships at the FCO – the summer diversity internship programme (SDIP) last summer and the graduate internship programme. Both of my experiences have exposed me to the vast variety of work that the FCO does – from working in consular strategy and network and the Forced Marriage Unit during my SDIP to working as policy officer for Slovenia, Croatia, Romania and Bulgaria as a grad intern. I never expected the level of responsibility I was given as an intern but this filled me with confidence as I felt that the organisation trusted in my potential and abilities. My work has been wide-ranging and exciting as I worked on projects such as helping to organise the Slovenian

Presidential Visit to the UK and going on a regional visit of Bulgaria with the BE Sofia Political Team. The meat of my work is briefings where I learnt how to draft content both concisely and quickly as there were often surprise briefings with quick turnarounds!

“I was quite nervous when I first started my internship and had a preconception of the FCO largely being pale, male and stale. I am a BAME Muslim woman from a working class background so the idea of immediately sticking out and not fitting in worried me. However, I was pleasantly surprised that the FCO was more diverse than I thought – though it still has a long way to go – and grateful for my colleagues’ genuine interest in learning about my culture and accommodating my needs. This manifested itself most clearly during Ramadan, where I and another Muslim colleague were given the opportunity to talk about Ramadan in our departmental meeting and was taken aback by the fantastic support given by my colleagues and opportunity to work flexibly during the Holy Month.

“I now have a place on the Diplomatic Fast Stream, a career path that I was never predicted to embark on as a working class Bengali girl from Hackney, East London. The internship programmes really helped to reiterate that my sense of belonging and the fact that my diversity is a strength, not a weakness.

“The FCO graduate internship was an invaluable experience and a true insight into the inner-workings of diplomacy and international affairs. The best advice I can give to those starting the internship is to say yes to every opportunity offered and keep an open mind!”

Tania Ahmed, LSE International History Graduate, East London

Outreach

The FCO’s Diversity Outreach Programme seeks to increase the number of applicants and successful candidates from backgrounds currently under-represented in FCO recruitment. This year our campaign involved 13 University Roadshow events across the UK with a focus on high-potential candidates from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and low socio-economic backgrounds. Over 50 members of staff from across the organisation volunteered to take part in University Roadshows, engaging with over 800 students throughout the UK.

We seek to engage individuals who might not otherwise consider, or who could even self-select out of, an FCO career. As part of this Diversity Outreach, we hosted an event at the FCO for BAME students studying at London Universities. The event was opened by the Minister for the Commonwealth, the UN and South Asia, Lord Ahmad, and hosted in conjunction with FCO Staff Associations, including the FCO’s Social Mobility Network (Foreground) and the FCO’s BAME Network.

The FCO also participated in the Children’s Commissioner’s (who has special responsibility for the rights of children who are in or leaving care) Whitehall Takeover Challenge, which puts children and young people into real-life decision-making positions in organisations – in this case the FCO Permanent-Under-Secretary’s office. Looking ahead, we are exploring new relationships with organisations who already work with talented schools and university students from diverse backgrounds.

Experience of the FCO’s Outreach Programme

“Before attending the FCO University Roadshow in 2016 I had already convinced myself the Diplomatic Service was for a ‘different type’ of person. The Roadshow challenged my preconceptions about the FCO – it felt like ground-breaking information when a speaker revealed he had attended my university. Hearing from FCO staff made their stories real and relatable. I went on to join as a Graduate Intern in 2017 and then the Diplomatic Fast Stream the year after. This year I had the strange but very worthwhile experience of returning to my university as part of the Roadshow team. It’s great being able to show how impactful a career at the FCO is. The best aspect, however, is breaking down the stereotypes and misconceptions of what a diplomat looks like.”

