

Home Affairs Committee

Combatting new forms of extremism

Seventh Report of Session 2024–26

HC 903

Home Affairs Committee

The Home Affairs Committee is appointed by the House of Commons to examine the expenditure, administration, and policy of the Home Office and its associated public bodies.

Current membership

[Dame Karen Bradley](#) (Conservative; Staffordshire Moorlands) (Chair)

[Lewis Atkinson](#) (Labour; Sunderland Central)

[Mr Paul Kohler](#) (Liberal Democrat; Wimbledon)

[Ben Maguire](#) (Liberal Democrat; North Cornwall)

[Robbie Moore](#) (Conservative; Keighley and Ilkley)

[Margaret Mullane](#) (Labour; Dagenham and Rainham)

[Chris Murray](#) (Labour; Edinburgh East and Musselburgh)

[Peter Prinsley](#) (Labour; Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket)

[Joani Reid](#) (Independent; East Kilbride and Strathaven)

[Bell Ribeiro-Addy](#) (Labour; Clapham and Brixton Hill)

[Jo White](#) (Labour; Bassetlaw)

The following Members were members of the Committee during the inquiry:

[Shaun Davies](#) (Labour, Telford)

[Mr Connor Rand](#) (Labour, Altrincham and Sale West)

[Jake Richards](#) (Labour, Rother Valley)

Powers

The Committee is one of the departmental select committees, the powers of which are set out in House of Commons Standing Orders, principally in SO No. 152. These are available on the internet via www.parliament.uk.

Publication

This Report, together with formal minutes relating to the Report, was Ordered by the House of Commons, on 25 March 2026, to be printed. It was published on 1 April 2026 by authority of the House of Commons. © Parliamentary Copyright House of Commons 2026.

This publication may be reproduced under the terms of the Open Parliament Licence, which is published at www.parliament.uk/copyright.

Committee Reports are published on the Committee's website at www.parliament.uk/homeaffairscom and in print by Order of the House.

Contacts

All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk of the Home Affairs Committee, House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA. The telephone number for general enquiries is 020 7219 3440; the Committee's email address is homeaffcom@parliament.uk. You can follow the Committee on X (formerly Twitter) using [@CommonsHomeAffs](https://twitter.com/CommonsHomeAffs).

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Summary | 1 |
| 1 Introduction and background | 3 |
| Terms and definitions – terrorism, extremism and radicalisation | 4 |
| Government approach to countering extremism | 6 |
| Prevent and Channel | 9 |
| 2 Trends in extremism | 14 |
| Antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories | 16 |
| Research and evidence base | 18 |
| 3 Online spaces, AI and other technology | 21 |
| Legal but harmful content and algorithms | 21 |
| Com networks | 25 |
| AI and other technology | 26 |
| The Online Safety Act | 28 |
| Digital and media literacy | 30 |
| 4 Effective methods for identifying and intervening to combat new forms of extremism | 34 |
| Young people in Prevent referrals | 34 |
| Neurodiversity and mental health in Prevent referrals | 36 |
| Effectiveness of Prevent | 37 |
| The Prevent duty | 39 |
| Prevent in the wider safeguarding system | 41 |
| 5 Wider measures to combat new forms of extremism | 47 |
| Strengthening social and community cohesion | 47 |
| Tackling hate crime | 50 |

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Conclusions and recommendations | 52 |
| Formal minutes | 56 |
| Witnesses | 57 |
| Published written evidence | 59 |
| List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament | 62 |

Summary

Extremism is evolving rapidly. While long-standing threats such as Islamist extremism and right-wing extremism persist, new trends in extremism are emerging, including children and young adults being drawn into extremism, hybridised and conflicted ideological belief systems, and an over-representation of neurodiverse individuals and those with mental health conditions in referrals to the government's counter-terrorism Prevent programme.

Online spaces play a central role. Social media and gaming platforms, online forums, influencers, and creative tools such as memes, humour and coded messaging make extremist narratives easily accessible and highly engaging, particularly for younger audiences. Algorithms push a steady stream of harmful content while advances in technology, including generative AI, lower barriers to producing extremist and harmful content. A disproportionate number of individuals who are neurodiverse and those with mental health conditions are being drawn into new forms of extremism. Com networks, online networks of predominantly teenage boys seeking to inflict harm and engaging in a range of criminality, are an example of how the extremism landscape is evolving. These trends are being seen internationally as well as in the UK.

