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1. Introduction

"Violence against women continues to persist as one of the most heinous, systematic and prevalent human rights abuses in the world. It is a threat to all women, and an obstacle to all our efforts for development, peace, and gender equality in all societies. Violence against women is always a violation of human rights; it is always a crime; and it is always unacceptable. Let us take this issue with the deadly seriousness that it deserves."

(Ban Ki moon, United Nations Secretary General)

According to the United Nations, violence against women is "Violence that is directed at a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately". Each year up to 3 million women across the UK experience violence, and there are many more living with the legacies of abuse experienced in the past. In the UK, violence against women includes domestic violence, rape and sexual violence, sexual harassment, female genital mutilation, forced marriage, crimes in the name of honour, trafficking and sexual exploitation. Violence against women is commonly committed by men that women know, or are in a close relationship with, however in instances of “honour” related violence, families and communities are also perpetrators.

In the 85th plenary meeting of December 1993, on the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the General Assembly affirmed that violence against women constitutes a violation of the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and impairs or nullifies their enjoyment of those rights and freedoms. The Declaration recognised that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between
men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. There was concern that some groups of women, such as women belonging to minority groups, indigenous women, refugee women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention, female children, women with disabilities, elderly women and women in situations of armed conflict, are especially vulnerable to violence. This is particularly true in respect to “honour” related violence in all its’ many variations and forms.

The UK definition of “honour” related violence is a form of domestic abuse which is perpetrated in the name of so called “honour”. The “honour” code which it refers to is set at the discretion of male relatives, and women who do not abide by the rules are then punished for bringing shame on the family.

“Honour” related violence and abuse can take many forms, such as threatening behaviour, assault, rape, kidnap, abduction, forced abortion, forced marriage, threats to kill and false imprisonment, committed due to so called “honour”. Murders in the name of ‘so-called’ honour, (often called honour killings) are murders in which predominantly women are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour which is deemed to have brought shame on the family. In the UK, some examples of “honour” related murders have been for trivial reasons such as dressing or behaving in a westernised manner, falling in love with somebody not chosen by their family, rejecting a forced marriage, initiating divorce, or being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, queer, intersex, or asexual, (LGBTQIA).
2. History of “Honour” Related Violence

“Honour” killings have been known since ancient Roman times, when the pater familias, or senior male within a household, retained the right to kill an unmarried but sexually active daughter or an adulterous wife. “Honour” related crimes were known in medieval Europe where early Jewish law mandated death by stoning for an adulterous wife and her partner. Today the practice is most commonly associated with regions in North Africa and the Middle East.

The notions of honour and shame and their use as justification for violence and killing is not unique to any one culture or religion. Indeed, “honour” and “honour” related violence is reflected in historical events in many countries. For instance, duelling was a key practice through which claims of masculine honour were made, maintained and understood in Western societies. In France, Le Cid told the story of a man insulted by a slap across the face, who asked his son to defend his honour in a duel. In Canada, duelling continued into the late 1800s.

Similar notions can be traced in Latin American societies. In Brazil and parts of Latin America, machismo is often described as a code of honour. In the early times of Peru, the laws of the Incas permitted husbands to starve their wives to death as punishment for committing an adulterous act. Aztec laws resulted in death by stoning or strangulation for female adultery during the early times of Mexico.

Several great wars started over honour. The most well known of these was the Trojan War, which began over the honour of Helen. Her father required that all her suitors defend his choice for her marriage, thereby setting all of Greece against Troy.

In Britain, the fifth wife of Henry VIII was beheaded based on allegations of adultery. In British literature, Shakespeare's Desdemona was killed over allegations of infidelity, and Romeo and Juliet tracked an ancient family feud over honour. King Arthur and the Knights of the Round
Table centred on notions of honour. The premise of the Three Musketeers was the King's guards avenging the betrayal of the king by Cardinal Richelieu. ¹

Nowadays, the most recognised form of "honour" related violence in existence is the one originating from Arab, Middle Eastern, and South Asian countries. Honour is expressed in many other terms, including "shame," "izzat," "avenging," "saving face", and ongoing blood vengeance. As people have migrated and settled around the world, they have taken their traditions and practices with them, and are executing them in their new countries.

3. Honour Related Violence in UK

“Honour” related violence has remained a hidden phenomenon in the UK, for many years. It is only in the last two decades that women activists and ngo’s have successfully campaigned, lobbied, and raised awareness to bring this to the fore, and for it to be recognised as an abuse. Their work has been furthered and assisted by international movements, governmental recognition and support, and the work of domestic and international non-governmental organisations. Furthermore, several killings have taken place which made it unviable to ignore this practice any longer.

One of the first “honour” killings in the UK was that of Rukhsana Naz, in 1999. Rukhsana, 19, had hoped to divorce her husband, whom she had only seen twice since her arranged marriage at the age of 15, and to marry her lover, Imran Najib, but she was strangled by her mother and brother after she refused to have an abortion. Rukhsana’s mother held her feet while her brother strangled her with a piece of plastic flex at her home in Derby. The teenager was seven months pregnant with Imran’s child, and was hoping to obtain a divorce from her husband who lived in Pakistan, and marry Imran. Her family could not accept this for two reasons: he was already married, and he was socially inferior to her.

Rukhsana’s mother, tried to force her daughter to have an abortion, kicked her in the stomach, and told her to take paracetamol to induce a miscarriage, however, Rukhsana, who already had two children, now aged 18 months and three, by her husband, refused. There was only one outcome.

“We did not want to kill her,” her mother told police. 'But it was written in her fate.'

2 https://www.theguardian.com/uk/1999/may/26/sarahhall
Rukhsana’s mother and brother were jailed for life.

According to the BBC Asian Network and Victoria Derbyshire programme, more than 11,000 cases of so-called honour crime were recorded by UK police forces from 2010 – 2014. UK charity IKWRO said the figures suggested incidence of the crime remained “consistently high” in the UK and that the issue was “not going away”. Unfortunately, they [the figures] do not show the real extent of the problem. So many crimes are unreported because the perpetrators are often the victim’s own family.”

It is thought that there are at least 12 honour killings in the UK annually, however charities and non-governmental organisations consider this to be a severe underestimate. “Honour” crimes and killings are consistently under-reported, or covered up by family and community members, this, coupled with the lack of official statistics, makes it difficult to assess the actuality of the abuse.

There is a tendency in the West to see so-called “honour” killings as exclusively related to specific cultural traditions. They are often depicted as culturally specific to Muslim communities although they are not, in fact, restricted to any particular religion, culture, type of society or social stratum. In its report on harmful practices, for instance, the charity Imkaan reported a case of a Traveller woman forced to leave her community due to "honour-based violence".

There is a widespread belief that honour is no longer as important in Western societies, with their emphasis on individual rights and legality. However, the modern-day importance of "honour" should not be so quickly cast aside. In the UK data from the British Crime Survey 2016, suggests that 1.3 million female and 600,000 male victims were estimated to have experienced domestic abuse in 2014/15\(^3\) – how many of these cases relate to the “honour” of the perpetrators being allegedly besmirched by victims and survivors?

There have been a number of victims of “honour” killings in the UK, the below are a few of them:

\(^3\) House of Commons Briefing Paper Number 6337, 6 May 2016, John Woodhouse & Noel Dempsey
Shafilea Ahmed, a 17-year-old British Pakistani girl, who was murdered by her parents. They were imprisoned for a minimum of 25 years each in 2012.

Banaz Mahmod, a 20-year-old Iraqi Kurd woman from Mitcham, south London, was killed in 2006, in a murder orchestrated by her father, uncle and cousins.

Samaira Nazir, a 25-year-old British Pakistani woman murdered by members of her family. She fell in love with an Afghan immigrant and planned to marry him, against her family’s wishes. Her brother and a cousin, murdered her by stabbing her in front of other family members, including two of her nieces, aged two and four.

Caneze Riaz, 39, and her four daughters killed by her husband and children’s’ father. He sprayed petrol throughout the house, and set it alight, because he could not bear them adopting a more westernised lifestyle.

Amrit Kaur Ubhi, a 24-year old British Indian woman, killed by her father because he disapproved of her being ‘too westernised’.

Laura Wilson, a 17-year-old, was killed by her Asian boyfriend, because she revealed details of their relationship to his family, challenging traditional cultural values of the family, and bringing shame on them. Wilson was repeatedly knifed to death as she walked along a canal. Considered to be the first white victim of an “honour” killing in the UK.

Heshu Yones, stabbed to death by her Kurdish father in London in 2002 when her family heard a love song dedicated to her and suspected she had a boyfriend.

Violence against women occurs in all societies and cultures and in all parts of the world. In the UK, such violence has been tackled over the last few decades through new laws, awareness-raising campaigns and a zero-tolerance approach tailored to changing specific aspects of mainstream British culture. This policy has largely succeeded in reducing domestic violence and making such violence socially unacceptable. As a result, domestic violence is today widely seen as morally wrong and as a criminal act.
A similar approach is now being slowly implemented to bring about a comparable change among some of the UK’s immigrant groups. At present, ideas of honour which fuel violence against women are common in sectors of British society which originate in the Middle East and South Asia. In some cases, particularly among Pakistani communities in the North of England, such attitudes appear to be becoming more entrenched in people’s cultures and identities through increasing segregation, rising religious radicalism and the development of a “them-and-us” attitude to mainstream society. Frequently, ideas of sexual honour are perpetuated as a counterpoint to a mainstream British culture which community and religious leaders frequently dismiss as corrupt, worthless and immoral. In many cases, these factors are combining to make ideas of honour the core of many immigrants’ identities.

Asylum seekers, refugees, and economic migrants have also added their individual traditions and norms regarding honour to the existing culture and sub-culture of the UK. In 2015 the UK received 38,878 asylum applications, including dependents. Refugees and asylum seekers have arrived in the UK from Eritrea, Iran, Pakistan, Sudan, Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Albania, Nigeria, and Sri Lanka. For many, they have had to leave behind all they owned in terms of material wealth, the only thing they have remaining of any value is their “honour”, therefore protecting and maintain this becomes even more necessary.

A report by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), a UK-based independent think tank states that another factor contributing to the phenomenal rise in irregular migration is the growing “professionalisation” of people smugglers driving migrants through the Middle East, Africa and Europe. Individuals are often indentured to “agents”, and commonly live and work in appalling circumstances, without recourse to public services.

So far, government attempts to tackle honour-based crimes have been inconclusive. Laws have been passed to criminalise specific acts of violence such as Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage, while police officers and the voluntary sector have aimed to protect women at acute risk of immediate violence. These attempts have avoided tackling the roots of the violence. The government appears to have hoped that honour-based violence would
simply fade away as immigrants integrated into mainstream society. This approach has not worked and in many cases, social services have failed to protect women from violence.\textsuperscript{4}

A compounding factor in the perpetration of “honour” related violence in the UK, is the issuance of dual nationality by some countries, not only to the original nationals, but also to their children.

Dual citizenship (also known as dual nationality) is allowed in the UK. This means you can be a British citizen and a citizen of other countries. You don't need to apply for dual citizenship. You can apply for foreign citizenship and keep your British citizenship. This can be particularly problematic for British Pakistanis, who have inherited their Pakistani nationality by default through their father, or for some women, upon marriage.

Dual citizenship allows migrants to retain strong links with their country of origin, and this is reinforced through regular visits to the home country, where progress and advancement may have occurred in relation to women and their rights, however the visitors are not there long enough to absorb these changes. Furthermore, there is a lack of will to accommodate these changes within a minority of migrants, who feel that the patriarchal control of women is perfectly acceptable.

Acquiring land and building houses in the home country is also a status symbol for many expat Pakistanis. Finances are directed towards this, with contributions expected to be made from all those who are in receipt of salaries, grants, or government benefits. The physiological and psychological needs of women are greatly disregarded in the quest to build mansions and villas in the country of origin, which once completed, act as a means of acquiring further “honour”.

\textbf{Countries which Allow Dual Citizenship}

\textsuperscript{4} Crimes of the Community - Honour-based violence in the UK by James Brandon and Salam Hafez 2008 Centre for Social Cohesion
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<tr>
<th>Austria*</th>
<th>Denmark</th>
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<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<td>Iceland</td>
<td>Lithuania*</td>
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<td>Belgium</td>
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<td>Iran</td>
<td>Macedonia</td>
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¹ Generally not allowed; Persons retain their former citizenship only if they apply for permission prior to taking out another citizenship, otherwise citizenship is generally lost.

² The government of Pakistan now recognises and allows its citizens to also hold citizenships of 16 countries, including Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Iceland, New Zealand, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and others.

³ Only under limited circumstances⁵

⁵ Henley & Partners Holdings Ltd
4. Legislation

The United Kingdom is often said to be a country without a written constitution, this is not strictly true. Although there is no single codifying document, such as the United States or France have, more than half of the UK’s constitution is written down, mainly in statutes and case law. Other aspects of the constitution are found in non-binding conventions, parliamentary rules, and the royal prerogative. These various sources make it difficult to pinpoint specifics of the constitution, but on the other hand allow for the constitution to be easily amended, giving it a flexible nature. Traditionally, the UK constitution is said to be founded on two principles: the doctrine of parliamentary supremacy and the rule of law. EU law and international treaties may also contribute to the UK’s constitution.⁶

CEDAW - The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is the international human rights treaty that focuses specifically on equality between women and men in all areas of life. It is often referred to as the ‘women’s bill of rights’. The UK ratified CEDAW in 1986. By ratifying the treaty, the UK is committed to taking steps to end discrimination against women in all forms. CEDAW provides the basis for making equality between women and men a reality in areas such as education, employment, participation in political and public life, access to health care services, and marriage and family relations.

In July 2013, the Committee raised concerns about many issues related to the implementation of this treaty in the UK. Their recommendations included:

➢ ensuring that women can access courts effectively

⁶ http://www.inbrief.co.uk/legal-system/british-constitution/
➢ ratifying the Istanbul Convention (a Council of Europe Convention combating violence against women)
➢ making forced marriage a criminal offence
➢ adopting a comprehensive national action plan to tackle trafficking in women and girls
➢ improving mental health care in all prisons, and
➢ taking steps to end occupational segregation (the concentration of men and women in certain jobs, or in certain levels of job) and reducing the gender pay gap.  