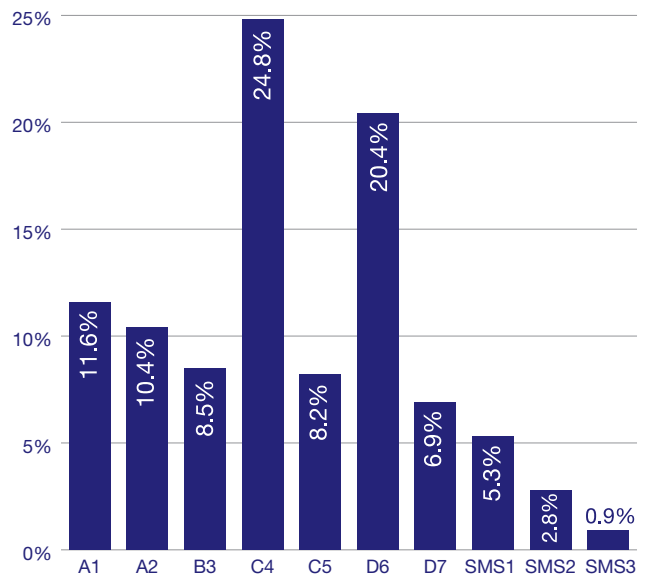
Kyle Parks

Staff retention

The figures below show the grade, gender, ethnicity, disability and age percentage breakdown of staff leaving 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. 3.1% of FCO employees left between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019. Please note this excludes end of loan/secondment or end of casual, period, conditional or provisional appointments.

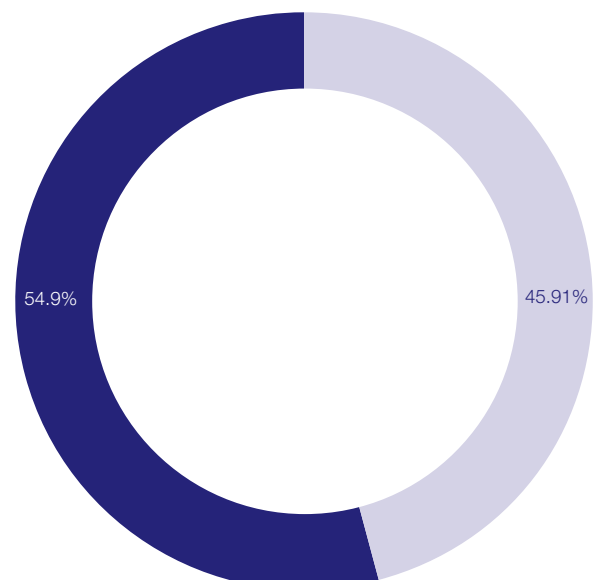
UK-based staff leavers by grade

(E.g. 24.8% of those who left the FCO were at grade C4)