In addition, there are rising incidents linked to anti-blasphemy activism, anti-Israel extremism, anti-Muslim hostility and eco-extremism, driven by divisive, inflammatory and apocalyptic rhetoric. There are a range of underlying drivers to new forms of extremism, including geopolitical events, most notably the Israel-Hamas conflict, the rapid spread of mis- and disinformation, the mainstreaming of antisemitic and anti-Muslim rhetoric, social exclusion and discrimination, and grievance-based narratives. Malign state actors, including Russia and Iran are also using mis- and disinformation to sow fear, mistrust and division, targeting young people in particular and blurring the lines between state threats, terrorism and non-ideologically motivated violent extremism.

The government's current approach to countering extremism has not kept pace with these changes. It is overly reliant on counter-terrorism systems like the Prevent programme, which aims to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, and is not designed for dealing with the complexity of current extremist threats.

Prevent is becoming saturated with non-ideological cases, many of which would be better supported through health, education or community-based interventions rather than through a counter-terrorism lens. Prevent is also poorly adapted to identify individuals being drawn into extremism online.

Our principal recommendation is that the Home Office should embed the Prevent programme within the wider safeguarding system and introduce a triage structure that sits above Prevent. This will ensure that cases suitable for the types of intervention that Prevent offers are funnelled to Prevent and cases more suited to other forms of support are directed elsewhere, without having to first pass through Prevent. A triage system would create a single point of entry, or 'big front door' through which a broad range of concerns can be assessed before being offered a suitable package of support. This would apply to concerns relating to vulnerability, neurodiversity, mental health, violence fascination, or any form of concern around an individual's risk and capacity to hurt themselves or others. This triage function should sit above Prevent, ensuring that Prevent is used only for cases with a genuine risk of radicalisation to terrorism, consistent with its statutory purpose.

We make further recommendations for the Home Office to establish a coherent, long-term research and evidence-gathering programme on new forms of extremism. The UK currently lacks the empirical data needed to understand where and how radicalisation is occurring, particularly online, and how best to intervene. Without a strengthened evidence base, policy will continue to lag behind the evolving threat.

Strengthening digital and media literacy is also essential. Young people must be equipped to analyse online material critically, recognise manipulative content, understand algorithms, and identify AI-generated or deceptive content. To that end, we welcome planned reforms to expand digital and media literacy in the national curriculum.

New patterns of extremism, particularly those affecting children and young adults, require a whole-of-society approach. We welcome the government's strategy on social cohesion, 'Protecting what matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom'. Cross-government working is crucial to ensure its successful implementation. We expect to see the Home Office working closely with relevant departments to disrupt extremist influence and activity, rather than treating this solely as a counter-terrorism issue.

1 Introduction and background

1. Extremism can pose risks to national security, public safety and social cohesion. While it is not an offence to be an extremist and not all those with extremist beliefs commit or incite violence, extremism can lead to radicalisation, denial of rights, suppression of freedom of expression, incitement of hatred, erosion of democratic institutions, acts of serious violence and acts of terrorism.¹
2. In April 2025, we published our report on the police response to the 2024 summer disorder which followed the murder of three children in Southport.² While that report focused on the policing of disorder following the tragic events in Southport, we were also concerned that the perpetrator of the attack had been referred to Prevent three times, with each case closed on the basis that he did not meet the threshold for a terrorism risk. The final referral related to concerns about his online activity. We explored this issue further in private meetings with the National Crime Agency (NCA) and decided to examine emerging trends in extremism, the role of online spaces and what happens to individuals whose cases fall below the threshold for being at risk of radicalisation to terrorism.
3. The title of this inquiry is ‘Combatting new forms of extremism’. Our primary focus has been on the growing number of children and young adults, mostly male, who are being radicalised online. When we talk about new forms of extremism, we refer to the combination of the young ages of those involved, the diversity and fluidity of their belief systems—that incorporate different ideologies and do not fit into traditional categorisations—and the central role of online platforms in exposing and drawing them towards harmful content. We also note the high proportion of individuals who are neurodiverse, particularly those on the autism spectrum, being drawn into new forms of extremism.³