ICERD - The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) is an international treaty adopted in 1965 by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly.

ICERD covers the rights of all people to enjoy civil, political, economic and social rights, without discrimination on grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. The UK ratified ICERD in 1969. In August 2016, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination published its concluding observations. Issues raised by the committee included:

➢ A worrying rise hate crime since the EU referendum
➢ Employment gaps and the challenge of access to justice against the cuts in legal aid for employment cases.
➢ Concerns about racist bullying in schools
➢ The presence of institutional racism in the criminal justice system
➢ The continued use of immigration detention without a time limited and that children continue to be held in immigration detention facilities

The UK has also signed and ratified additional international instruments, including International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), International Convention Against Torture (CAT), International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), and the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Istanbul Convention - In June 2012, the UK government signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, known as the Istanbul Convention, but years later it still has yet to ratify the convention, which

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would bring into legal force measures, among others, requiring the UK to protect from and prevent violence against women, and to prosecute perpetrators who are nationals or resident in the UK - wherever they commit the act of violence.  

In the past the government has blamed the delay in ratification on the requirement to make all aspects of the convention compatible with UK law, but many of the major obstacles involved, such as the criminalisation of forced marriage and coercive control, have already been overcome. Yet the UK continues to trail behind 22 states which have ratified the Convention, including Romania, Serbia, France and Spain.

**The status of women in UK Law**

There are both civil and criminal remedies for victims of domestic violence: -

**Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015** came into force in December 2015 and criminalises patterns of coercive or controlling behaviour where they are perpetrated against an intimate partner or family member. A number of other criminal offences can apply to cases of domestic violence - these can range from murder, rape and manslaughter through to assault and threatening behaviour.

Civil measures include non-molestation orders, occupation orders and domestic violence protection orders (which can mean that suspected perpetrators have to leave their houses).

**The Protection from Harassment Act 1997** (as amended) provides both civil and criminal remedies. These include non-harassment and restraining orders.

In March 2016, the Home Office published its 2016-20 strategy to end violence against women and girls. This includes £80 million of dedicated funding to provide core support for refuges and other accommodation-based services, rape support centres and national

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8 Domestic violence in England and Wales, House of Commons briefing paper, May 2016, Woodhouse and Dempsey
helplines. From April 2017, a new Violence Against Women and Girls Service Transformation Fund will support local domestic abuse service provision.

**The UK Equality Act 2010** - a new Equality Act that aimed to bring together a range of previously separate pieces of legislation into a single act that would protect the rights of individuals, and advance equality of opportunity for all. This improved protection for women in a number of ways including:

- allowing for Positive Action in recruitment and promotion, which gives greater scope to address deficits in the workforce
- strengthening the powers of employment tribunals
- strengthening the protection for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers
- banning discrimination in private members’ clubs

**Sex and Gender Legislation** - within the UK legislation exists to protect both women and men in the following situations:

- Discrimination against an individual with regards to their marital status
- Gender reassignment
- The right for both sexes to have equal pay
- Immediate, short term dependent care leave
- Pensions equality
- Maternity and parental leave
- Paternity and adoption leave

*Please note, separate legislation exists in Northern Ireland*

The new Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations 2005 came into force in October 2005. The main changes are as follows:

- a new definition of indirect sex discrimination in employment matters and vocational training
- new provisions prohibiting harassment of a sexual nature or on the grounds of sex
- a provision specifically stating that less favourable treatment of women on grounds of pregnancy or maternity leave is unlawful sex discrimination
➢ the extension of SDA protection to people who work overseas for a British employer
➢ clarification of the responsibilities of those who provide vocational training and extension of the protection to cover vocational guidance and unpaid practical work experience
➢ introduction of an 8 week response time by the employer to a statutory questionnaire
➢ a change to the current exception in the SDA that allowed an employer to refuse to offer a particular job to someone planning or undergoing gender reassignment

The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 - FGM has been a specific criminal offence in the UK since 1985 when the (UK-wide) Prohibition of Female Circumcision Act (“the 1985 Act”) was passed. The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (“the 2003 Act”) replaced the 1985 Act in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It modernised the offence of FGM and the offence of assisting a girl to carry out FGM on herself while also creating extra-territorial offences to deter people from taking girls abroad for mutilation. To reflect the serious harm caused, the 2003 Act increased the maximum penalty for any of the FGM offences from five to 14 years’ imprisonment.

To date no-one has been convicted of FGM in England and Wales. In July 2014, the UK Government and UNICEF hosted the first Girl Summit, aimed at mobilising domestic and international efforts to end FGM. The Government made a number of commitments for new legislation to tackle FGM.

Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 - The Act came into force on 25 November 2008. It makes provision for the family courts to make a Forced Marriage Protection Order to prevent a forced marriage from occurring or to offer protective measures when a forced marriage has already taken place. The court’s powers are quite wide and orders may contain prohibitions, restrictions or requirements or such other terms as the court thinks appropriate to stop or change the behaviour or conduct of those who would force the victim into marriage.

➢ Examples of the types of orders the court might make are:

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9 Taken from the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU) web site

10 www.gov.uk
➢ to prevent a forced marriage from occurring;
➢ to hand over all passports (where there is dual nationality) and birth certificates and not to apply for a new passport;
➢ to stop intimidation and violence;
➢ to reveal the whereabouts of a person;
➢ to stop someone from being taken abroad; and
➢ to facilitate or enable a person to return to the UK within a given time period.

Orders may also be made against other people, not named as respondents in the application, recognising the complexity of the issues and the involvement of the wider community and the numbers of people who might be involved.

The court may add a power of arrest where violence is threatened or used or where there is a risk of significant harm, either to the intended victim or to someone else in connection with the intended marriage and the court considers that there will be inadequate protection without it. Breach of an order made under the Act is not a criminal offence, but the respondent may be arrested if the police believe there is reasonable cause to suspect there is a breach of the order. Breach is dealt with as contempt of court and the courts will have the full range of sanctions available to them, including imprisonment.

Under the Act, the following three categories of person can make an application for a Forced Marriage Protection Order:

➢ a victim;
➢ anyone can apply for an order on behalf of a victim, as long as they obtain the court’s permission to make an application; and
➢ a relevant third party, who can make an application on behalf of a victim but does not need to seek leave of the court.

**The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014** - makes it a criminal offence to force someone to marry This includes:
➢ Taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the forced marriage takes place)
➢ Marrying someone who lacks the mental capacity to consent to the marriage (whether they’re pressured to or not)
➢ Breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order is also a criminal offence

The civil remedy of obtaining a Forced Marriage Protection Order through the family courts will continue to exist alongside the new criminal offence, so victims can choose how they wish to be assisted

Forcing someone to marry can result in a sentence of up to 7 years in prison

Disobeying a Forced Marriage Protection Order can result in a sentence of up to 5 years in prison. 11


The Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) is the key institution involved in the promotion and practical implementation of gender equality issues. The main functions of the Equal Opportunities Commission are to:

➢ set the gender equality agenda through campaigns and promotion of good practice
➢ investigate into institutions where gender inequalities exist
➢ commission and publish research into gender equality issues
➢ take landmark cases under the Equal Pay Act and Sex Discrimination Act (through employment tribunals).

11 Ministry of Justice Forced Marriage Civil Protection Act 2007
The Commission is independent from the government, however, it is responsible to the Minister for Equality. There are 15 independent Commissioners (12 women and 3 men) plus nominated Chair and Chief Executive. Commissioners have as a team to be representative of all strands of UK society, e.g. private sector, public sector, ethnic minorities, disabled people.

**The Women and Equality Unit (WEU)** is headed by the Minister for Equality and responsible for promoting and realising the benefits of diversity in the economy and more widely. This includes taking forward proposals on civil partnerships and the future of UK equality bodies. WEU develops policies relating to gender equality and ensure that works on equality across government is co-ordinated. WEU works with colleagues, both inside and outside government, to bring about measurable improvements in the position of women and men, and to promote equality for all – which benefit society generally.

**The Women’s National Commission** (WNC) is one of the most important NGO’s working nationally and internationally on gender equality issues. Established in 1969, the Women’s National Commission is the official and independent advisory body giving the views of women to the government of the United Kingdom. It is an umbrella organisation representing women and women’s organisations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales to ensure women’s views are taken into account by the government and are heard in public debate.  

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12 https://www.gender-equality.webinfo.lt/results/uk.htm
5. The status of minority women in UK law

In the UK, there are religious institutions that interpret, apply and enforce some aspects of religious law. Courts of the Church of England are treated as part of the state legal system. Jews, Muslims and Catholics have established religious councils that deal with civil disputes but these are not recognised by state law. Any person who commits a criminal offence is liable to be prosecuted for that offence when it is in the public interests to do so, irrespective of the norms of religious law or the decision of a religious council. In some civil matters, individual members of religious communities have the option of voluntarily following the decisions of their own community based institutions. These decisions are subject to state law and they cannot be automatically enforced through the state legal system.

Minority legal orders have become a controversial topic in recent years, in the UK. Archbishop Rowan Williams’ statement in February 2008 that some religious communities such as British Muslims could share jurisdiction with state law has been a catalyst for subsequent public debates. Jews, Muslims and Catholics have established religious councils that deal with civil disputes but these are not recognised by state law.13

Muslim women in the UK

Muslim women living in industrialised countries are at risk of what is known as ‘multiple discrimination’, because they are women, and belong to religious minorities and often also ethnic minorities. In addition to the risk of discrimination on each issue separately, they are also open to discrimination from all of them at the same time. Muslim women can also experience discrimination that includes more than one of their identities in ways that produce an entirely new form of discrimination. Muslim women are at high risk of specific forms violence, but attempts to understand and address this gender-based violence are often filtered through the lens of “Muslimness” by policy-makers, the media and public opinion. One result of this is that the main-stream only hears about violence against Muslim women that

13 http://www.britac.ac.uk
can be associated with being Muslim, such as forced marriages and so-called “honour crimes”. Another result is that public discourse on these forms of violence blames and demonises Muslim communities, suggesting that Muslim women are at risk of these forms of violence because of ‘backward cultures. Thus, Muslim women remain at risk of those kinds of violence that are painted as “cultural”, and are encouraged to believe that the government and the British legal system will not or cannot help them.\textsuperscript{14}

Sharia, or Muslim religious law, has been highly controversial in the UK. Interpretations of Sharia are associated in other countries with harsh penalties unknown in the UK, and campaigners and politicians worry that Muslim women are discriminated against when family disputes are resolved under Sharia. There are several different councils and tribunals dealing with Sharia principles around the UK, however, they aren't courts of law. Most are Sharia “councils” set up to make decisions on purely religious matters, although there are some bodies that mix Sharia principles with legally binding arbitration, but none can overrule the regular courts.

Sharia councils are known to offer rulings on issues such as marriage and divorce, but often fail to inform women that getting married according to their religion doesn't necessarily mean they are married in the eyes of the state. Equally, the paperwork required for a civil divorce may not be recognised by their religion. For this reason, many Sharia councils exist to issue Islamic divorce certificates, and give advice on other aspects of religious law, and are often attached to mosques.

Sharia councils have become fairly entrenched in the UK, however there is still a great deal of controversy surrounding their existence and practice. Arguments in favour suggest that generally Sharia councils are supportive of a woman who has been a victim of domestic violence, and give them a refuge where they can build a new life. A female Islamic law specialist, agrees that Sharia councils can help women by entitling them to divorce when their husband refuses and giving them financial rights: “A woman can keep all her properties, her earnings, and even her own name whereas the husband cannot claim these. “She says that discrimination against women usually happens also because eighty per cent of Muslim marriages are not registered.

\textsuperscript{14} http://minorityrights.org
Arguments against having Sharia courts in Britain suggest that it is a human rights scandal, and under their laws a woman’s testimony is worth half of a man’s. Maryam Namazie spokesperson for “One Law for All” says: “A man can have four wives and divorce his wife by simple repudiation, whereas a woman has limited rights to divorce; child custody reverts to the father at a pre-set age, even if the father is abusive; and marital rape is not considered a crime.”

The women’s rights activist, Gita Sahgal, criticises Sharia courts also called Sharia councils, describing them as businesses that charge money to deal with women’s’ pain.\(^\text{15}\) IKWRO, the Iranian Kurdish Women’s Rights Organisation, has evidence of both direct and indirect discrimination against women by bodies which offer Islamic divorce services. Such discrimination is in breach of the Equality Act 2010. IKWRO has also identified conflicts with the Sex Discrimination Act 1975, the Children Act 1989 and the Human Rights Act 1998. They are also concerned that by allowing for the application of Sharia Law within this country, the UK may be in breach of its obligations under Article 16 of the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW), which requires signatories to take all necessary steps to end discrimination against women and girls in relation to marriage and family life.\(^\text{16}\)

**Jewish women in the UK**

A Jewish court has operated in some form or another in the UK since 1290. Like Sharia, Talmudic jurisprudence has its own practices for marriage, divorce and other aspects of communal life – but unlike Sharia, the Beth Din operates with relatively little criticism from the British authorities.

Unlike Sharia, Jewish marriages in Britain also include a civil ceremony (a signing of the register) – meaning British Jews only need to have one service. Muslim marriages, on the other hand, are totally separate from civil ceremonies. As many as 30% of British Muslims only have a religious marriage and therefore have to rely exclusively on Sharia courts when seeking divorce.