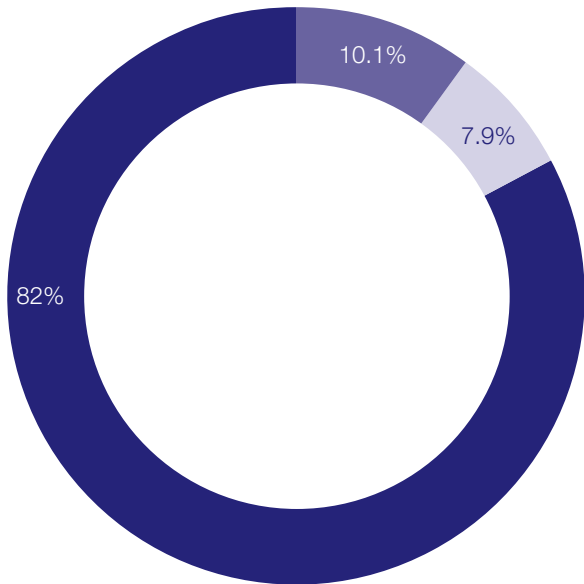
UK-based staff leavers by gender

Female Male



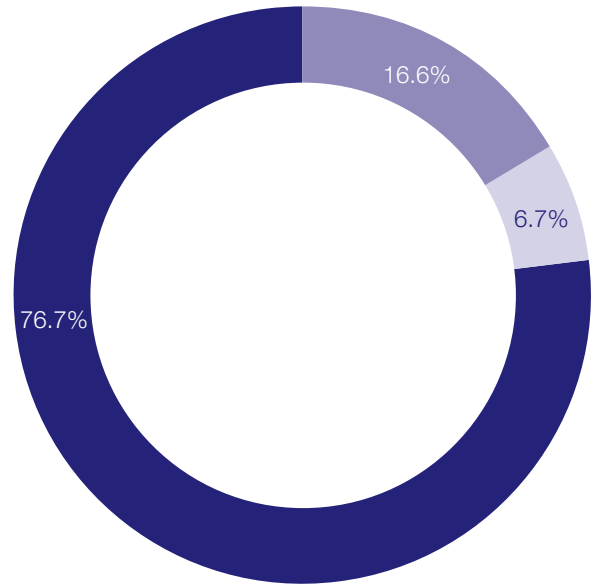
UK-based staff leavers by disability

Disabled
 Do not wish to declare
 Non-disabled



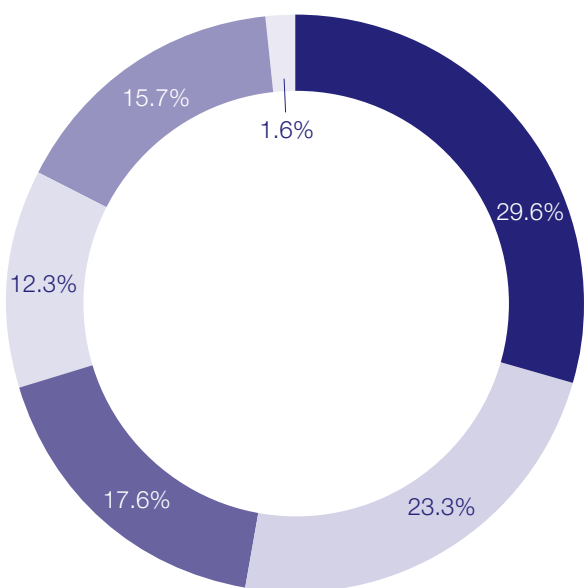
UK-based staff leavers by ethnicity

BAME
 Do not wish to declare
 White



UK-based staff leavers by age

18-29
 30-39
 40-49
 50-59
 60-69
 70+



Equality of pay

FCO pay, for both UK-based 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 equal pay, we regularly monitor the impact of pay practices, including via Annual Pay Audits and pay reviews.

Gender

FCO employees are paid according to standard pay scales which apply to all staff at each grade. In 2017, the UK government introduced world-leading legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. This includes the mean and median hourly ordinary pay gaps; the mean and median bonus pay gaps; the proportion of men and women who received bonuses; and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile. The 2017-18 FCO Gender Pay Gap Report showed an ordinary mean gender pay gap of 8.68% and an ordinary median gender pay gap of 8.2%. Further information can be found in the FCO Diversity and Equality Report 2017-18. The 2018-19 FCO Gender Pay Gap Report will be published in January 2020.

Ethnicity

The table below reflects data from those who have reported their ethnicity. The comparison by delegated grade shows mean pay gaps of up to 2.2% between mean white salary and mean minority ethnic salary. The workforce comparison data shows that this is because of the smaller proportion of disclosed BAME staff at more senior grades. Public sector pay was frozen for two years in 2010, except for those earning less than £21,000 a year, and since 2013, rises have been capped at 1% - below the rate of inflation. When the public sector pay cap was introduced, the FCO was 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 nine 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.

Ethnicity salary data by grade for UK-based staff

Grade	Mean White Salary	Mean Minority Ethnic Salary	% Mean Salary Gap
A1	£19,384	£19,384	0.00%
A2	£21,568	£21,622	0.20%
B3	£25,502	£24,947	-2.20%
C4	£31,310	£30,982	-1.10%
C5	£38,563	£38,448	-0.30%
D6	£51,204	£50,820	-0.80%
D7	£61,743	£62,691	1.50%
SMS1	£71,023	£68,976	-3.00%
SMS2	£93,000	£91,996	-1.10%
SMS3/4	£128,188	£115,047	-11.40%

FCO Services and Wilton Park are excluded from this data.

Staff Engagement Survey

As with staff in all Civil Service Departments, FCO staff are encouraged to take part in a Staff Engagement Survey (SES) in October each year. The 2018 SES had an 87% response rate, a 1% increase over the previous year. The FCO's overall engagement score (based on five questions which show how positive, attached and motivated staff feel) was 72%, 10 points higher than the Civil Service average. The FCO's inclusion and fair treatment score was 79%, 2 points above the Civil Service average.

As part of the SES, staff are asked if they have experienced bullying and harassment or discrimination (BHD) at work in the past 12 months. The 2018 SES scores for bullying and harassment remained at 13% (in comparison to 2017) while the discrimination figure decreased from 16% to 15%. Civil Service averages were 11% for bullying and harassment and 12% for discrimination.

Under-represented groups continue to report a higher number of experiences of BHD in the SES. 19% of staff with a disability said that they had experienced bullying and harassment, the same figure for 2017. 19% said they had experienced discrimination, a decrease from 26% in 2017. 12% of staff without a disability reported bullying and harassment and 12% without a disability reported experiencing discrimination. 15% of staff who identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual (LGB) said that they had experienced bullying and harassment in 2018; this score decreased from 21% in 2017. 17% of LGB staff said they had experienced discrimination; this score decreased from 26% in 2017. Non-LGB staff scores were 12% for bullying and harassment and 13% for discrimination.

The results shown below are broken down by age, gender, disability status, sexual orientation and ethnicity. Not all staff, however, disclose their demographic information when completing the SES so the SES data is not consistent with centrally collected benchmark data.