1 MHCLG, [New definition of extremism](#), gov.uk, March 2024

2 Home Affairs Committee, Second Report of the Session 2024–25, [Police response to the 2024 summer disorder](#), HC381

3 Security Service, [Director General Ken McCallum gives latest threat update](#), gov.uk, 8 October 2024, Security Service, [Director General Sir Ken McCallum gives threat update](#), gov.uk, 16 October 2025, and Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation, [The Terrorism Acts in 2023: report of the Independent Reviewer of Terrorism Legislation](#),

4. While our inquiry focused on new forms of extremism, we acknowledge that more traditional forms of extremism, including Islamist extremism and right-wing extremism, continue to pose a serious threat internationally as well as in the UK. These must remain a central focus of national security, counter-terrorism, and counter-extremism efforts.
5. We launched our inquiry in May 2025. We received 55 pieces of written evidence and held four oral evidence sessions. We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this inquiry.

Terms and definitions – terrorism, extremism and radicalisation

6. The terms ‘terrorism’, ‘extremism’ and ‘radicalisation’ are used throughout this report. There is some overlap between these terms, although they describe distinct concepts that are important to differentiate.

Box 1: Definition of terrorism

Terrorism is defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 as follows:

- 1) In this Act “terrorism” means the use or threat of action where—
 - a) the action falls within subsection (2),
 - b) the use or threat is designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and
 - c) the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause.
- 2) Action falls within this subsection if it—
 - a) involves serious violence against a person,
 - b) involves serious damage to property,
 - c) endangers a person’s life, other than that of the person committing the action,
 - d) creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public, or

gov.uk, 15 July 2025, Counter Terrorism Policing, [CTP joins Five Eyes partners in calling for ‘whole society’ action to fight growing threat to children posed by online extremism](#), police.uk, 5 December 2024

- e) is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.
- 3) The use or threat of action falling within subsection (2) which involves the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not subsection (1)(b) is satisfied.
- 4) In this section—
 - a) “action” includes action outside of the United Kingdom.
 - b) a reference to any person or to property is a reference to any person, or to property, wherever situated,
 - c) a reference to the public includes a reference to the public of a country other than the United Kingdom, and
 - d) “the government” means the government of the United Kingdom, of a Part of the United Kingdom or of a country other than the United Kingdom.
- 5) In this Act a reference to action taken for the purposes of terrorism includes reference to action taken for the benefit of a proscribed organisation.⁴

Source: [Terrorism Act 2000](#)

Box 2: Definition of extremism⁵

There is no legal definition of extremism. The previous government published a non-statutory definition of extremism in March 2024:

Extremism is the promotion or advancement of an ideology⁶ based on violence, hatred or intolerance⁷ that aims to:

4 [Terrorism Act 2000](#) The Act further notes that the use or threat of action which involves the use of firearms or explosives is terrorism whether or not the use or threat is designed to influence the government or an international governmental organisation or to intimidate the public or a section of the public.

5 The Committee heard views on the adequacy and appropriateness of the definition of extremism, however that debate is beyond the scope of this report. The government’s new social cohesion strategy notes that it will embed this definition across government departments. MHCLG, [Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom](#), gov.uk, 9 March 2026.

6 The definition footnotes here: “Ideology: A set of social, political, or religious ideas, beliefs, and attitudes that contribute to a person’s worldview.”

7 The definition footnotes here that “this phrase is found consistently in the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights. See for example *Perinçek v Switzerland* (App. 27510/08). “Intolerance” in the context of the definition is closely linked with “violence” and “hatred” and is intended to mean (and is to be applied to mean) an actively

- i) Negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedom⁸ of others; or
- ii) Undermine, overturn or replace the UK’s system of liberal parliamentary democracy⁹ and democratic rights;¹⁰ or
- iii) Intentionally create a permissive environment for others to achieve the results in (i) or (ii).