\(^{16}\) [ikwro.org.uk](http://ikwro.org.uk)
Like Sharia, Talmudic law has faced criticism for inequality towards the sexes. When a Jewish couple want to get divorced, a woman must obtain a "get" from her husband. If he refuses, the divorce cannot go ahead and there is no way for the Beth Din to compel him to do so. This has resulted in the phenomenon of "chained women", unable to remarry without consent from their estranged partner. Chief registrar of London’s Beth Din, David Frei, is unapologetic about the issue that this creates for some Jewish women, arguing that when Jews have a religious marriage, they are accepting the rules – unequal or not. If they are not happy with the system, they can go to other less conservative branches of the Beth Din run by the Reformed or Liberal Jewish movements. Or they can have a civil ceremony – and the same goes for divorce.17

**Hindu women in the UK**

There are about 800,000 Hindus living in Britain today, most are of Gujarati origin (70%), and a significant number from Punjab (15%). Others are from Bengal, South India, Shri Lanka, Guyana, Fiji, Mauritius, and parts of Africa. There is evidence that many young Hindus have integrated well and developed high degrees of social and cultural competence in a pluralistic society, and the Hindu diaspora in Britain appears to be flourishing. Members are well established in professional fields – law, media, medicine, engineering, and accounting – and in many branches of business. Hindu students often top the charts in academic achievement.

Hindu sacred texts often present diverse and conflicting views on the role and position of women, from warriors, leaders, and goddesses, to obedient daughter, wife, and mother.

Hindu religious marriages are not recognised in the UK, and must be accompanied with a registered marriage for it to have legal standing. Marriages are often arranged by family or community elders, and take into consideration social standing and caste. Caste plays a big role in India, however in the UK this is relaxing and although inter-caste marriages are not generally approved of, there is evidence of grudging acceptance. There is little verification of the practice of dowry in the UK, although the practice is still in existence in India, despite a change in the law. Dowry or Dahej is the payment in cash, jewellery, and goods, by the bride’s family to the bridegroom’s family along with the giving away of the bride (called Kanyadaan). Kanyadanam is an important part of Hindu marital rites. Kanya means daughter, and dana means gift.

17 http://www.ibtimes.co.uk
Marriage is considered as a sacrament in Hinduism and not a social contract, unlike Christianity or Islam. However, there is recognition that marriages can and do break down, and although it is seen as dishonourable for a divorce to take place, especially for the woman, it is an accepted fact for Hindus in the UK, albeit still a desperate last resort. Divorced women will often be shunned by family and friends, and may find it difficult to re-marry.

The Hindu tradition of Sati, where a recently widowed woman commits suicide on her husband's funeral pyre, has been outlawed in India since 1829. There is little evidence to suggest that this takes place in the UK.

**Sikh women in the UK**

Most of Britain's Sikhs have their origins in immigration either from the Punjab in Northwest India in the 1950s and 60s, or from East Africa slightly later. According to the 2011 England census there are around 420,196 Sikhs living in England alone, with small communities in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

When a baby girl is born within the Sikh community, it is often the child’s mother and aunts who are the first to say, “never mind, maybe next time”. Within Punjabi culture, girls are often brought up as inferior to boys and are sometimes treated like commodities. Many girls are emotionally or physically forced into marriage. Ultimately, some girls have appalling crimes committed against them. Some are killed.

Marriage is a very important part of Sikhism. Some marriages are still arranged by the families of the bride and groom, but both individuals have the right not to marry the partner chosen for them. Marriage is seen as a commitment before Waheguru and the purpose is so the individual has companionship on their spiritual path, rather than sexual pleasure.

A marriage also brings two families together and Sikhs believe that it is important that the families get on. This is one of the reasons why Sikhs encourage their children to marry other Sikhs. There is an opposition to interfaith marriages, and attempts to disrupt such marriages at Sikh gurdwaras have become worryingly commonplace across Britain. In July 2013, a Sikh woman and her Christian husband in Swindon were locked out of their own wedding by 40 protesters.
Sikh women have equal rights to men because Waheguru is neither male nor female, therefore Sikh women can occupy senior religious or spiritual positions. A woman is free to choose her position in the Sikh community and, particularly in the West, more Sikh women now choose to follow a career or get a university education, however this does not mean that the Sikh community in the UK have reached a desired level of gender equality. According to the British Sikh Report 2013, 43% of British Sikh females have experienced gender discrimination, as opposed to 14% of British Sikh males, 71% of British Sikh females who experienced gender discrimination did so within their extended family, and 55% of British Sikh females who experienced gender discrimination did so at their Gurdwara.  

The Sikh community largely follow the Punjabi culture which is very similar to the culture in other South Asian countries such as Pakistan. Sikh women and girls face the same levels of “honour” related abuse in the UK as their Muslim counterparts and peers.

**Gypsy, Traveller, and Roma women in the UK**

Negative attitudes towards Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities were still widely held in the UK; according to the Spring 2014 Global Attitudes survey, 50% of people in Britain reported having an unfavourable view of Roma. Discrimination and harassment of Gypsies, Roma and Travellers is still common across Britain, not only on the part of the general public but also by the police and other authorities. Evidence from a study carried out in Devon found that some people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities had hidden their ethnic identity in order to access employment and services, and others said their children were bullied at school and that they had been refused entry to pubs and cinemas.

Many Gypsy and Traveller women in the UK, are victims of domestic violence, and although there is no conclusive evidence about the prevalence of this abuse, a study in Wrexham, cited in a paper by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2007, found that 61% of married English Gypsy women and 81% of Irish Travellers had experienced domestic abuse.

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18 [http://www.britishsikhreport.org](http://www.britishsikhreport.org)
19 Pew Research Centre, 2014
20 Lane, Spenoer and Jones, 2014
21 Devon and Cornwall Police, 2013
A significant number of those women who had reported the abuse appeared to have suffered more severe and sustained violence than those within mainstream communities.\(^{22}\)

Domestic violence is just one of the issues faced by Gypsy, Traveller, and Roma women. The welfare needs of the women and girls of this community are vast. The women are three times more likely to miscarry or have a still-born child compared to the rest of the population, mainly, it is thought, as a result of reluctance to undergo routine gynaecological care, and infections linked to poor sanitation and lack of clean water. The rate of suicides among Traveller women is significantly higher than in the general population, and life expectancy is low for women and men, with one third of Travellers dying before the age of 59. And as many Traveller girls are taken out of education prior to secondary school to prevent them mixing with boys from other cultures, illiteracy rates are high.

When Traveller girls are growing up, they are only allowed to go out with other family members, and once married, the husband rules the roost. The men rarely allow a woman out with her friends. There is concern on the part of specialist refuge and support services such as Solas Anois (Gaelic for Comfort Now) that the issues and problems faced by women and girls, such as lack of education, forced and early marriage, and abuse within the home, are not being taken seriously.

**Refugee Women in the UK**

A lack of gender sensitivity in the asylum procedure and evidence assessment of asylum claims has further restricted women’s access to protection in the UK. Although a number of improvements have been made to improve women’s experience of the asylum system, women are not always able to access female interviewers and interpreters; they are still wrongly detained during the process; they continue to suffer from decision-makers lacking the skills to assess gender issues and from the poor quality of information used about women’s situations in their countries of origin.

The UK’s criminal courts have recognised that the trauma of rape can cause feelings of shame and guilt which might inhibit a woman from going to the police. However, an asylum seeker is obliged to immediately tell a stranger, in the form of a UKBA representative, of any

\(^{22}\) the Guardian.com
violence, including sexual violence that might form the basis of her asylum claim. If she does not, she risks being routed into the detained fast track and / or having her credibility questioned at a later stage.

Problems with the quality of decision making on asylum claims are compounded by a lack of high quality legal advice. Without good legal representation, women struggle to get their protection needs recognised and will find themselves at risk of destitution or return.

The Refugee Council believes that women asylum seekers should be able to access women representatives with relevant expertise in gender violence. Further, there is a need for representatives trained specifically in advocating for survivors of sexual violence as establishing trust, along with confidentiality, is vital in assuring that these women are able to reveal the complete basis of their asylum claims. Without these, factors such as fear, trauma, or shame may inhibit their ability to express the extent of the violent experiences and persecution they have experienced or fear.\(^\text{23}\)

\(^{23}\) https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/assets/0001/5837/Briefing_-_experiences_of_refugee_women_in_the_UK.pdf
6. Asylum procedures in UK

The UK asylum system is strictly controlled and complex. It is very difficult to get asylum. The decision-making process is extremely tough and many people’s claims are rejected.

Initial Home Office decision-making remains poor. In 2015, the courts overturned Home Office decisions in 38% of asylum appeals. (Home Office asylum statistics November 2015)

There are particular problems with decisions on women’s claims. Women who turn to the courts for help when their asylum claims are refused are more likely to have their protection needs recognised by the courts. Women state that it is in part because the asylum system can feel very hostile and it is difficult for them to give full details of the violence they have experienced.

In 2015, 14,832 asylum seekers had been locked up in detention centres. Shamefully, around half of all asylum seekers find themselves detained during the asylum process. Despite the Government’s 2010 pledge to end child detention for immigration purposes, 154 children were imprisoned during this time.

Since 2005 most people recognised as refugees are only given permission to stay in the UK for five years. This makes it difficult for them to make decisions about their future, to find work and make definite plans for their life in the UK.

There are three sources of law that determine who is entitled to protection in the UK:

➢ the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees 1951 (the ‘Refugee Convention’ or simply ‘the Convention’);
➢ the European Convention on Human Rights 1950 (ECHR); and

Contrary to popular opinion, asylum seekers do not come to the UK to claim benefits. In fact, most know nothing about welfare benefits before they arrive and had no expectation that they would receive financial support. Most asylum seekers are living in poverty and experience poor health and hunger. Many families are not able to pay for the basics such as clothing, powdered milk and nappies.

Almost all asylum seekers are not allowed to work and are forced to rely on state support – this can be as little as £5 a day to live on, neither do they jump the queue for council housing. Asylum seekers cannot choose where they live, the accommodation allocated to them is not paid for by the local council. It is nearly always “hard to let” properties, where other people do not want to live.

Asylum seeking women who are destitute are vulnerable to violence in the UK. More than a fifth of the women accessing our therapeutic services had experienced sexual violence in this country.

Refugees have the benefit of the 1951 Refugee Convention, which is already effectively part of UK law. The Convention means that they cannot normally be returned to a country where they fear persecution for certain specified reasons. UK courts have been active in ensuring that refugees are not returned to a country where they would be at risk of persecution, or which might return them to another unsafe country.

Refugees and asylum-seekers now have the additional protection of Article 3 of the ECHR, which prohibits torture, and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In practice,

24 Refugee Council, Chance or Choice? Understanding why asylum seekers come to the UK, 2010
25 The Children’s Society Briefing highlighting the gap between asylum support and mainstream benefits, 2012
26 Refugee Council, The experiences of refugee women in the UK, 2012
refugees and asylum-seekers will not find it too difficult to secure legal aid to fund challenges, but their dispersal might make finding a competent legal representative difficult, since there are few such in many areas outside of London. There are two characteristics of Article 3 which may assist asylum-seekers: its breadth; and its absolute nature.

Unlike the 1951 Convention, Article 3 does not require anyone to demonstrate why they face the prohibited treatment. It does not have to be for a political or religious reason; it does not have to be part of state policy, or carried out with state complicity. Those who face a real threat of violence or rape, as a result of their countries being devastated by civil war, will not be returnable. There will, in other words, be an objective standard of humanity against which removal must be measured.

In practice, many of the groups mentioned above are not at present forced to leave the UK; but they rely upon being given "exceptional leave to remain" outside immigration rules. This is a discretionary, and often unclear, policy, and cannot be challenged at appeal. However, when the Human Rights Act is in effect, the Home Office must consider explicitly whether there is an Article 3 risk, and the appellate authorities will be able to overturn refusals to grant protection on Article 3 grounds. This will have the effect of bringing these policies out into the open, and exposing them to direct challenge.

Second, there are no exceptions to the protection offered by Article 3. People can be refused refugee status, or deported, if they are held to be threats to national security, or if they have committed criminal offences. Article 3 does not permit any such exemptions. Once the risk of Article 3 mistreatment has been established, it is an absolute bar to return.
However, precisely because of its absolute nature, Article 3 has a high threshold. It is not enough to establish that someone will be treated unfairly or unjustly, or that they are likely to encounter living conditions or health or education standards that are significantly worse than those in the UK. The situation that they would face must be shown to be inhuman or degrading, not simply unwelcome or harsh, and they must be able to identify a specific, rather than a general, threat. UK courts, like the Strasbourg court, are unlikely to want the ECHR to provide a ban on returning anyone simply because they have come from a less developed, or more unstable, country.

The other ECHR article that may come into play is Article 8, the right to private and family life. So far, it has had a limited application in immigration and asylum. It does not automatically allow entry to the relatives of those already in the UK, or prevent the deportation of those who have established family ties while in the country, but there are circumstances in which it can be of assistance. If a family can only be reunited in this country, because it is unsafe for one family member to return to where the rest of the family is living, then Article 8 rights may be used to assist family reunion in the UK. This would be particularly important for asylum-seekers who are given exceptional leave to remain, rather than full refugee status, and who cannot immediately and automatically be joined by their families.

If an asylum-seeker has put down family roots in the UK while the application has been considered, and particularly if children are born in the country to a mixed-nationality couple, it may not be feasible for them all to return to the asylum-seeker’s country. The longer the family has been in the UK, the more likely it is that their rights to private life would be breached by forcing them to leave. Similarly, a child who is ill, or at a critical stage in education, would face a breach to private-life rights if forced to leave with his or her parents.

However, Article 8, unlike Article 3, is not an absolute right. Family and private life can be interfered with for immigration reasons, but only if it is necessary to do so, and if the degree of interference is proportional to the need. So, the stronger the family’s ties with the UK, the harder it will be to justify breaking those ties, in particular if this would have particularly detrimental consequences. But each case must be looked at individually, to see where the balance lies, and what the degree of harm would be in removal.
Article 8 also includes the ability to live a normal life, and to have your “physical integrity” protected (for example, freedom from undue threats to your health or safety). This need not reach the degree of severity required under Article 3. So, in the context of attempted mass returns, for example of Kosovan Albanians, there may be individuals who are particularly vulnerable, such as single mothers without support, and who may be able to show that it would be a breach of their Article 8 rights to private and family life to expect them to carry out a normal life under such conditions. In these cases, too, it will be a question of balancing the consequences of removal against the need to enforce immigration control, unless the ill-treatment that they face is so severe that it would amount to an Article 3 breach, in which case they cannot be returned.