Reported bullying, harassment and discrimination

FCO 2018 Staff Engagement Survey						
	Have reported bullying or harassment			Have reported discrimination		
	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
Overall	13%	13%	13%	15%	16%	14%
Gender						
Female	14%	14%	12%	15%	16%	15%
Male	10%	11%	11%	12%	13%	13%
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic						
BAME	14%	14%	13%	15%	16%	15%
Non-BAME	11%	11%	11%	12%	13%	12%
Disability						
Yes	19%	19%	18%	26%	26%	25%
No	12%	12%	12%	13%	14%	13%
Sexual orientation						
LGBT	15%	21%	17%	17%	23%	16%
Heterosexual/straight	12%	12%	12%	13%	14%	13%
	Have reported bullying or harassment			Have reported discrimination		
Age	2018	2017	2016	2018	2017	2016
20-24	12%	15%	12%	10%	16%	11%
25-29	14%	14%	14%	16%	16%	15%
30-34	14%	14%	13%	16%	17%	16%
35-39	12%	12%	12%	14%	16%	15%
40-44	11%	11%	12%	13%	11%	12%
45-49	12%	12%	11%	12%	14%	15%
50-54	10%	11%	11%	10%	12%	12%
55-59	9%	10%	10%	11%	11%	9%
60-64	8%	9%	9%	8%	10%	8%
65+	5%	17%	8%	9%	12%	8%

Details have been taken from the FCO Staff Engagement Survey and are produced by the Cabinet Office.

FCO diversity policy and engagement

The diversity of the FCO’s workforce in the UK and overseas continues to be a priority. This includes visible diversity but also 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:

SMS targets			
	October 2019 target (% SMS)	31 March 2018	31 March 2019
Women	39%	33.2%	34.9%
BAME	7%	5.6% (based on 92.6% SMS recording rate)	7.0% (based on a 92.6% SMS recording rate)
Disabled	7%	8.1% based on 76.3% SMS recording rate)	6.9% (based on 76.7% recording rate)
LGBT	6%	3.6% (based on 78.2% SMS recording rate)	4.3% (based on 80.6% SMS recording rate)

New FCO-wide (including in the SMS) diversity goals are being introduced in October 2019 and progress against them will be reported in next year’s Diversity and Equality Report. We continue to strive to make progress against the three diversity and inclusion priorities in the FCO’s Diversity and Inclusion 2020 Strategy:

- 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 Civil Service and external talent schemes. In addition, our Outreach Programme has made contact with potential applicants from a wider talent pool by engaging with students from Widening Participation backgrounds.

- Tackling bullying, harassment and discrimination (BHD): The 2018 Staff Engagement Survey results show that bullying and harassment remains at 13% and that discrimination has decreased from 16% to 15%. We continue to target intervention at our 30 posts and departments with high BHD scores or where there are relatively high numbers of staff reporting BHD in the SES. In order to build on our understanding of BHD in the FCO, we are developing an Anonymous Feedback Tool to help us to learn more about the inappropriate behaviours that our staff are encountering and target intervention better. We continue to introduce learning and development initiatives to help prevent and tackle BHD. At the end of 2018, we facilitated mediation training for staff from our 30 most challenged posts and departments.
- Creating an inclusive culture: Driving change in leadership and line manager capability and behaviour on diversity. SMS staff continue to access face-to-face diversity training and are required to include measurable diversity and inclusion activities among their annual objectives, following the example of the FCO’s Permanent Under Secretary. Learning and development schemes, including leadership offers from external organisations such as Stonewall and Disability Rights UK, continue to support talented colleagues to become inclusive leaders and role models.

Disability policy and support in the FCO

The FCO is an accredited Disability Confident Employer under the government's Disability Confident Scheme. This is reflected in the FCO's recruitment policies. For both external and internal appointments, we guarantee an interview to anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the role outlined in the relevant job specification.

Workplace adjustments for UK-based staff are provided by the Disability Policy and Support Team (DPST). The DPST has access to guidance and support from the Civil Service Workplace Adjustment Service (CSWAS) and draws on the expertise of the FCO's Occupational Health contract, as well as the services of external disability specialists.

Workplace adjustments for disabled staff are based on an initial disability assessment and include specialised office equipment, IT software and hardware, support workers, British Sign Language (BSL) interpreters and lip speakers. More general awareness training and support is also available to disabled staff, their managers and other team members.