Source: MHCLG, [New definition of extremism](#), gov.uk, 14 March 2024

Box 3: Definition of radicalisation

There is no legal definition of radicalisation. The government’s statutory guidance on Prevent, the government’s counter-terrorism programme to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism, describes radicalisation as “the process of a person legitimising support for, or use of, terrorist violence”. Radicalisation need not be limited to radicalisation to terrorism; it can also happen when a person develops extreme views or beliefs that support violent or harmful actions.

Source: Home Office, [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\)](#), gov.uk, 7 September 2023

Government approach to countering extremism

- 7. The government’s approach to countering extremism is shared across several departments, with the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) playing leading roles. The Home Office leads on CONTEST, the UK’s counter-terrorism strategy. CONTEST has four pillars: Prevent, Prepare, Protect and Pursue. Of these, the Prevent pillar, which aims to identify people at risk of becoming

repressive approach rather than simply a strong opposition or dislike.”

- 8 The definition footnotes here that “In particular those rights and freedoms listed in Schedule 1 to the Human Rights Act 1998. Lawful expression of one’s beliefs, for example advocating for changes to the law by Parliament, exercising the right to protest, or expressing oneself in art, literature, and comedy, is not extremism.”
- 9 The definition footnotes here that, “Parliamentary democracy: The UK is a parliamentary democracy which consists of a constitutional monarch as Head of State, who exercises a number of constitutional and ceremonial duties; Parliament, which is the supreme legislative authority with the ability to make or unmake any law; government, which is drawn from and accountable to Parliament; and a judiciary which is independent from government and Parliament.”
- 10 The definition footnotes here that is includes “the right to vote, the right to join a political party, or the right to stand in elections.”

terrorists or supporting terrorism and intervene early, sits within the counter-terrorism apparatus but works in a policy space that overlaps with countering extremism. Beyond counter-terrorism measures, wider criminal justice measures, including hate crime and public order legislation, are in place to address harmful behaviours that fall below the terrorism threshold.

8. Alongside this, MHCLG is responsible for strengthening social cohesion and community resilience to stop extremism from taking root, while departments including Education and Health and Social Care, together with local authorities and law enforcement, play vital roles in identifying concerns, safeguarding individuals, and supporting community-based responses. The Department for Science, Innovation and Technology leads on engagement with technology companies, an increasingly important part of the government's approach given the central role of online spaces in exposing people, particularly young people, to extremist content.
9. The Commissioner for Countering Extremism and the Independent Prevent Commissioner provide oversight of the government's multi-faceted approach, providing expert advice and impartial scrutiny of policy, including Prevent, and the implementation of the government's counter-extremism measures. The position of the Commissioner for Countering Extremism has been vacant since July 2025, and the government has stated that it is reviewing this role.¹¹ The role of the Independent Prevent Commissioner was established in December 2024 to provide independent strategic oversight of Prevent and to develop expertise and insight into the Prevent system and provide recommendations to improve its effectiveness. Lord Anderson of Ipswich has been the Interim Prevent Commissioner since January 2025.¹²
10. As the nature of the threat posed by extremism has evolved over the past decade, the approaches of successive governments to countering extremism have been shaped by a series of reviews and strategies, including:
 - The Conservative Government's Counter Extremism Strategy (2015, now expired);¹³
 - Challenging Hateful Extremism (2019), a report by Dame Sara Khan in her former role as the Commissioner for Countering Extremism;¹⁴
 - Operating with Impunity (2021), a legal review conducted by Dame Sara Khan and Sir Mark Rowley looking at the adequacy of existing legislation to deal with hateful extremism;¹⁵

11 [Commission for Countering Extremism](#), PQ HL9334, 4 August 2025

12 Home Office, [Independent Prevent Commissioner](#), gov.uk, 14 February 2025

13 Home Office, [Counter-Extremism Strategy](#), gov.uk, 19 October 2015

14 Commission for Countering Extremism, [Challenging Hateful Extremism](#), gov.uk, 7 October 2019

15 Commission for Countering Extremism, [Operating with impunity: legal review](#), gov.uk, 24 February 2021

- Independent Review of Prevent (also known as the Shawcross Review) (2023), an independent review by William Shawcross CVO looking at Prevent’s objectives and implementation;¹⁶
- The Khan Review: Threats to Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience (2024), an independent review by Dame Sara Khan in her capacity as Independent Adviser on Social Cohesion;¹⁷
- Protecting our Democracy from Coercion (2025), an independent review by Lord Walney in his role as Independent Adviser on Political Violence and Disruption;¹⁸
- Independent Prevent learning reviews of the murder of Sir David Amess and Southport attack (2025);¹⁹ and
- Lessons for Prevent (2025), an independent review of Prevent by Lord Anderson of Ipswich, the interim Independent Prevent Commissioner, following the murder of Sir David Amess and the Southport attack (2025).²⁰