The other ECHR right that is frequently forgotten, but which is very important, is the non-discrimination right under Article 14. It is not a free-standing right, as it must be discrimination that relates to the exercise of one of the other ECHR rights. It is very broad in its scope, as it can be used to challenge discrimination on any grounds, even those not specifically listed. In relation to asylum-seekers, it could be used to challenge differential return policies, which impacted on Article 8 rights, in relation to different ethnic or national groups, if that difference could not be objectively justified.27

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7. UN Women – Global Database On Violence Against Women – United Kingdom And Northern Ireland
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy/Strategy</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Focus Area</th>
<th>Date/Details</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Website/Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Human Trafficking Strategy</strong></td>
<td>2011-2013</td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
<td>19 July 2011</td>
<td>The Human Trafficking Strategy (2011) was issued on 19 July 2011. The Strategy focuses on four key areas: Improved victim care arrangements; Enhanced ability to act early, before the harm has reached the UK; Smarter multi-agency action at the border; and Better coordination of our law enforcement efforts within the UK. For more information on the work of the Government on the issue of trafficking,</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender Equality Bill</strong></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
<td>10 October 2011</td>
<td>The Gender Equality Bill (2011) of the Cayman Islands was signed on 10 October 2011 and it will be enforced as law in January 2012. The bill contains provisions on sexual harassment.</td>
<td>Website of the Government of the Cayman Islands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POLICE NATIONAL DATABASE</strong></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Other research and statistical data</td>
<td>22 June 2011</td>
<td>The Police National Database was launched on 22 June 2011. The Police National Database (PND) is a national system that allows users direct access to local force intelligence and other information. The information held on the PND is not new information but comes from existing force systems that support force intelligence, crime, domestic abuse, child abuse and custody business areas.</td>
<td>Website of the National Policing Improvement Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Co-Ordinated Action against Domestic Abuse</strong></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Intimate partner violence</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) is a national charity supporting a strong multi-agency response to domestic abuse. Its work focuses on saving lives and saving public money. CAADA provides practical tools, training, guidance, quality assurance, policy and data insight to support professionals and organisations working with domestic abuse victims. The aim is to protect the highest risk victims and their children - those at risk of murder or serious harm.</td>
<td>Website of CAADA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Action Plan: Call an End to Violence against Women and Girls</strong></td>
<td>2011-2015</td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
<td>2011-2015</td>
<td>The Action Plan: Call an End to Violence against Women and Girls (2011-2015) was adopted in March 2011. The Action Plan contains measures for central government to: prevent violence from happening by challenging the attitudes and behaviours which foster it and intervening early where possible to prevent it; provide adequate levels of support where violence does occur; work in partnership to obtain the best outcome for victims and their families; take action to reduce the risk to women and girls who are victims of these crimes and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice. Prevention is at the heart of the government’s approach and it is focusing on awareness raising, early identification and early intervention.</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Domestic Violence Protection Orders</strong></td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Police Protocols and guidelines</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) are provided for in the Chapter on domestic violence of the Crime and Security Act (2010). From 30 June 2011 to 30 June 2012, DVPOs will be piloted for one year in three police force areas - West Mercia, Wiltshire and Greater Manchester Police. The government is strengthening the protection available to victims by enabling the police to apply for a DVPO which, if made by the Magistrates Court, may require the alleged perpetrator to not contact the victim or return to the victim's address for a minimum of 14 days and maximum of 28 days.</td>
<td>Domestic Violence Protection Orders</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women</strong></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Prevention Awareness-raising Campaigns</td>
<td>Stalking On 25 November 2010, to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the coalition-government launched a paper outlining their ambition and guiding principles to tackle violence against women and girls.</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation</strong></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Violence against women Regulations, Monitoring and Evaluation Policies</td>
<td>Female genital mutilation The Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM/C) provide information on: identifying when a girl (including an unborn girl) or young woman may be at risk of being subjected to FGM and responding appropriately to protect them; identifying when a girl or young woman has been subjected to FGM and responding appropriately to support them; and measures that can be implemented to prevent and ultimately eradicate the practice of FGM</td>
<td>Guidelines on Female Genital Mutilation</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office; Website of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>National Stalking Helpline</strong></td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Social services Hotline Helpline</td>
<td>Stalking The National stalking helpline was launched in April 2010. It is funded by the Home Office, the Zochonis Trust and another private trust. The number of the helpline is: 0300 636 0300. The call costs the same amount as a standard landline call to any national number. For more information,<a href="http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/">http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/</a> see the website of the National stalking helpline.</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office; Website of the national stalking helpline</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls</td>
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<td>The new National Action Plan (NAP) on the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2010-2013) was adopted in November 2010, and then revised in February 2012. The aims of the NAP are as follows:</td>
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<td>To provide a clear framework to guide the UK Government’s work on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) at the national, bilateral and multilateral levels and to make the plan more accessible to outside audiences;</td>
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<td>To maximise the impact of UK efforts by focusing on where the UK Government can exert the most influence at a global level and by developing detailed plans on implementing UNSCR 1325 on the ground in priority conflict or post-conflict situations;</td>
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<td>To encourage cross-Government working on WPS by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), Department for International Development (DFID) and Ministry of Defence (MoD), and to link the plan with domestic gender strategies, particularly the Home Office-led strategy on tackling violence against women;</td>
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<td>To ensure that UK action covers the four UN pillars of UNSCR 1325 - Prevention, Protection, Participation and Relief and Recovery, and to reflect international developments;</td>
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<td>To set out a process to better report and monitor the government’s actions on an annual basis and be able to strengthen and ensure the NAP reflects new developments through adaptations made annually; and</td>
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<td>To work closely with Civil Society to continue to strengthen the plan through an annual review process.</td>
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The NAP makes commitments to further implementation of UNSCR 1325 in three main areas of activity: 1. The National Action sets out how the FCO, MoD and DFID will integrate WPS into the government’s conflict policy. The main commitments are: |

| Training Gender considerations will be incorporated into the government’s training on conflict in the FCO, DFID, Stabilisation Unit and MoD; |
| The government’s programmes to address conflict will consider the needs of women and girls. |

Operations: the government will work to mainstream gender considerations into core working practices (e.g. the deployment of Female Engagement Officers in support of UK battle groups, to improve military engagement with female Afghan civilians) 2. Bilateral Action sets out actions being taken on the ground in priority conflict or post-conflict countries, by means of individual country plans delivered by the government’s network of embassies and country offices. Country plans have been developed for three countries initially and the |
UK aims to increase this during the life of the NAP. Initial plans have been developed by Posts in:

- Afghanistan: Includes actions to support women’s civil society organisations, the influence of Afghan women in public life and to enhance their protection through support to legal reforms and SSR programmes.

- The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): Includes actions to improve protection of women protection through programmes that support reforms in security and legal services; increase the influence of women in public life and help survivors of sexual and gender-based violence.

- Nepal: Includes actions to support the Government’s attempts to strengthen implementation of UNSCR 1325, programmes to increase women’s participation in public life and assistance for survivors of sexual or gender-based violence.

3. Multilateral Action sets out how the government’s actions in multilateral and regional organisations such as the UN, EU and NATO will strengthen implementation of UNSCR 1325 at a global level. The main commitments are:

   - To provide political support, through the UN Security Council for measures to enhance the UN’s institutional approach to UNSCR 1325, including through UN peacekeeping mission mandates, its ability to measure progress and ensuring a prominent profile for UNSCR 1325 in the Security Council.

   - To provide political support for measures to incorporate UNSCR 1325 into the political and operational activities of the EU and NATO.

Equality Strategy 2010-2015

The Equality Strategy (2010-2015) was adopted in December 2010. It sets out the Government’s new approach to tackling inequality. It also contains information on how to tackle violence against women. Notably, it indicates that the economic cost of violence against women in the UK is estimated to be £37.6 billion annually. For more information on the Equality Strategy, [http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-strategy/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/equality-strategy/)

Department of Health 2010

The Department of Health is involved in dealing with violence against women and children.

Equality Strategy

Website of the Home Office

Department of Health

Website of the Department of Health
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crime and Security Act</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Domestic violence Protection Orders</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Crime and Security Act (2010) contains a whole Chapter on Domestic Violence (Sections 24 to 33). In particular, it provides for the issuance of Domestic Violence Protection Orders.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equality Act</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Legislation</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sexual harassment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Article 26 of the Equality Act (2010) reads as follows;</td>
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<tr>
<td>(1) A person (A) harasses another (B) if-</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) A engages in unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, and</td>
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<td>(b) the conduct has the purpose or effect of-</td>
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<td>(i) violating B's dignity, or</td>
<td></td>
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<td>(ii) creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) A also harasses B if-</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) A engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, and</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) the conduct has the purpose or effect referred to in subsection (1)(b).</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) A also harasses B if-</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) A or another person engages in unwanted conduct of a sexual nature or that is related to gender reassignment or sex,</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) the conduct has the purpose or effect referred to in subsection (1)(b), and</td>
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<tr>
<td>(c) because of B's rejection of or submission to the conduct, A treats B less favourably than A would treat B if B had not rejected or submitted to the conduct.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(4) In deciding whether conduct has the effect referred to in subsection (1)(b), each of the following must be taken into account-</td>
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<tr>
<td>(a) the perception of B;</td>
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<tr>
<td>(b) the other circumstances of the case;</td>
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<td>(c) whether it is reasonable for the conduct to have that effect.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) The relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee's Guide on Violence against Women: Crown Prosecution Office</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Education &gt; Non-formal education</td>
<td></td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
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<tr>
<td>The CPS Employee's Guide on Violence Against Women was published in March 2010. It includes practical guidance to assist those members of staff who are victims of stalking and harassment either in a domestic or non-domestic environment. It includes information to reduce any affected employee's risk by considering:</td>
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<td>their working arrangements;</td>
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<td>their communication needs;</td>
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<td>security arrangements;</td>
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<td>and information about concealing their identity.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Stern Review (Treatment of Rape Complaints)

- **2009 - 2010**
- **Monitoring and Evaluation > Policies, Monitoring and Evaluation > Services**
- **Sexual violence**

The Stern Review is an independent review which was conducted from November 2009 to March 2010 by Baroness Vivien Stern regarding the treatment of rape complaints by public authorities in England and Wales. Baroness Stern was invited to carry out this study by the Government Equalities Office and the Home Office. The Stern Review terms of reference are: to examine the response of the public authorities to rape complaints and examine how more victims can be encouraged to report; to explore ways in which the attrition rate in criminal cases can be reduced, and how to fairly increase the conviction rate; to identify how to increase victim and witness satisfaction, and confidence in the criminal justice system in addressing rape; to explore public and professional attitudes to rape and how they impact on outcomes; to utilise findings and information available from other relevant work, particularly the work on victims’ experience being led by Sara Payne and the Department of Health Taskforce led by Professor Sir George Alberti, avoiding unnecessary duplication; and to make recommendations, with particular reference to improving the implementation of current policies and procedures. The 23 recommendations made by the Stern review can be found from pp. 119 to 124. The Government gave its response to the Stern Review in March 2011. The Government made a precision that while the Stern Review focused on rape, many of the conclusions and recommendations have equal value in relation to other forms of sexual violence. The Government therefore often refers to rape and sexual violence throughout its response to indicate its intention that these improvements should apply not only to rape but to all forms of sexual violence. The Government structured its response into four key themes: understanding sexual violence; supporting victims; an effective criminal justice response; and accountability and governance.

### Strategy: Together We Can End Violence against Women and Girls

- **2009**
- **Policies > National strategy specific to violence against women**
- **Trafficking**

The main areas of the 2009 Strategy are as follows:

- **Protection** - delivering an effective criminal justice system: investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator programmes.

- **Provision** - helping women and girls to continue with their lives: Effective provision of services, advice and support; emergency and acute services; refuges and safe accommodation.

- **Prevention** - changing attitudes and preventing violence: Awareness-raising campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification/intervention and training.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crown Prosecution Office Policy for Prosecuting Cases of Rape</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>Justice &gt; Protocols and guidelines</th>
<th>Sexual violence The Policy statement explains the way the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) deals with cases in which an allegation of rape has been made. It gives advice on what the CPS does, how rape cases are prosecuted, and what victims can expect from the CPS. The document is particularly designed for those who support victims of rape, whether professionally or personally, although it may be of interest to victims, witnesses and the general public.</th>
<th>Website of the Crown Prosecution Office</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOJOURNER PROJECT</td>
<td>2009 - 2010</td>
<td>Institutional mechanisms</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls The Sojourner Project was a pilot scheme run by Eaves, a London-based charity, and funded by the Home Office, and was operational from Monday 30th November 2009 until the end of February 2010. Eaves worked in partnership with a range of other voluntary providers to co-ordinate support, accommodation and subsistence for women and their dependents throughout the country. The Sojourner Project was for women with no recourse to public funds, who entered the UK on a spousal or partner visa and are eligible to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) under the Domestic Violence Rule.</td>
<td>Website of the Home Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialized Police</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Police &gt; Protocols and guidelines</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls Several police forces in England and Wales operate a dedicated team approach to rape investigation. The Home Office is piloting this approach in Hampshire. All forces have specially trained officers to deal with rape and sexual assault cases. Virtually every force in the country has a dedicated domestic abuse unit. In addition, each police force has a nominated domestic violence champion who leads on violence against women related issues. These nominated individuals meet twice a year to exchange good practices and ensure a consistent approach to tackling violence against women.</td>
<td>Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guidelines: Support Women Who Have Been Affected by Violence and Abuse</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Justice &gt; Protocols and guidelines</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls The &quot;Supporting Women Who Have Been Affected by Violence and Abuse&quot; Guidelines were issued to women's prisons in January 2008. These Guidelines include a Directory of Projects of community agencies supporting women affected by violence.</td>
<td>Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist Prosecutors</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Justice &gt; Protocols and guidelines</td>
<td>Trafficking In 2007-08 the Crown Prosecution Service had over 800 specialist rape prosecutors. Specialists were trained in forced marriage and so-called honour crimes in four Areas for a pilot in 2007-2008; consideration is currently being given to selection of prosecutors for guidance and training nationally from 2009. All prosecutors were specifically trained on domestic violence and most specialist domestic violence courts ensure specific prosecutors deal with cases at these courts. Complex case unit prosecutors deal with trafficking.</td>
<td>Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Policing Improvement Agency</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Police &gt; Protocols and guidelines</td>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
<td>The National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) have produced (and are updating) guidance on the investigation of serious sexual offences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadshows to Raise Awareness of Honour-Based Violence</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Prevention &gt; Awareness-raising Campaigns</td>
<td>Other harmful practices</td>
<td>In the lead-up to the entry into force of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 on 25 November 2008, the Home Office launched a series of regional roadshows to raise awareness of honour-based violence across England and Wales. The evaluation from the roadshows will be used to identify and develop further actions and practical tools to assist victims and potential victims of honour-based violence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Counselors</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Health &gt; Training</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>The Mental Health Collaborative is now piloting routine enquiry of violence and abuse in all National Health Service mental health trusts, comprising rollout of one day abuse training and publication of Practice Guidance (due to be published early '09) outlining all requisite steps to embed violence and abuse in service delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Prosecutors</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Justice &gt; Training</td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
<td>All forty three Crown Prosecution Service Areas completed mandatory domestic violence training for all prosecutors and associate prosecutors (approx 4000) by November 2008. Training for prosecutors in 4 Areas for pilot dealing with forced marriage and so-called honour crimes took place in 2007 and future training is planned for selected prosecutors nationally from 2009. A mandatory training course is to be undertaken by all rape coordinators and specialist rape prosecutors (over 800) - completion by 2011. Training for complex case unit heads on trafficking was undertaken in 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training of Police</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Police &gt; Training</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>The responsibility for domestic abuse training is devolved to individual police forces. Training is currently being undertaken within individual police forces under the current modular system. However, the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) has engaged with the National Policing Improvement Agency (NPIA) in relation to an initiative to revise the modular training on topics such as honour-based violence, stalking and harassment, risk identification, assessment and management and the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004 (non-molestation and civil and criminal law interface). The NPIA has carried out an initial consultation period in relation to these revisions, and will undertake further consultations with the voluntary sector.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Programme</td>
<td>Programmes</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Perpetrators Programme</td>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
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</table>