The FCO continues to support the promotion of good mental health. In April 2018, the FCO attained the Silver Award in the MIND Workplace Wellbeing Index. We have an ongoing programme to train Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) across our global network and have trained nearly 350 staff overseas. The FCO has also trained over 50% of our senior leadership in Wellbeing Confident Leadership.

The FCO is 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. The FCO regularly hosts BDF meetings.

FCO staff associations

The FCO Board consults with staff networks and the Diplomatic Service Families Association (DSFA) to understand and address issues faced by different groups of staff. As part of this collaboration, Board-level Champions provide staff networks with coaching, strategic direction and senior advocacy. Among the Board-level Champions are ones for diversity and inclusion and for tackling BHD.

Our staff networks are:

FLAGG (FCO LGBT+ Staff Association): FCO Lesbian and Gay Group (FLAGG) focuses its work around: (a) confidential advice and support to LGBT+ individuals; (b) working with HR Directorate to ensure FCO policies are inclusive of LGBT+ staff and; (c) raising awareness of LGBT+ issues and promoting an inclusive environment in the FCO through outreach within the wider FCO network. At the end of 2018, FLAGG coordinated the opening of the Watkins Room, named after an LGBT+ member of staff to recognise the contribution of LGBT+ officers to the FCO. FLAGG has hosted various events including: a joint event with DfID and DIT to mark LGBT+ History Month; an event around Female Identities in Diplomacy; and a high-level panel event discussing the theme of Justice and Protection for All to mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia. FLAGG continues to support the development of its members through the Stonewall Leadership Programme.

Religion and Belief Group: The 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 Group manages the FCO's Multi-Faith Prayer Room. The Group also celebrates the contribution that religion and belief bring to the lives of staff by organising events to mark the main religious festivals, including Christmas, Easter and Ramadan. In September 2018, the Group arranged for a Jewish sukkah to be put up in the main quadrangle of the FCO's building in King Charles Street during the festival of Sukkot.

Wellbeing Network: The Wellbeing Network acts as a point of contact and source of information on wellbeing and mental health, advising FCO staff in the UK and overseas about professional support available within and outside the organisation. The Network also manages and promotes the wellbeing rooms located across the FCO estate. The Network regularly run events to promote good mental health in the workplace which link to wider campaigns such as Mental Health Awareness Week, National Work Life Balance Week and Time to Talk Day.



FCO illuminated Purple on United Nations International Day of Persons with Disability, 3 December 2018. Many government departments and agencies got involved, with a record number lighting up their buildings to support the *PurpleLightUp* movement and to raise disability awareness.

FCO/DSFA Carers' Network: The FCO/DSFA Carers' Network has over 100 members; its aim is to provide guidance and support for those officers and their families who are balancing work and caring responsibilities, including those who are distance-caring while on overseas postings. The Network also promotes awareness within the FCO of the issues faced by those with caring responsibilities and holds regular meetings for carers as well as for managers and colleagues of carers. In 2018, the Network relaunched its Carers' Charter and Passport in line with the Civil Service guidelines.

Flexible Working Network: The 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 Directorate to consider and develop global policies on flexible working.

Foreground (Social Mobility Network):

Foreground champions diversity of background and thought within the FCO. It supports members who may have faced or be facing barriers to social and professional mobility, and engages in efforts to challenge barriers to progress facing colleagues from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Foreground is open to all who are passionate about improving social mobility. They participate in a cross-government network to improve diversity of background across the Civil Service.

FCO Women: FCO Women has well over 1,000 members – both men and women. Since a new chair and committee started in February 2019, FCO Women has focused on five priorities: (i) tackling sexual harassment – following the FCO-DIT sexual harassment survey in 2018, working with HR Directorate to improve guidance and procedures for reporting, supporting and responding to sexual harassment; (ii) supporting and boosting local chapters of FCO Women, including for our local staff; (iii) recruiting more men as allies and engaging a wider community; (iv) holding FCO policymakers to account on gender equality commitments; and (v) creating an inclusive culture that helps all women,

regardless of ethnic heritage, sexual orientation and other barriers. In addition, FCO Women manage a mentor-matching service for members, run masterclasses to support members' informal learning, and provide a channel for all our members to contribute to policies ahead of Management Board making a decision on them.

BAME Network: The Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Network represents the views of ethnic minority staff in the FCO. The Network focuses on: (a) celebrating racial diversity in the FCO through Role Model speaker events and blogs; (b) supporting BAME staff in the FCO with first response services, mentoring and learning sets; and (c) engaging senior leadership, HR policy leads and other staff associations so FCO policies are sensitive to the needs of its diverse workforce. The BAME Network was heavily involved in the 2018-19 Outreach Programme to ensure the FCO continues to represent the changing face of the UK in the years ahead. The Network's membership is open to all staff, and is passionate about raising awareness and generating dialogue around issues of race and ethnicity in the FCO.