These reports have informed and shaped the development of government strategies. The CONTEST update, published in 2023, and the National Security Strategy, published in June 2025, underscore a growing focus on emerging threats, including from lone actors, those driven by fixations on extreme violence and the role of foreign state actors. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s social cohesion strategy, ‘Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom’, published in March 2026, notes that social cohesion has come under strain as a result of “rapid technological, demographic, and economic change, alongside a rising tide of extremism and malign foreign actors”.²¹ Forthcoming reviews by Lord MacDonal of River Glaven on public order and hate crime legislation, and the Southport Inquiry led by Sir Adrian Fulford, will provide further analysis to inform future policy developments in this area.²²

16 Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent](#), gov.uk, 20 February 2023

17 Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, [The Khan Review: Threats to Social Cohesion and Democratic Resilience](#), gov.uk, 25 March 2024

18 Home Office, [Protecting our Democracy from Coercion](#), gov.uk, 21 May 2024

19 Home Office, [Independent Prevent learning reviews](#), gov.uk, 5 February 2025

20 Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner, [Lessons for Prevent](#), gov.uk, 16 July 2025

21 MHCLG, [Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom](#), gov.uk, 9 March 2026. The strategy was published after we finished taking evidence for this inquiry.

22 Home Office, [Review of public order and hate crime legislation](#), gov.uk, 15 November 2025

Prevent and Channel

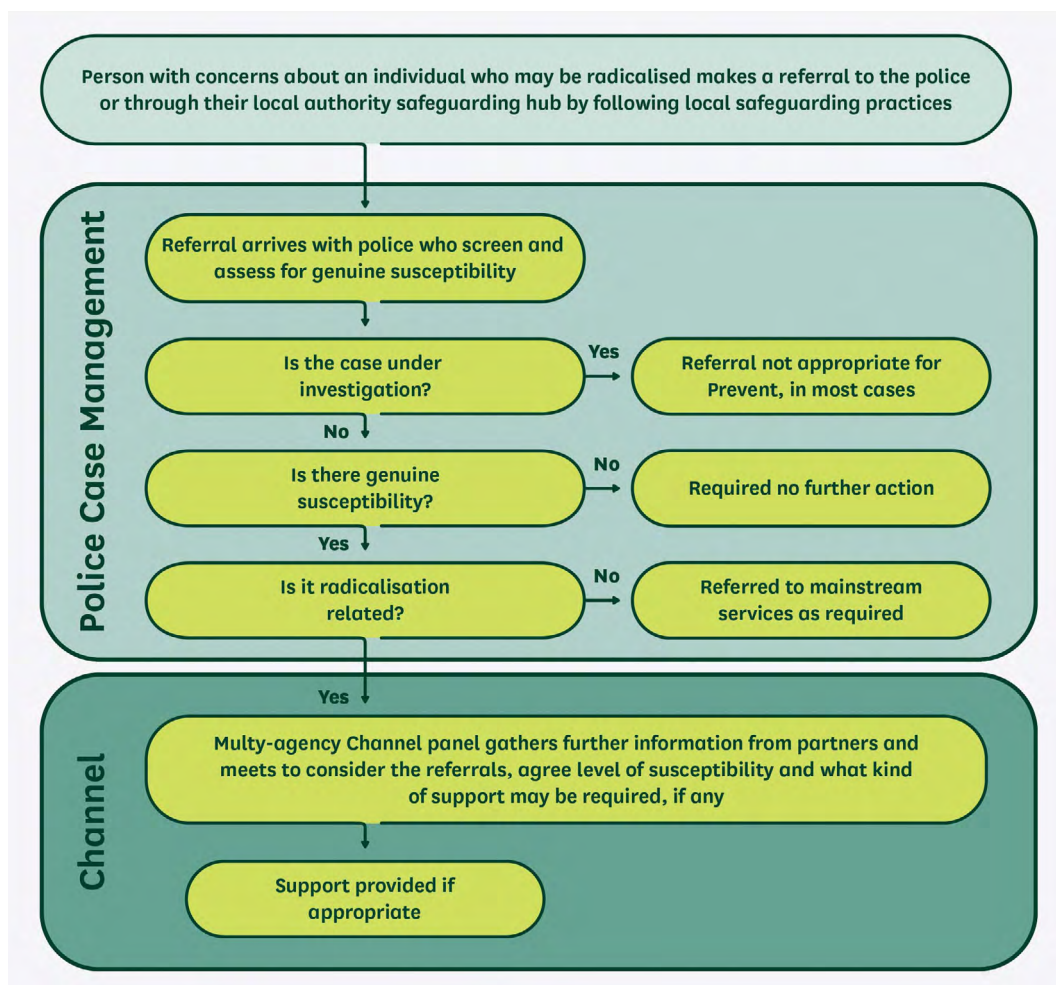
11. The Prevent pillar of CONTEST aims to identify people at risk of becoming terrorists or supporting terrorists and intervene to stop this happening.²³ Anyone who is concerned that they or someone they know is susceptible to radicalisation or might be at risk of becoming involved in terrorism or supporting terrorism can make a Prevent referral. When a referral is made, the police will carry out initial checks. If the individual is found to be at risk, a multi-agency 'Channel panel' assesses the case. If the panel agrees that the case should be taken up, a package of support is offered to the person. If the individual is found not to be at risk the case will be closed.²⁴
12. The relevant local authority chairs the Channel panel, which can include a variety of partners such as the police, children's services, social services, education professionals and mental health care professionals. Participation in Channel is voluntary: people referred to Prevent must give consent (via a parent or guardian if underage) before any support is provided. If someone (or their parent or guardian) turns down Channel support, the Channel panel should suggest alternative services to provide support. If someone refuses Channel support, and the police believe there is a terrorism risk, the police may progress the referral outside of the Channel framework.²⁵