The two services (HM Prison Service and the National Probation Service), which now form part of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), have developed and deliver three treatment programmes:

- the Healthy Relationship Programme,
- the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme (IDAP) and
- the Community Domestic Violence Programme (CDVP).

IDAP and CDVP are run in the community and the Healthy Relationships Programme is run in custody. The programmes have received accreditation from the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel. The programmes are designed for adult male domestic abuse offenders, the victims of whose offences are women.

IDAP and CDVP are the only domestic abuse programmes that can be used as a programme requirement of a community sentence or as a condition of a post-release licence. The programmes consist of the same infrastructure with inter-agency risk assessment and risk management, contact with the known victims and new partners of men on the programme, pro-active offender management, and core group work sessions with the offender. They provide the participants with the opportunity of learning and practising alternative forms of thinking and behaviour to ensure their level of risk of reoffending is reduced, this is alongside an exploration of wider societal attitudes and beliefs towards women.

The Government also provides funding for RESPECT to develop national standards for perpetrator programmes outside the criminal justice system. The main psychological treatment programmes in the United Kingdom are a suite of Sex Offender Treatment Programmes (SOTP), undertaken by offenders in prisons and on licence in the community. Treatment of sex offenders involves helping the offender confront their criminal behaviour, take responsibility for their actions and develop victim empathy. Not all offenders in prison currently undergo treatment. It also involves helping them learn to recognize and avoid risky situations where they are more likely to offend.

In addition to treatment programmes, an initiative known as ‘Circles of Support and Accountability’ (CSA) has been running as a pilot since 2001. CSA provide a group of 4 to 6 volunteers to act as a support network for socially isolated sex offenders in the community, particularly those with learning difficulties or personality disorders.

Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women
| Training of Healthcare Professionals | 2008 | Health > Training | Child early and forced marriage | The Department of Health (DH) has provided practical guidance and training to healthcare professionals working with service users who may have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. In addition, a number of regional 'Train the Trainer' workshops have taken place to impart domestic abuse training in order for senior practitioners to return to their localities to train midwives in improved practice in responding to domestic violence and abuse. The Department of Health has created a training DVD for health professionals on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Forced Marriage guidelines for health professionals were also produced in June 2007. The Department of Health has also funded the production of a 'Children and Domestic Violence toolkit', which will be published in spring 2009. The toolkit will provide guidance for frontline professional working with children and young people. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
| Training of Judges | 2008 | Justice > Training | Trafficking | A training programme on domestic violence was implemented across all jurisdictions and has now been integrated into all training for both judges and magistrates. There is continuous training for judges hearing cases of rape, prostitution, and people trafficking. Other supporting materials can be accessed via a private website, including guidance on forced marriage orders. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
| National "Honour Network" | 2008 | Institutional mechanisms | Other harmful practices | The Crown Prosecution Service, Association of Chief Police Officers and the Forced Marriage Unit launched the National "Honour Network" in April 2008 to provide support for victims and survivors of honour-based violence. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
| Funding For Services | 2008 | Budgets > Government allocation | Sexual violence | Grants of £75,000 ($114,000) were made to sexual violence umbrella groups, The Survivors Trust and Rape Crisis England and Wales, in 2007/08 and again in 2008/09. £1.25m ($1.9M) from the Victims Fund was allocated to 40 voluntary sector organisations providing services for victims of sexual violence and abuse in 2007/08 and again in 2008/09. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
| Funding for Helpline | 2008 | Social services > Hotline Helpline, Budgets Government allocation | Domestic violence Intimate partner violence | The Government funds a matrix of national help lines to support a range of victims/survivors, as well as perpetrators wanting to change their behaviour: the National 24 hour free phone help line (number: 0800 2000 247); Men's Advice Line and Enquiries for male victims; Broken Rainbow for LGBT victims; and RESPECT for perpetrator's wishing to change their behaviour. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
| Domestic Violence Virtual Unit | 2008 | Institutional mechanisms | Domestic violence Intimate partner violence | The Domestic Violence Virtual Unit is attended by cross-government domestic violence leads of nine Government Departments and meets on monthly basis to monitor progress on the National Domestic Violence Action Plan. | Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |

- To drive forward work on sexual violence, with a particular focus on improving the investigation and prosecution of rape and protecting children from sex offenders.
- To roll out the good practice we have developed in tackling domestic violence.
- To reduce street prostitution, human trafficking and all forms of sexual exploitation. | Action Plan for Tackling Violence |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crown Prosecution Service Data | 2008 | Administrative data > Justice | Sexual violence | The Crown Prosecution Service started collecting domestic violence data in 2005 and rape data in 2006. From April 2006 data was collected on domestic violence as part of a Hate Crime Indicator, with targets for performance. From April 2008 data is monitored quarterly on domestic violence, rape and sexual offences under a new violence against women indicator with set targets for performance. From 2002-2006 annual December domestic violence snapshots of data were published - providing one month of data.

In December 2008 CPS published its first Violence against Women Crime report detailing data from charge to conviction on domestic violence, rape and sexual offences in 2006-07 and 2007-08. Some data was also included on child abuse and pornography. Work is planned on monitoring wider VAW strands by 2011. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Independent Sexual Violence Advisers | 2008 | Social services > Psycho-social counselling, Budgets > Government allocation, Monitoring and Evaluation > Services | Sexual violence | The Home Office funds 36 Independent Sexual Violence Advisers who work within a multi-agency setting to provide a pro-active service to adult victims of sexual violence within and outside of the criminal justice system to:

- risk assess and help clients keep safe
- help clients access health and other services they require
- monitor and keep client informed of case progress
- provide support through the criminal justice system

Continuation grants of £20,000 ($30,000) were awarded to all 38 Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) projects participating in pilot project/evaluation in 2007/08 and to 36 in 2008/09. |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Inter-Ministerial Groups on Sexual and Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking</strong></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Institutional mechanisms</td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
<td>Progress on the Government’s various action plans covering violence against women is monitored by Inter-Ministerial Groups on sexual and domestic violence and human trafficking. These groups meet on a quarterly basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Independent Domestic Violence Advisers</strong></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Institutional mechanisms</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) are trained specialists who provide a service to victims who are at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members, with the aim of securing their safety and the safety of their children. Serving as a victim’s primary point of contact, IDVAs normally work with their clients from the point of crisis, to assess the level of risk, discuss the range of suitable options and develop safety plans. They are pro-active in implementing the plans, which address immediate safety, including practical steps to enable victims to protect themselves and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. IDVAs will represent their clients at the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and help implement safety plans which will include actions from the MARAC as well as sanctions and remedies available through the criminal and civil courts, housing options and services available through other organisations. IDVAs support and work over the short to medium-term to put victims on the path to long-term safety.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Housing Support Including Sanctuary Schemes and the Supporting People Programme</strong></td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Social services &gt; Longer term support Education Employment Housing and Financial</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>There are approximately 600 housing-related support services for women at risk of domestic violence across England, which support around 10,000 clients. There is a range of support for victims of domestic violence. Some victims will be accommodated in refuges, but Sanctuary Schemes and mainstream local authority accommodation may be an option for others, while some victims will pursue independent solutions with help and advice from support schemes as necessary. Housing Associations have around 3,200 units of accommodation for women at risk of domestic violence. In the period 2006/08 the Housing Corporation allocated £17m for 153 units in 17 schemes or refuges which will accommodate some 400 persons. A number of victims of domestic violence prefer to stay in their own homes when it is safe to do so and the perpetrator no longer lives in the accommodation. The Government has published guidance on Sanctuary Schemes for housing providers which sets out the measures which can enable victims and their children to remain in the family home. The Supporting People programme provides the main source of public funding for housing-related support in England. This programme is delivered at a local level and decisions on how much money is spent on services for those affected by domestic violence, or other services, are made by the top tier local authorities, based on a local needs assessment. In 2005/06, top tier local authorities spent £59,333,258 under the Supporting People programme on services for those affected by domestic violence, and £61,645,319 in 2006/07.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigration Directorate Instructions 2008</td>
<td>Police &gt; Training</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>To support the introduction of the domestic violence concession into the Immigration Rules in 2002, the Secretary of State published Immigration Directorate Instructions. The instructions define Domestic Violence for the purposes of the Immigration Rule, explain which persons are able to apply under the rule, and what documentary evidence should be provided to prove that Domestic Violence has occurred. The detailed instructions, recently updated in July 2008, provide comprehensive information to United Kingdom Border Agency caseworkers (and the public domain) regarding the interpretation and practical application of the legislation.</td>
<td>Immigration Directorate Instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judicial and Court Statistics 2007</td>
<td>Administrative data &gt; Justice</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>Judicial and Court Statistics collect information on the number of applications to the county courts for domestic violence remedies e.g. non-molestation or occupation orders. The number of these applications decreased by 7% in 2007 compared with 2006. Compared with 2003 they have fallen by 19%. In 2004 the Government passed the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. That year, family courts made 32,906 protective injunction orders against domestic violence whilst criminal courts dealt with 34,839 cases involving domestic violence. By 2007, family courts made 26,901 protective orders and the criminal courts dealt with 63,819 cases of domestic violence. This shows that more victims are choosing to report incidents to the police to take the criminal court route. It also shows that both jurisdictions of court helped 22,975 more victims in 2007 than in 2004.</td>
<td>Judicial and Court Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forced Marriage Unit 2007</td>
<td>Institutional mechanisms</td>
<td>Violence against women and girls</td>
<td>The Forced Marriage Unit is a joined initiative with the Home Office. For information on the Forced Marriage Unit, <a href="https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage">https://www.gov.uk/guidance/forced-marriage</a></td>
<td>Forced Marriage Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awareness-Raising Campaign Christmas Period 2007</td>
<td>Prevention &gt; Awareness-raising Campaigns</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
<td>In December 2007 the Home Office provided funding for the police to carry out domestic violence enforcement campaigns over the Christmas period. The aim was to encourage more people to report incidents of domestic violence and to reduce the level of repeat offending by bringing more offenders to justice.</td>
<td>Awareness-Raising Campaign Christmas Period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Code (Amendment) Act (British Virgin Islands)</td>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Violence against women</td>
<td>Legislation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Criminal Code (Amendment) Act, 2007, amended the Criminal Code, 1997 to provide for the criminalization of human trafficking for exploitation, and smuggling of migrants. This legislation was passed in recognition that women and children were the most targeted and affected by human trafficking for exploitation and smuggling of migrants, and such acts needed to be appropriately addressed. In the Act, exploitation is therefore defined as “in relation to a person, includes the exploitation of the person through prostitution, pornography or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour for services, slavery or practices similar to slavery servitude or the removal of organs”. “Human trafficking” under the Act means, “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or reception of a person for the purpose of the exploitation of the person”.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Cross-Government Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Abuse was published April 2007 and ran for 12 months. A new plan for the period 2009-11 will be produced early in 2009. The measures set out in the plan aim to increase access to health and support services for victims of sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse; improve the criminal justice response to sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse; and prevent sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse from occurring wherever possible. The Action Plan is the work of six government departments: the Home Office, the Department of Health, the Department for Constitutional Affairs, Crown Prosecution Service, Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Communities and Local Government.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Campaign Regarding the Importance of Active Consent to Sex</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Prevention &gt; Awareness-raising Campaigns</th>
<th>Sexual violence</th>
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<tr>
<td>In 2006 the Government ran a hard hitting campaign stressing the importance of getting active consent to sex, hoping to raise greater awareness and understanding of what ‘consent’ means, as well as dispelling myths about the type of people who commit rape. The campaign involved radio ads, and advertisements in magazines with predominantly young and male audiences, and in the gay press. Posters were also used in gent’s washrooms of pubs and clubs in urban areas. The evaluation of the campaign was positive. Of the 600 men who were surveyed following the campaign, 70% said the advertisements really would make them think differently about getting consent before sex in the future.</td>
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Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women
<p>| National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 | 2006 | Policies &gt; Inclusion of violence against women in other national plan strategy | Sexual violence | In 2006 a National Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 was introduced. It contains 12 points which link humanitarian, defence and diplomacy work, all of which are important to conflict resolution and peace-building. The Permanent Joint Headquarters has ensured that relevant briefing material on the role/relevance of gender to the specific society living in the deployed area is being included in the Pre-Deployment Training provided to British personnel. |
| Seminars on so-called Honour Crimes | 2006 | Justice &gt; Training | Other harmful practices | In October and November 2006 the Attorney General of the United Kingdom and the Baroness of Scotland jointly hosted two seminars on honour killings with community leaders and agencies such as Southall Black Sisters and IMKAAN. The aims of the honour killings seminars were to identify how police and statutory agencies can work more effectively with affected communities to get co-operation and information in relation to so-called honour crimes; and to prevent a so-called honour crime. |
| Supporting Practitioner Guidance Regarding the National Probation Service Interim Domestic Abuse Policy | 2006 | Violence against women &gt; Regulations | Domestic violence - Intimate partner violence | Supporting practitioner guidance for the implementation of the National Probation Service Interim Domestic Abuse Policy and Strategy was issued during 2006, providing further details on the issues covered by the Strategy as well as key legislation. |
| Armed Forces Services Agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission | 2005 | Work with public private sectors &gt; Military | Sexual violence | The Services signed an Agreement with the Equal Opportunities Commission (now subsumed into the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC)) in June 2005 to prevent and deal effectively with sexual harassment in the Armed Forces. Measures put in place have included creating a working environment in which sexual harassment is unacceptable; ensuring there is an effective complaints process; ensuring procedures deal with upheld complaints of sexual harassment and protect the victim; and providing effective sanctions to deter and discourage sexual harassment. |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Initiative</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Alliance</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Against Domestic Violence</td>
<td>The corporate alliance against domestic violence is a group of progressive companies and organizations working individually and collectively to address the impact of domestic violence in the workplace. Domestic violence currently costs UK business over £2.7 billion a year and affects thousands of working men and women every day. By proactively addressing the issue, organizations can both reduce the costs to their business, and, most importantly, help prevent domestic violence in society at large.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alliance Chair</td>
<td></td>
<td>Baroness Scotland QC, Minister of State for the Home Office and chair of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence.</td>
<td>The Alliance Chair is the Rt Hon Baroness Scotland QC, Minister of State for the Home Office and chair of the Inter-Ministerial Group on Domestic Violence. The Body Shop International chairs the five person Executive committee which is appointed on an annual basis. In 2005 the Executive Team was comprised of representatives from: AOL / Time Warner, BBC, KPMG, The NHS - NHS Employers and The Department of Health, Vodafone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women</td>
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<tr>
<td>National Report and National Delivery Plan on Domestic Violence</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Policies &gt; National action plan specific to violence against women, Monitoring and Evaluation &gt; Policies</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
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| Employment Equality (Sex Discrimination) Regulations | 2005 | Violence against women > Regulations | Sexual harassment | The Directive updated the law covering equality between men and women in the workplace to take into account changes to the EU Treaty and developments in European case law since the original Equal Treatment Directive was published. UK law only required a few changes to conform, such as amending the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 to make explicit the fact that discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity leave and sexual harassment and harassment on the grounds of sex are unlawful. Previously the courts had to rely on case law. |