Parents Support Network: The Parents Support Network (PSN) brought the former 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 on family-friendly policies including flexible and part-time working, shared parental leave and childcare. The PSN has over 300 members and raises awareness through outreach work with overseas and Cross-Whitehall Parents' Support Networks. It formed a new PSN Committee and Community site for parents to share information and parenting strategy tips. In March 2018, it launched the FCO's first purpose-built parent/baby room.

ENABLE: (Disability Association): In 2018-19, Enable has worked to ensure that the FCO's estate and IT are accessible to disabled staff, and has worked in partnership with the FCO Language Centre to encourage more dyslexic staff to consider learning a foreign language. Enable has almost 850 members who champion disability awareness across the FCO and who helped the FCO achieve DWP's Disability Confident Leader accreditation back in March 2017. In December 2018, the FCO's building in King Charles Street and the British Ambassador's Residence in Manila were illuminated purple to mark the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities, while hundreds of staff wore purple in support. As part of the Leadership Conference, Enable organised a reverse mentoring event giving Heads of Mission and senior leaders opportunities to hear from staff with lived experience of disability. Enable also contributes to delivery of the wider Civil Service Diversity and Inclusion strategy. The Chair of Enable is Co-Chair of the Civil Service Disability Network, contributing to Civil Service-wide disability policies and governance groups.

Section 2 – Regard for equality within the FCO’s activities

Foreign policy

Women’s rights

Gender equality

The FCO has committed to a foreign policy that consciously and consistently delivers for women and girls. The FCO’s Gender Equality Unit leads on gender equality and women’s and girls’ rights, working closely with our Embassies and High Commissions, other government departments, international organisations such as the United Nations (UN) as well as civil society. The FCO’s Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, promotes greater international action on gender equality through her travel and engagement with partners.

In 2018-19, a key focus of our work was the implementation of the government’s 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 through seven strategic outcomes. 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 is funding a midpoint independent evaluation of the current NAP, and we funded an external evaluation for the previous 2014-2017 NAP.

The UK continues to support local women peacebuilders. The UK is one of the largest donors to the UN’s Women’s Peace and Humanitarian Fund (WPHF), providing approximately \$3 million over the last three financial years. In March 2019, a further £800,000 was announced to support the Fund. In April 2018, the UK committed £1.6 million to amplify the voices of women peacebuilders. As part of this, the UK launched the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth (WMC) initiative, which now has over 40 members from Commonwealth countries, building peace around the world, and working closely with other regional women mediator

networks. We are also promoting women in peacekeeping roles. The UK announced £1 million for Canada’s Elsie Initiative Fund, managed by the UN, to promote women peacekeepers at the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial, 29 March 2019. The UK is proud to have already met and exceeded UN targets set in 2015 for doubling female participation in peacekeeping by 2020. Women currently make up 7.5% of our contingent peacekeeping troops and 17.2% of military observers and staff officers.

The UK, led by Lord Ahmad, the Prime Minister’s Special Representative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict, has continued to champion the Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict Initiative (PSVI) on the global stage. In 2018-2019, we focused on the three pillars of the PSVI: tackling the stigma faced by survivors; strengthening justice and accountability; and preventing conflict-related sexual violence by tackling its root causes. In April 2018, Lord Ahmad hosted a meeting with a number of Commonwealth countries on PSVI. In June 2018, we launched UK-funded research on supporting children born of sexual violence at the UN, which will inform future policy, both for the UK and the international community. In September 2018, Lord Ahmad co-hosted a roundtable event at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) on preventing sexual violence in conflict together with the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. This had significant impact in highlighting the need to maintain international focus and momentum on tackling this crime.

The November 2018 PSVI Film Festival, Fighting Stigma Through Film, successfully raised awareness of this abhorrent crime and galvanised the international community into further action. In the margins, Lord Ahmad hosted a roundtable event for representatives of PSVI champion and focus countries; he was joined by UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict’s Office, UNHCR Special Envoy Jolie. He also hosted an event with young filmmakers from conflict-affected countries and the Commonwealth which Lord Hague and HRH The Countess of Wessex attended.

In February 2019, we held a Wilton Park conference with a broad range of stakeholders, including technical experts to identify practical steps for strengthening justice for survivors and holding perpetrators to account. The resulting recommendations will inform policy development as we focus on concrete deliverables this year.