23 Home Office, [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\)](#), gov.uk, 7 September 2023

24 Home Office, [Prevent and Channel factsheet – 2024](#), gov.uk, 5 December 2024

25 Home Office, [Prevent and Channel factsheet – 2024](#), gov.uk, 5 December 2024

Figure 1 Prevent process flow diagram



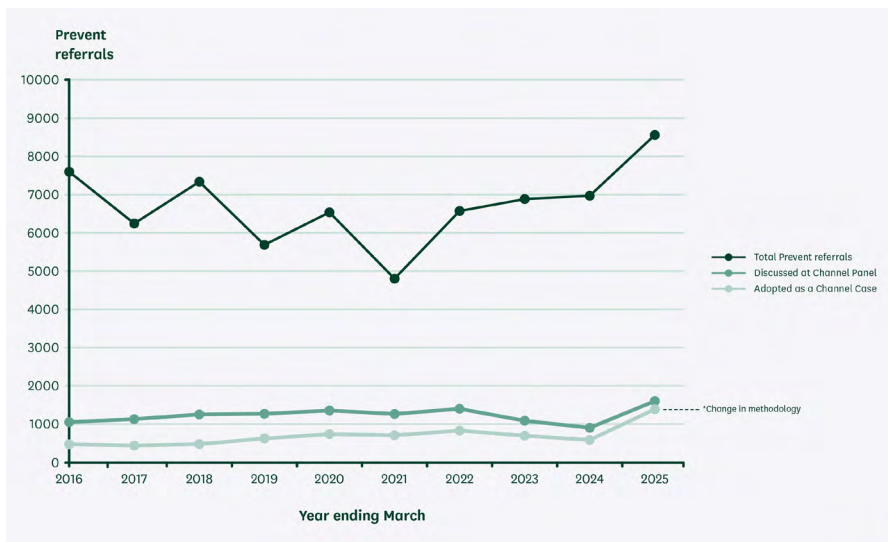
Source: Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk. 6 November 2025