<p>| National Probation Service Interim Domestic Abuse Policy and Strategy | 2005 | Policies &gt; National strategy specific to violence against women | Domestic violence Intimate partner violence | The National Probation Service Interim Domestic Abuse Policy and Strategy was issued in July 2005, setting out the key principles and practice aims of probation service work with domestic abuse perpetrators and victims. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Probation Circular in Relation to the Domestic Violence</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Violence against women &gt; Regulations</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Module on Inter-Personal Violence within the British Crime Survey</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Research and statistical data &gt; Violence against women module in survey</td>
<td>Stalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act</td>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Violence against women &gt; Legislation</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Offences Act</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Violence against women &gt; Legislation</td>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Assault Referral Centres</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Coordinated and or Integrated service delivery &gt; Referral services, Coordinated and or Integrated service delivery &gt; One-stop centres, Budgets &gt; Government allocation, Monitoring and Evaluation &gt; Services</td>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female Genital Mutilation Act</td>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Violence against women &gt; Legislation</td>
<td>Female genital mutilation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poppy Project (Support for Survivors of Trafficking)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Budgets &gt; Government allocation, Social services &gt; Psycho-social counselling, Prevention &gt; Awareness-raising Campaigns</td>
<td>Trafficking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rule 289A (Domestic Violence Concession)</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Violence against women &gt; Regulations</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Report: Investigation and Prosecution of Rape Offences</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Policies &gt; National action plan specific to violence against women, Monitoring and Evaluation &gt; Services</td>
<td>Sexual violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London Domestic Violence Strategy</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Policies &gt; National strategy specific to violence against women</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Topic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex and Relationship Education Guidance</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Education &gt; Formal education</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic Violence: A Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>Health &gt; Training</td>
<td>Domestic violence Intimate partner violence</td>
</tr>
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Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act</th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>Violence against women &gt; Legislation</th>
<th>Violence against women and girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In criminal courts, section 24 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999 (YJCE Act) provides that a special measures direction can be made to give evidence by means of a live link. The provision of special facilities in county/combined courts depends on the availability of resources to help to ensure safety and reduce the distress of attending court vulnerable or intimidated victims and applicants may face. In 2005 and 2007 assessments were carried out into the availability of special facilities in family courts. 52% of county/combined courts responded in 2007, it was found that of those that responded 40% did provide video link, 14% could provide this facility if requested in advance, and, 46% could not provide this facility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>In criminal courts section 23 of the YJCE Act provides that a special measures direction can be made to provide for the witness, while giving testimony or being sworn in court, to be prevented by means of a screen or other arrangement from seeing the accused. The provision of special facilities in county/combined courts depends on the availability of resources, however, provision of screens are more available in combined courts as they are purpose built to hear criminal cases as well as family/civil cases.</td>
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<td>Special arrangements for separate arrival to, and exit from, the court was dependent on the court accommodation. In 2005 and 2007 assessments were carried out into the availability of special facilities in family courts. Just over a third of responses from the 2007 assessment confirmed that they are able to provide this facility, most of these courts that can provide this are purpose built to maximise public safety in the court environs. Although it was recognised that there were difficulties with some courts being able to provide this measure the assessments highlighted some innovative practices such as court staff bringing the vulnerable party in the building through the staff entrances. Where this was not possible courts can and have requested that the case be listed at another court where these measures are available.</td>
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Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women
<table>
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<th>Access to Justice Act 1999</th>
<th>Violence against women</th>
<th>Domestic violence</th>
<th>Intimate partner violence</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under the Access to Justice Act 1999 the Community Legal Service provides assistance and representation to those taking action in the courts of England and Wales, provided that they meet the statutory tests of their means and the merits of their case. The Legal Services Commission’s (LSC) Funding Code Criteria covers all applications to fund legal representation in proceedings seeking an injunction, a committal order or other orders for the protection of a person from harm (other than public law children proceedings). The LSC will normally waive all financial eligibility limits for Legal Representation for the victims of domestic violence. This measure improves access to legal aid for domestic violence victims by extending eligibility beyond the original limit. However, any contribution from income or capital that is applicable under the regulations cannot be waived.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994</th>
<th>Violence against women</th>
<th>Sexual violence</th>
<th>Sexual violence</th>
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</table>

| Response of the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire on violence against women |
8. Drug and alcohol abuse

Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups make up around 13% of the population in England. Information regarding alcohol use and alcohol-related harm in BME groups is generally poor or non-existent, particularly for newer migrant groups and for more itinerant groups such as Travellers or Gypsies and seasonal workers. Although research has consistently shown lower consumption and rates of alcohol-related harms among BME groups compared to the general population, a more nuanced picture is needed for service planning and commissioning. BME communities are extremely diverse and patterns of alcohol consumption vary greatly both between and within different groups. Anecdotal evidence suggests that alcohol consumption is increasing amongst younger women from Black and Minority Ethnic groups, however there is little empirical research at present.

Drug use among women in England and Wales has dropped to its lowest level in at least 20 years. According to the BBC one in 20 women (5%) aged between 16 and 59 reported using an illicit substance in the past year, the Crime Survey for England and Wales found.

This was the lowest level since the records started in 1996. It had peaked at 8.8% in 2000 and 2003-04.\(^\text{28}\) A breakdown in terms of ethnicity, faith, and immigration status was not found

\(^{28}\) bbc.co.uk
9. Existing Organisations, Frameworks, And Policies Relating To GBV and HRV

**Forced Marriage Unit**

The Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) is a joint Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Home Office unit which set up in January 2005 to lead on the Government's forced marriage policy, outreach and casework. It operates both inside the UK, where support is provided to any individual, and overseas, where consular assistance is provided to British nationals, including dual nationals.

The FMU operates a public helpline to provide advice and support to victims of forced marriage as well as to professionals dealing with cases. The assistance provided ranges from simple safety advice, through to aiding a victim to prevent their unwanted spouse moving to the UK (“reluctant sponsor” cases), and, in extreme circumstances, to rescues of victims held against their will overseas.

The FMU undertake an extensive outreach and training programme of around 100 events a year, targeting both professionals and potential victims. The FMU also carry out media campaigns, such as 2015’s “right to choose’ campaign”, where the FMU commissioned a short film to raise awareness amongst young people at risk of being forced into marriage, as well as potential perpetrators.

The FMU has produced various resources to assist practitioners, such as the **Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance** for dealing with forced marriage 2014. Guidance is for all persons and bodies who exercise public function in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.
Multi-Agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage 2014 - Step-by-step advice for frontline workers. Essential reading for health professionals, educational staff, police, children's social care, adult social services and local authority housing.

**Guidance for Members of Parliament and constituency offices**

The guidance above is available for all MPs and provides background information on forced marriage and describes best practice for supporting victims and dealing with their families.

**Guidance for Registrars** - a factsheet for registrars to refer to when they suspect or know about a forced marriage.

**eLearning training for professionals** - a new forced marriage e-learning package for professionals. The modules aim to enable professionals to recognise the warning signs of forced marriage and ensure that the appropriate action is taken to help protect and support all those at risk.

**Ending violence against women and girls (VAWG) Strategy 2016-2020 - Home Office, 2016**

The government published a new VAWG strategy in March 2016. The strategy outlines a shift from crisis response to early intervention and prevention.

The strategy includes an action plan for its delivery focusing on: preventing violence and abuse; preventing online abuse and exploitation; provision of services; partnership working and pursuing perpetrators.

Measures include:
➢ A Service Transformation Fund to promote projects which stop violence before it happens and prevent abusive behaviour from becoming entrenched.
➢ Work with local authorities on changing the attitudes and behaviours of perpetrators through rehabilitation and mental health interventions.
➢ Harnessing new technologies in police work such as body worn cameras and GPS tracking to protect victims.
➢ A new National Statement of Expectations (NSE) to make clear to local authorities what good commissioning and service provision look like. A new network of local and national experts will support local councils and a range of tools and guidance will be published to help them meet the needs of all victims.

The child protection system across the UK

The UK’s 4 nations – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales – have their own child protection system and laws to help protect children from abuse and neglect. Each nation has a framework of legislation, guidance and practice to identify children who are at risk of harm, and take action to protect those children and prevent further abuse occurring.

Each UK nation is responsible for its own policies and laws around education, health and social welfare. This covers most aspects of safeguarding and child protection.

Laws are passed to prevent behaviour that can harm children or require action to protect children. Guidance sets out what organisations should do to play their part to keep children safe.

Although the child protection systems are different in each nation, they are all based on similar principles.29

29 nspcc.org.uk
NPCC Honour Based Abuse Strategy – a policing strategy for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland – eradicating “Honour” based Abuse, forced marriage, and female genital mutilation together

Commander Mak Chisty, the National Police Chiefs’ Council Lead for “Honour” based abuse, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, states that he is committed to working in partnership to see the sustained prevention and eradication of these harmful practices whilst bringing offenders to justice. He will work with the police forces across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and the College of Policing to ensure that the police service consistently delivers a high quality service to victims, survivors, affected communities, and partners to realise their aims.

The strategy will support the police service to:

- build the trust and confidence of affected communities in the police service so that they seek police help directly
- tackle and reduce under reporting of all forms of “honour” based abuse
- provide an effective proactive response on every occasion, recognising and responding effectively to risk, keeping victims safe, and holding offenders to account
- proactively engage with communities, raising awareness and identifying victims, prospective victims, and perpetrators
- demonstrate the Police Service’s leadership on the issues, as well as playing an effective role in the coalition of partners to tackle “honour” based abuse
- to gain a better understanding of the scale of the problem

There are also three underpinning principles:

- that victims have a fundamental right to be believed
- putting victims, their safety (safeguarding) and well-being at the heart of responses and investigations
- the victims’ personal details will be stored, managed, and handled with integrity and confidentially

In “Moving forward to 2018”, the police service aims to achieve its strategic intentions through a programme of work. Measures include:
• commissioning a National Problem profile to understand the national picture and identify affected communities to better focus work, energy, and resources
• support police forces to understand the local picture, by identifying, measuring, and understanding the extent and nature of harmful practices within their local force area
• consistency of the police service’s approach to data recording and collection
• develop a programme of regular and sustained engagement with leaders of all religions and faiths to secure their support to publicly denounce harmful practices
• develop a comprehensive community engagement programme
• work with the Department for Education, Headteachers, and Governors to initiate and take forward school engagement programmes to educate and empower young people to tackle and dismantle the generational cycle of offending
• work with local, regional, and national third sector agencies to identify communities’ knowledge gaps, emerging issues, and learning
• champion, influence, and deliver marketing campaigns which drive and deliver key messages, that HBA, FM, and FGM are crimes, and safely signpost victims to the police and specialist support agencies
• working with victims, survivors, communities, and ngos to enhance trust and confidence in the police service, empower victims and survivors, and improve the police service’s knowledge and influence its work.
Most domestic abuse services are either charities or ngo's, and provide a wide range of information and support including refuge accommodation, helplines, outreach support, floating support, resettlement support, specialist children and young people services, Domestic Abuse Prevention Advocates and drop-in support.