The Gender Equality Unit works hand in hand across Whitehall 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.

In November 2018, the FCO (in partnership with cross-government partners and the UK Parliament) hosted an historic conference for female parliamentarians from around the world, as part of the celebrations to mark the centenary of women's (partial) suffrage in the UK. Over 100 female parliamentarians from around the world took part in the conference, to accelerate progress on women's political empowerment and gender equality.

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in April 2018, the UK launched the 'Leave No Girl Behind' campaign, calling for 12 years of quality education for all girls by 2030, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will not only respect girls' human rights but also help make their societies more peaceful, prosperous and equitable. Since then, the UK has continued to build international support for this agenda, working through key multilateral fora to foster commitment for girls' education. We worked with Canada to make girls' education a prominent theme of their 2018 G7 Presidency, and secured support from 152 states for a UK-led joint statement on girls' education at the 38th Session of the UN Human Rights Council in June 2018. At UNGA in September 2018, former Prime Minister Theresa May co-hosted an event with the French President, Emmanuel Macron, and Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and called upon other countries to join the UK in giving girls in developing countries access to quality education.

At UNGA 2018, the UK co-hosted the first meeting of the Platform for Girls' Education – a group of 12 influential figures committed to securing 12 years of quality education for girls across the world. In January 2019, the Platform for Girls' Education launched its first paper, which examines the state of girls' education across the Commonwealth and identifies measures that governments can take to accelerate girls' access to quality education. The work of the Platform has been shaped by a Wilton Park Conference examining how diplomacy can be used to mobilise momentum for girls' education, which we held in June 2018.

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 should 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 UNGA 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 69 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. We fly the rainbow flag with pride on appropriate occasions.

The International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) and Pride celebrations provide an opportunity for overseas posts to signal our strong solidarity with LGBT communities worldwide.

We introduced consular same-sex marriage services in June 2014. In 2018, we performed 53 consular same-sex marriages and 57 conversions of civil partnership to marriage in 13 countries. We offer consular same-sex marriages in 26 countries and conversions in 13 countries.

The UK, a founding member of the Equal Rights Coalition (ERC) founded in 2016, attended the ERC conference in Vancouver in August 2018. The ERC is a grouping of 42 like-minded countries working together to address criminalisation and violence and discrimination against LGBT people.

At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April 2018, the Prime Minister announced a £5.6 million programme to assist member states seeking to reform legislation, which discriminates on the grounds of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Rights of persons with disabilities

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

We work actively at the multilateral level and engage on all disability-focused resolutions at the UN Human Rights Council. The UK also promotes and enables 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 disabled people in political and public life. We mark the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities with events in London and at overseas Posts.

We continue 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 and the UN Human Rights Council, and we continue to lobby to improve the rights of persons with disabilities bilaterally.

Freedom of religion or belief

The UK remains fully committed to promoting and defending freedom of religion or belief (FoRB) for individuals around the world. In July 2018, the former Prime Minister, Theresa May, showed her commitment to supporting FoRB by appointing Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon as her Special Envoy for Freedom of Religion or Belief. As Special Envoy, Lord Ahmad has led international FoRB diplomacy efforts; defended the right to FoRB in key countries where the UK can have a real influence; and responded quickly, along with our diplomatic network, to specific instances where FoRB is under attack.

Lord Ahmad has increased the UK's advocacy on FoRB with visits to many countries, including Indonesia, Iraq, Sudan, Tunisia, Algeria, Pakistan and Lebanon. He met people who had been targeted because of their faith, such as members of the Yezidi and Christian minorities in Iraq. He also met victims of persecution who now live safely in the UK.

Lord Ahmad worked closely with key partners such as the Holy See, the EU’s Special Envoy for the Promotion of Freedom of Religion, and the UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. He represented the UK at the high-level Ministerials to Advance Religious Freedom in Washington DC.

On 26 December 2018, the former Foreign Secretary, Jeremy Hunt, announced that he had asked the Reverend Philip Mounstephen, Bishop of Truro, to lead an independent review on the support that the FCO provides to persecuted Christians. The final report of the independent review, published in July 2019, presented a series of recommendations on measures the UK can take to support persecuted Christians overseas. The UK government accepted all of the recommendations, and work has begun to implement them.



Racism

Tackling all forms of racism including racial discrimination, xenophobia, and related intolerance remains an important part of the UK government’s work on human rights. The UK works bilaterally and through multilateral organisations, including the UN to address these issues.

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

In our ongoing commitment to tackle anti-Semitism, we remain an active member of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). Lord Pickles, UK Envoy for Post-Holocaust Issues, visited Italy from 28-30 January 2018, Austria from 2-6 May 2018 and Belarus from 24-25 October 2018, among others. In Rome, he called on countries to adopt the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism.

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 UK nationals in difficulty abroad.

In 2018-19, our Consular contact centres handled 355,000 telephone enquiries and consular staff provided support in more than 22,500 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 on the next page shows the top five highest volume case types and number of Emergency Travel Documents issued in FY 2018-19 by demographic.

Highest volume case types and number of Emergency Travel Document (ETDs) issued in FY 2018-19 by demographic

	Arrest / detention	Death	Hospitalisation	Victim of crime	Welfare	Emergency Travel Documents
Male						
0-15	19	27	70	7	20	1,412
16-30	1,454	119	360	139	483	6,358
31-50	1,933	375	465	145	845	6,204
51-64	747	785	527	74	537	(51+) 4,896
65+	208	1,699	778	34	409	-
Unknown	80	51	72	31	107	-
Female						
0-15	11	22	69	31	12	1,353
16-30	255	38	192	389	384	3,925
31-50	303	120	255	231	513	3,251
51-64	89	228	232	59	217	(51+) 3,341
65+	25	589	442	20	206	-
Unknown	16	14	38	40	99	-
Undisclosed						
0-15	1	0	4	1	2	-
16-30	108	8	21	20	37	-
31-50	117	21	36	17	57	-
51-64	53	31	33	2	35	-
65+	15	103	53	3	25	-
Unknown	30	20	29	7	47	-

Support for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender travellers

Our travel advice and information for travellers, available online, aims to help all UK nationals travel safely. Our advice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) travellers was reviewed and updated in 2017 to help LGBT travellers research laws and local attitudes in their destination country, and plan for a safe and enjoyable trip. We are continuing to keep our advice under regular review, including implementing commitments within the government's LGBT Action Plan.

Forced Marriage Unit

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Home Office and FCO unit that provides assistance in cases of forced marriage in the UK and consular cases involving UK nationals 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 2018, the FMU handled 1,764 cases of possible forced marriage. These figures include cases raised with the FMU through the public helpline or by email, as well as general enquires about forced marriage. Since 2012, the FMU has provided support to approximately 1,500 British nationals a year. FMU's statistics do not reflect forced marriage cases in the UK.

Where the age was known

574 cases (33%) involved victims below 18 years of age

542 cases (31%) involved victims aged 18-25

165 cases (9%) involved victims aged 26-30

146 cases (8%) involved victims aged 31-40

45 cases (3%) involved victims aged 41 and over

In 17% of cases the age of the victims was unknown. 75% of cases involved female victims and 17% involved male victims, the remaining 8% were unknown.

Forced marriage is not a problem specific to one country or culture. Since 2011, the FMU has handled cases relating to over 110 countries across the world. The six countries with the highest number of cases in 2018 were:

- Pakistan – 769 cases (44%)
- Bangladesh – 157 cases (9%)
- India – 110 cases (6%)
- Somalia – 46 cases (3%)
- Afghanistan – 44 cases (3%)
- Romania – 43 cases (2%)

7% of cases were domestic and had no overseas element.

Within the UK, the regional distribution was: London 18%, West Midlands 11.6%, Yorkshire and the Humber 10.4%, North West 14.4%, South East 8.4%, East Midlands 3.9%, East 7%, North East 1.7%, South West 3%, Scotland 1.7%, Wales 1.9%. The region was unknown in 18% of cases.

5.3% of cases involved victims with disabilities.

0.6 % of cases involved victims who identified themselves as LGBT. FMU statistics are based on the information that is volunteered to the unit at first contact; victims are not routinely asked to disclose their sexual orientation.

Digital transformation of consular services

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 and documentary services. In 2017, we expanded the ETD service to allow children's applications to be submitted online. We have added photo and document upload so the entire application can now be made online. The process has been assessed by the Digital Accessibility Centre to ensure customers with accessible needs find it as easy as possible to access the service. We regularly test with users with a range of digital abilities so it is easy for customers without digital expertise to complete. There is also the ability for someone to apply online on someone else's behalf. This facility is used by our contact centre staff, family members, friends, or holiday reps and tour operators.

Our contact centre staff are always at the end of the telephone to help people filling in the digital forms. The services are significantly simpler and quicker to use than the old paper forms, making consular services easier to access for everyone. As at March 2019, 94% of ETD applications were made online.

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