There are 361 domestic abuse services in England run by 228 different organisations, 272 of these services include refuge services.

The demand for domestic abuse services is high. It is difficult to exactly demonstrate demand as the only numbers available are for those referrals declined. There are likely to be many women who could have benefited from a referral but are not counted in these figures. This is perhaps because the woman was too frightened to disclose the abuse she was experiencing or a referring agency already knew a refuge was full or not able to support that woman’s needs, so did not make the referral.

The single largest challenge faced by charities and ngo’s working against gender based violence and “honour” related violence is funding. Many rely on national and local funding from sources such as the National Lottery and charitable trusts, whilst others are fortunate enough to secure a core element of statutory funding. Women’s organisations have been disproportionately impacted by recent and current public spending cuts and efficiency savings. An annual survey conducted by Women’s Aid in 2015 showed: -

- 44% (72 services) were running an area of work without dedicated funding during the previous financial year.
➢ 6% of services responding to the survey said that their most challenging issue in 2014/15 was a lack of funding or uncertainty about funding.\footnote{women’s aid.org.uk}

Services helping women escape forced marriage and honour-based violence are closing and facing drastic budget cuts across the country, this loss of specialist help is putting victims at risk, according to forced marriage experts, who warn that cultural and language barriers mean many women would never go to a generic domestic violence refuge.

Cities whose services have been affected include Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham and Rotherham. The closures and cuts mean losing decades of expertise and local networks. Many of the charities have built more than 30 years of trust within specific communities, meaning they see some of the more isolated victims who their members argue generic services would struggle to reach.\footnote{independent.co.uk}

The charity “Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse” develops and delivers services for those affected by domestic abuse in Oxfordshire and provides training across the UK. Their services cost £300,000 a year, a proportion of which comes from statutory funding and a small growing income from training. The organisation raises one third of its costs through donations and charitable trust funding in order to remain independent and act as advocates for service users.\footnote{reducing the risk.org.uk}

Modern day slavery is an issue which is increasingly coming to light, and although it is difficult to comprehend how an individual could be enslaved in today’s world, modern slavery is real. It is happening in communities around the UK. Largely an unseen crime, it hides in take-aways, hotels, car washes, nail bars and private homes.
The Home Office predicts that there may be as many as 13,000 victims in the UK alone. There is no typical victim of slavery. Victims can be men, women and children of all ages and cut across the population, but it is normally more prevalent amongst the most vulnerable, minority or socially excluded groups. Modern slavery has been getting increasingly more attention both from the mainstream media and the government, which culminated with passing the Modern Slavery Act in 2015.

It is feared that Europe’s current migration crisis could further increase the number of people being trafficked into the UK for sexual and labour exploitation, and some campaigners estimate there could be up to 80,000 victims in Britain, stuck in slavery, in the shadows of society. The number being identified is much lower. More than 3,200 potential victims were referred in the UK last year – a 40 percent rise on the previous 12 months. Victims of trafficking and slavery are often sexually exploited, or exploited for labour. Some examples are:

➢ a woman who was trafficked from Vietnam and forced to work as a prostitute. The traffickers threatened to kill her father.
➢ a man came to the UK from Poland and forced to work every day for just 13 euros. He was locked up and beaten if he tried to escape.
➢ Student forced into labour exploitation, worked for 15 hours and just two breaks, only for the washroom.
➢ “Sara” came to the UK from Asia to study, but she was forced to work every day in a cafe, on low wages, facing constant threats from her manager. “She (manager) told me, if I go against her, she would inform the immigration people, I would be sent to Asia. The second fear is that she could contact my parents and she would tell them I’m doing something wrong, like against my family name,” she explained.

Some victims are indentures or trapped in debt bondage, and there are UK charities provide support and safe houses for those who have been trafficked in such situations and

33 unseenuk.org
circumstances. Sadia Wain, who works for Hestia states that trafficking victims are terrified to seek help, often paying off a never-ending debt.

“The debt bondage being the fact that they’ve been brought over here and we paid for your ticket and, if you don’t pay, you have to pay us back. And that debt doesn’t seem to decrease,”

“It seems to just increase and if they refuse to work in any way, whether it’s sexual exploitation or whether it’s domestic servitude, or whether it’s forced labour, then they’re threatened with their families back home, and so, because of that, they continue to do what they are doing.”

The UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) – which coordinates law enforcement – admits exploitation could be further fuelled by Europe’s migrant crisis. The Head of the UKHTC states that “Some individuals are determined to get into the UK, and their circumstances when they arrive may mean that they are desperate in terms of finding legitimate employment or any form of employment. And so they’re likely to be vulnerable to forms of exploitation.”

Many charities and ngo’s are having to deal with Islamophobia and all the related issues. The Independent Newspaper reports that the UK is entering “uncharted territory” of Islamophobia after Brexit vote, whilst the Anti-Muslim hate monitoring group Tell MAMA reports a 326 per cent increase in incidents in 2015 – and warns Brexit could make it worse.

The greatest impact is being felt by women, whose ability to move around and live their daily lives free from fear, have been greatly affected.

An additional disadvantage caused by current circumstances is the failure to report “honour” related violence on the parts of service providers, for fear of being labelled Islamophobic.

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34 euronews.com
35 independent.co.uk
Although the number of individuals accessing help and support is increasing, there are many more victims and potential victims who are possibly not coming forward. Claire Phillipson from Wearside Women in Need says that “some schools and communities are keeping silent about it, because they are concerned that they would be called racist, and Islamophobic, they don't quite know where the line between culture, religion and human rights should be drawn.”

The UK government’s counter-terrorism strategy is an enormous cause for concern, particularly amongst British Muslims. A recent study by the Justice Initiative says the British government’s key counter-radicalisation policy is badly flawed, potentially counterproductive and risks trampling on the basic rights of young Muslims. Women are increasingly feeling the effects of the strategy, not only externally as victims of increased Islamophobic attacks, but also internally. Muslim communities and families across the UK are feeling threatened and vulnerable, and are becoming increasingly isolated in a bid to protect themselves from the harsh realities of the current climate. Women are the main victims of this drawing apart, and even those families who were liberal in their thoughts and practices are beginning to show a marked change in attitude towards practices such as forced marriage. This is seen as a way of protecting young women, and although the intention may be good, the resulting abuse is unacceptable.
11. Challenging and Preventing HRV

Until recent years, “honour” based violence (HBV) was a term that was very rarely used or widely understood by the British public and policy makers. Yet, over the past decade, considerable progress has been made in raising awareness about HBV. Reports of “honour” killing victims now make news headlines on a regular basis. Women’s rights groups have been at the forefront of educating politicians, law enforcers and the general public about the realities of “honour” related violence as well as helping to protect victims.

Yet, successful efforts to fill these gaps of knowledge and understanding as well as victim support are not being matched by those whose responsibility it is to protect British citizens, many of whom are still being let down by a government that is failing, not only to deal with crises, but to prevent them from happening in the first place.

While there have been several recent indications that the government is at least recognising the problem of “honour” related violence in the UK, there has been very little sign of the government’s long term commitment to multi-agency engagement that is desperately needed to successfully fight this abuse. Until the government provides adequate support for victims of “honour” related violence, as well as the groups that protect them, the rights and hopes of millions of girls and women will continue to be denied.\(^\text{36}\)

Much of the support and provision of services for victims and potential victims of “honour” related violence comes from the third sector, namely charities and non-governmental organisations. However, recent austerity measures and cuts have disproportionately affected specialist domestic violence services for minority women. Panahghar, a specialist domestic violence and abuse service, reports that £300,000 has been slashed from its yearly budget. In

\(^{36}\) Honour killings in the UK, Emily Dyer
Coventry, where approximately one third of the population is Black Minority Ethnic, the Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre no longer receives funding from the Equality and Human Rights Commission to carry out outreach work within communities that would otherwise not use their services, including Black Minority Ethnic women.

However women from minority communities and backgrounds need specialists with expertise in the very different services they need. For example, women from Black Minority Ethnic communities are more likely to experience forced marriage, “honour” based violence, female genital mutilation, and domestic abuse and violence from multiple perpetrators.37

Women’s organisations are often small grassroots organisations, making them more flexible in responding effectively to the needs of their service users. These organisations reach marginalised groups of women through their independent status, making their services more appealing to many women compared to statutory support. Led by and for Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LBT) women, disabled, poor, young and older women and women of minority faiths, the women’s sector is a multi-layered safety net for women from all walks of life.

As a sector, women’s organisations are more vulnerable and less likely to survive financial shocks than other types of charities. They are generally dependent on fewer, short-term incomes and therefore will struggle considerably if they lose even one source of funding. Despite their vulnerability, women’s organisations have a wide-reaching, positive impact; previous Women’s Resource Centre research has found that every £1 of investment in women’s services can create between £5 and £11 of social value.38

Despite the severity of austerity measures, the shortfall in service provision is not being met elsewhere. A review carried out in 2015 by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabularies, (HMIC), states that only 3 out of 43 police forces are effective in dealing with “honour” crimes.

Whether within the police or other agencies, individuals who have expertise, cultural sensitivity and commitment to protecting women at risk are the greatest resource. The most

37 BME women and austerity screamingviolets.co.uk
38 thewomensresourcecentre.org.uk
valuable and dedicated of these are women’s rights activists, fighting for change within their own communities, and providing a compassionate and effective source of help for women and girls at risk of their lives. Without their input and their ability to hold services to account, effective protection policies would not have been developed. They need to be central to developing our policy to provide protection. Without their ability to access communities that distrust mainstream services, we could not reach women at risk, or understand the cultural and family background to these events. Without their efforts, there would be many more victims, and much greater demands upon the police services. As the HMIC report remarks, “where traditions operate to imprison vulnerable people behind barriers of fear and the threat or reality of violence, and facilitate or intensify crimes committed against those people, such barriers must be broken.” Activist women from within the communities where “honour” crimes occur have been leading this debate from the very beginning. All of them now face severe difficulties. Some have already had to close their doors, or limit their services.

The Crown Prosecution Service is prosecuting and convicting a record number of rape, domestic abuse, sexual offences and child abuse cases. The CPS's annual Violence against Women and Girls report shows that rape, domestic abuse and sexual offences now account for 18.6 per cent of the CPS’s total caseload and this figure has been increasing year-on-year. In 2015/16, the CPS prosecuted 117,568 defendants for all crimes grouped together as Violence against Women and Girls (VaWG).

More than 100,000 defendants were prosecuted for domestic abuse, with over 75,000 convicted - the highest volumes ever recorded, also reaching the highest ever conviction rate of 75.4 per cent by March 2016. In December 2015, the new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour also came into law, and statistics show there were five prosecutions of this offence completed by the end of March 2016.  

39 \textit{cps.gov.uk}
The Forced Marriage Unit Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage “The Right to Choose” states that it usually falls to more than one specific agency to meet all of the needs of an individual, or indeed a wide group of individuals affected by forced marriage. As a result, the aim of this guidance document is to not only clearly set out why a multi-agency response is critical, but to also re-emphasise how important multi-agency cooperation and closer working is, as part of the overall approach to provide support to, and protect victims of, this abhorrent practice.
The guidelines stress the importance of the “One Chance Rule”, and stresses that all Chief Executives, Directors and Senior Managers providing services to victims of forced marriage and honour-based violence need to be aware of the “one chance” rule. That is, their staff may only have one chance to speak to a potential victim and thus their staff may only have one chance to save a life. This means that all professionals working within statutory agencies need to be aware of their responsibilities and obligations when they come across forced marriage cases. If the victim is allowed to walk out of the door without support being offered, that one chance might be wasted.

This multi-agency statutory guidance is given to all persons and bodies in England and Wales who exercise public functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as listed in section 11(1) or section 28(1) of the Children Act 2004. Such persons and bodies include local authorities, police authorities and chief officers of police and youth offending teams. This guidance is also given to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (established under section 11 of the Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act 2000) and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (established under section 13 or section 31 of the Children Act 2004).

This guidance is also given to all persons and bodies in England and Wales exercise public functions to protect adults with support needs from abuse. Examples of these bodies may include but are not limited to police authorities and chief officers of police, and NHS Trusts. Also key elements of local authorities and/or district councils, in particular adult social care services, strategic health authorities, primary care trusts, local health boards.

This guidance is also given to any third party who is exercising public functions on behalf of a person or body mentioned above.  

There are a number of national organisations that are able to offer support to victims and professionals dealing with cases of “honour” related violence and crimes, offering helplines,

40 [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) The Right to Choose: Multi-agency statutory guidance for dealing with forced marriage
face to face and survivor support. Prosecutors and Witness Care Units need to know what support agencies are available within their local area, nationally and internationally. These agencies are extremely well placed to advise prosecutors on the steps that need to be taken either to elicit information, to support an investigation and prosecution, to encourage others to come forward, to provide support to victims and witnesses and provide expert evidence.

**Practical Solutions**

[www.practical-solutions.info](http://www.practical-solutions.info)

**Practical Solutions** was founded in November 2007 as a result of the acute need for awareness and guidance in the area of forced marriage and honour based violence/honour killings.

Practical Solutions is the first organisation of its kind in the United Kingdom, offering specific advice, guidance and training on forced marriage and honour based violence to victims, communities and service providers.

**Henna Foundation** operates a "one stop" service that works to meet and advance the needs, concerns and aspirations of Asian and Muslim children and families. It also assists voluntary, statutory services and Government agencies to improve engagement and delivery of mainstream services. Henna Foundation hosts a National (multi-disciplinary) On-line Forced Marriage & HBV Directory and Knowledge Centre.

**BAWSO Women's Aid (Wales)**

[www.bawso.org.uk](http://www.bawso.org.uk)

An all Wales, voluntary organisation, BAWSO provides a specialist service to Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) women and children made homeless through a threat of domestic abuse or fleeing domestic abuse in Wales. They have purpose built refuges across Wales.
They also provide emotional and practical support for BME women living in social housing. The service is accessible 24 hrs. a day.

**Men's Advice Line**

0808 801 0327

www.mensadviceline.org.uk

This service provides a Freephone confidential helpline for all men experiencing domestic violence by a current or ex-partner. This includes all men - in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. The service gives men the chance to talk about what is happening to them and provides them with emotional support and practical advice. The advice line also has information about specialist services that can provide advice on legal, housing, child contact, mental health and other issues.

**Southall Black Sisters (SBS)**

www.southallblacksisters.org.uk

Southall Black Sisters operates a specialist centre for black and minority women. It provides advice, advocacy and support services to women facing all forms of gender-related violence including domestic violence, sexual violence, FM, honour killings and related issues such as immigration and asylum, health, welfare rights, homelessness and poverty. The front line work is also supported by campaigning, counselling and other activities aimed at helping women assert their human rights, overcome their isolation, build their self-esteem and skills needed to live independently in security and with dignity.

**Halo Project**

www.haloproject.org.uk
The Halo Project Charity is a national project that will support victims of HBV, FM and FGM by providing appropriate advice and support to victims. We will also work with key partners to provide required interventions and advice necessary for the protection and safety of victims.

**Freedom Charity**

www.freedomcharity.org.uk

Freedom or Freedom Charity is a UK-based charity formed to give support to victims of FM, FGM, radicalisation and violence upon women thought to have brought dishonour on their family. We target schools with presentations and sessions directly with students, whilst also offering training and lesson plans for teachers so that they may also aid in raising awareness.

**Karma Nirvana**

www.karmanirvava.org.uk

The Honour Network helpline providing emotional and practical support and advice for victims and survivors (male & Female) of forced marriage and/or honour based violence and abuse. It provides advice and support to potential victims, victims in crisis and professional agencies.
This report contains information obtained from a number of sources, including live interviews with victims, focus groups with service users, and workshops with delegates from all sectors, including victims, police officers, social workers, teachers, health workers, charity personnel and trustees, and those working in non-governmental organisations.

Workshop and focus group attendees:

The Keighley Association Women & Children's Centre (KAWACC) - a registered charity and voluntary organisation which adopts a holistic view of women

- Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
- Ramsden’s Solicitors
- Blackburn Central High School
- Blackburn College
- Lancashire Council of Mosques
- Bellamy & Co Immigration Solicitors
- Humraaz specialist refuge for Black Minority Ethnic Women
- Al Hayat Language Centre
- White Ribbon Campaign
- The Children and Vulnerable Adults Services, Ace Centre, Nelson
- Medina Mosque
- Jamia Ghosia Islamic Centre
- University of Central Lancashire
- Lancashire Constabulary
The purpose of the research was to identify the lived realities and experiences of victims of “honour” related violence, the attitudes and responses of service providers, existing responses and provision, and future interventions and tools for challenging and eradicating this abuse.

As stated before in this report, the main source of support for victims of “honour” related violence comes from third sector charities and ngo’s, who often operate on very stretched and insecure budgets, and where the goodwill, knowledge, and passion of the service providers plays a large part in ensuring that victims’ needs are met.

Focus groups with victims were held in community centres, refuge and safe spaces. The overwhelming feeling amongst participants was one of dissatisfaction and fear of the police, and the response they have received. Although a total of 37 victims took part in focus groups, only 3 have given permission to use their stories in this report.

1. Aysha – arrived in the UK following an arranged marriage with a British National which took place in Pakistan. During her first week in the UK she was subjected to physical, psychological, and emotional violence from her husband and mother-in-law. The violence continued, and furthermore she was not allowed to speak with her family members in Pakistan or in the UK, nor was she allowed to show any signs of the violence or unhappiness to visitors. Six months after arriving in the UK, Aysha was badly beaten, and had to be hospitalised, and it was here that hospital personnel informed the police who removed her to a place of safety. The police service also provided a report which assisted Aysha in securing her immigration status in the UK. All further support came from the refuge and other charities, who have assisted Aysha with housing, and with securing benefits. Currently Aysha is still suffering from a form of “honour” related violence in that her husband will not grant her the Islamic “talaaq” or divorce, which means she is unable to move on. Neither will he assist her solicitors with the state or legally recognised divorce. Aysha has approached a Sharia council to help her obtain her Islamic divorce from her husband, however this is proving to be a slow process, with continuous demands for re-consideration and for information which she does not have, such as her husband’s current address and employment details.
The state divorce has been pending for nearly 7 years, due to the prohibitive costs involved. This means that although Aysha is no longer with her abusive husband and his family, she is alone and isolated, unable to move on with her life.

2. Nila – is a British National who was facing continuous and sustained pressure to agree to a marriage arranged by her father and grandfather. Whilst at college, Nila sought help from a tutor responsible for the pastoral care of students, and also stated that she did not wish to go through with the marriage, but was afraid of what her family would do to her if she refused. The tutor got Nila’s permission to involve the police, as they would be able to assist her in moving away from the family, and also with obtaining a Forced Marriage Protection Order. Nila agreed, and met with a police representative on 3 occasions. She repeatedly said that she did not want an order serving on her family, however she did want to move away, and be safe, and to be able to continue with her education. She found that she was facing pressure from the police to obtain a Forced Marriage Protection Order, and was told by the police officer, that should she not go ahead with applying for the order, she could be in trouble for wasting police time. Further assistance with removing Nila to a place of safety was not forthcoming, and she was kept at the police station for over 12 hours, the reason given to her was that the police did not have the funding to transport her to the refuge which was out of the local area. Finally, Nila was able to get some money from a former teacher and his wife, which was used to take her to the place of safety.

3. Jamila – unwillingly entered into a marriage arranged by her parents, around 13 years ago. Although unhappy with her situation, she did not see a way out without losing her family, friends, and community, so she stayed with her husband. There were many arguments and incidents of violence, however the police were not involved, rather the family and extended family always came along and reconciled the situation. There were a number of aggravating features, firstly the high level of interference from her mother-in-law, who lives in another family, but still dictated how her son should treat his wife. Secondly, her husband’s insistence on sending a large amount of money to his parent and sibling family every month, but only provided the basics for Jamila and their children, and thirdly the death of one of Jamila’s children, a little girl who was ill
and passed away due to genital defects. Finally, when Jamila was unable to take any more, she called the police instead of speaking with her parents. The police removed Jamila and her children to a place of safety, and arrested her husband as she had made allegations of rape against him. Up until this point Jamila’s experience of the police was positive, however when she stated that she wished to go home to her parents’ house, she faced a lot of opposition and withdrawal of support from the police. Jamila wished to withdraw her statement, as she had got what she wanted, which was for her husband to leave. She did not wish to go to court, as she felt this would be far too much for her and her children to deal with, rather she wished to drop the charges, and rebuild her life with her children in her home. The police informed her that she was not allowed to drop the charges and she would have to go to court, and testify. Jamila sought the help of a local charity, who supported her, and she was able to withdraw her statement. She told the charity worker that the police and social services were bullying her to go to court because they were only concerned with their targets, and not concerned for her or her children’s’ welfare.
Although police forces are getting better at understanding and responding to incidents of “honour” related violence, there is still a long way to go. Individual officers still have prejudices and pre-conceived ideas which affect the way they respond to a victim or potential victim. The criminalisation and new guidelines should address this, and also go some way in ensuring uniformity of response across the country, which is currently missing. Some police forces are excelling in their duty and response to “honour” related violence, whilst others are sadly lacking.

Social services are better in terms of safeguarding vulnerable children and adults, however there are issues with understanding the nature of “honour” related violence, and often victims and potential victims are returned to the family home or environment, from where they face grave threats and danger. Legislation and policies are assisting in the services and response offered to victims and potential victims.

Bodies such as the police and social services must recognise that “honour” related violence is a form of domestic abuse, perpetrated by those known to the victim. However, they must also understand that this is a specific form of cultural abuse, which needs its own measures, responses, and actions, and cannot be dealt with using existing domestic abuse policies and procedures. Additional policies, both internal and external are necessary for the best service provision for the victims.

Charities and non-governmental organisations working to support victims of “honour” related violence and related issues are operating in a highly efficient manner within budget and financial constraints. They are effective in providing long term support to victims, as well as campaigning and lobbying for changes in legislation and implementation of policies and procedures. However, this work is unsustainable in the long term, as cuts to funding impact
both on service users and the recruitment and retention of dedicated and passionate personnel.

While awareness of “honour” related violence has increased in recent years, many police officers, teachers, social workers and other professionals still don’t fully understand the complexities and nuances surrounding it. Some local authorities aren’t taking the issue seriously enough, and although there have been appointments of specialist lawyers made within local government, many of these lawyers are also have limited understanding of the intricacies. As a result charities and ngo’s have to pick up the pieces when girls and women don’t get the help they require in order to be safe.

**Recommendations**

An appropriate way of addressing this lack of understanding is to have a mandatory programme of training for all personnel within an organisation. This can be tiered and differentiated according to levels of seniority, however all staff must complete this in the same way they undertake other forms of mandatory training. This will ensure that everyone within an organisation has working knowledge of “honour” related violence and will be able to support an individual at risk.

A thorough and extensive government study should be conducted to determine the full scale of the problem.

Existing government strategies need to be strengthened and built upon, especially in geographical areas where response has been poor. A specific strategy or indeed legislation should be brought about, in consultation with service providers, particularly charities and ngo’s working on the issues to ensure the policy is appropriate, fit for purpose, and comprehensive.

National and local dedicated funding must be made available for service providers delivering specialist support to victims and potential victims. The threat of funding cuts should be removed.
Organisations must record incidents of “honour” related violence as such, and not as domestic abuse.

Local specialists should be identified, and assisted in building local responses.

Intensive work must be undertaken with communities practising “honour” related violence in order to bring about a shift in mind-set. Communities must realise that these abuses are unacceptable, and bring about changes from within. This can only be achieved with external support from agencies such as national and local government and the police.

Remove the word honour from “honour” related violence. This is something the perpetrating communities choose to call this abuse, governments, practitioners, service providers need a separate definition, which must be universal to all sectors in the country.

Although “honour” related is becoming more understood and recognised in the UK, the complexities and motives that are connected to it are not. New motives are emerging as the local, national, and international climate changes, and these are co-existing with old traditions and practices that have travelled with individuals from their home countries. The culture of “honour” related violence is fluid; the perpetration and nature of abuse is constantly shifting. A dedicated and sustained approach is needed in order to bring about a reduction and elimination of “honour” related violence in the UK.
Appendixes

I - Workshop and seminar agenda

AGENDA

Honour Related Violence training and consultation seminars

09.15 Registration & Coffee
09.30 Welcome and Introduction to HASP Project
09.35 White Ribbon Campaign
09.40 Imams Against Domestic Abuse
09.45 Forced marriage training
11.00 Break
11.15 Honour related violence training
12.30 Q & A
12.40 Lunch
13.30 Consultation – introduction and grouping
14.45 Honour Network – interest and membership
15.00 Q & A & Reflection
15.15 Evaluation Post its and finish
Group 1

What is your knowledge of criminal provision, the law, and criminal procedure regarding honour related violence?

Are you aware of any forms of protection of victims of crime, and specifically women victims of violence and their children?

Please state any awareness or knowledge you have of

- Good practices
- Problems and gaps in investigation
- Prosecution
- Punishment and compensation

Please specify any opportunities and gaps in relation to access to justice for women victims of Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Honour Related Violence (HRV)

Please assess and comment on the effectiveness of protection and compliance with international and EU law

Please note any good practices you have identified in relation to GBV/HRV

Please list any recommendations or suggestions

Thank you

Group 2

What is your knowledge of existing institutional and policy framework?

Are you aware of any national gender equality bodies and/or co-ordinating institutions?

Are you aware of any national strategies and plans on GBV, specifically on HRV?
Do you know of any existing national mechanisms?

What is the allocation of resources by the government, including allocation of financial resources for combating GBV and HRV?

Please note any good practices you have identified in relation to GBV/HRV

Please list any recommendations or suggestions

Thank you

Group 3

What is your knowledge of the activities of prevention and response in practice to GBV and HRV?

What do you perceive to be the role of NGOs?

Mapping Questions

According to your experience what is the attitude towards and support of NGOs by national/regional/local government authorities NGOs?

What is your knowledge of: -?

Existing activities and initiatives for prevention of GBV & HRV?

Opportunities and obstacles in the response of social services & law enforcement?

Challenges and issues with identification of cases of HRV?

The role of NGOs in the support and referral of victims, their role as first and early entry point of the victim in the system of support, and preparation and support in subsequent procedures?

Please note any good practices you have identified in relation to GBV/HRV

Please list any recommendations or suggestions
Thank you

Group 4

What is your knowledge of the level of multi-agency and inter-sectorial response to GBV/HRV?

Are you aware of any co-ordinated community responses to GBV/HRV?

Which organisations and services should be participants in the integrated response?

What is your knowledge and awareness of the practice or response to specific groups such as:-?

- Ethnic and religious groups,
- Women and girls in international protection
- Migrants, refugees, asylum seekers
- Spouses without Indefinite Leave to Remain or insecure immigration status
- Protection of girls as a specific group
- LGBT
- Males

Please note any good practices you have identified in relation to GBV/HRV

Please list any recommendations or suggestions

Thank you
For all delegates

What is your knowledge and awareness of other existing opportunities for tackling GBV/HRV? (Prevention campaigns, initiatives for involving men and boys, work with perpetrators, network and alliance building)

Are you aware of any educational initiatives, mandatory or voluntary, for key stakeholders in the response to GBV/HRV by the: -

- Government (local, regional, national)
- NGOs
Delegate responses to Mapping Questions
Is there a difference between an arranged and a forced marriage?

If so, then what is the difference?

What is the age range of people affected by forced marriage?

Males are not subjected to forced marriage

In which communities/countries is forced marriage found?

Forced marriage is a religious practice

Forced marriage is a cultural practice

Forced marriage is legal in the UK

Forced marriage does not affect those with a disability or those suffering mental health illnesses

Forced marriage guidelines place a statutory duty on agencies

Which agencies have been named as Relevant Third Parties by the Ministry of Justice?

If you are not a Relevant Third Party you cannot apply for a Forced Marriage Protection Order