13. The categorisation of the types of concerns being seen in Prevent was updated following the launch in May 2024 of the Prevent Case Management Tracker, a new joint data source which combines information on Prevent referrals and Channel cases. This means that the new categories do not match exactly with previous years' categories. The categories are:
- No ideology identified;
 - No ideology—other susceptibility to radicalisation identified;
 - Extreme Right Wing;
 - Islamist Extremism;
 - Fascination with extreme violence or mass casualty attacks (where no other ideology);
 - Multiple ideologies (with no dominant ideology);

- InCel Extremism;
- Left Wing Extremism;
- Northern Ireland Related—Dissident Republican Extremism;
- Anarchist Extremism; and
- Other.²⁶

14. Notwithstanding other factors that may be at play, Prevent statistics showing referrals over time, type of concern and age group suggest that concerns beyond clear ideological indicators are increasingly being referred to Prevent. In the year ending March 2025, there were 8,778 referrals made to Prevent. This is the highest number of referrals to Prevent in any year. A much smaller number of cases than are referred go on to be discussed at Channel panels and fewer still are adopted. For the year ending March 2025, 1,727 individuals (20% of referrals) were discussed by a Channel panel, and 1,472 individuals (17% of referrals) were adopted as a Channel case.²⁷ As noted, cases not progressed in Channel can be signposted to other support services, including mental health.

Figure 2 Number of Prevent referrals, number of referrals discussed at a Channel panel and adopted as a Channel case, between 2015–16 and 2024–25



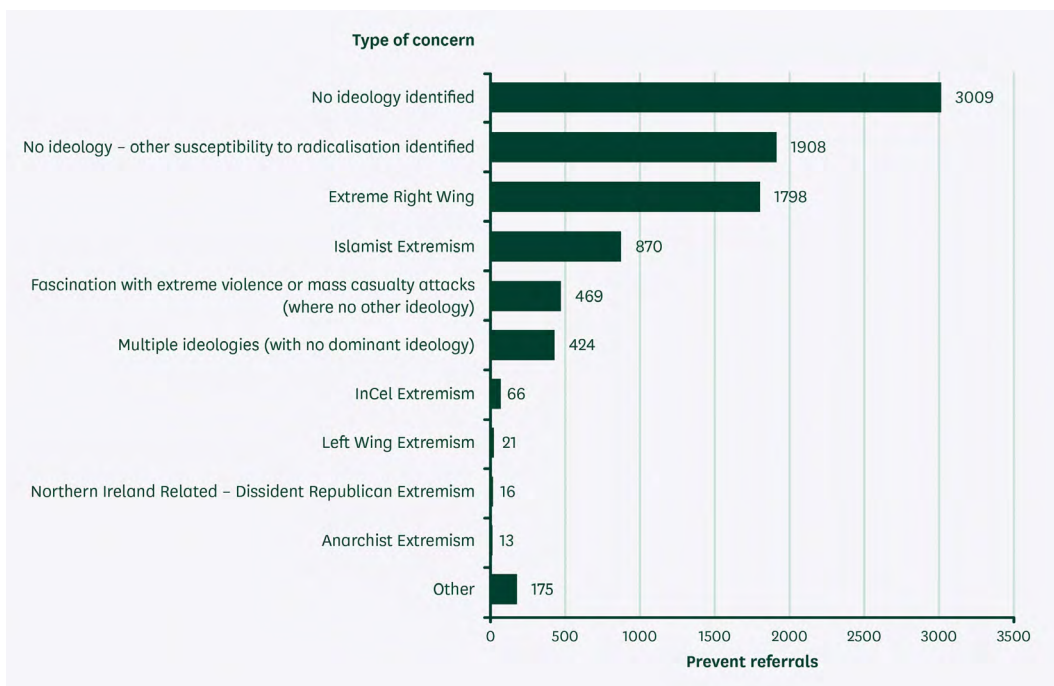
Source: Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

26 Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

27 Figures for “adopted” Channel cases are not comparable to previous years due to a change in methodology - adoption is now recorded at the point of the Channel Panel’s decision rather than when consent is provided. This has resulted in higher figures for the number of cases adopted compared to previous years. Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

15. Referrals by type of concern point to concerns about behaviours even when there are no clear signs of ideology. This aligns with trends in new forms of extremism which show a rise in individuals forming personalised hybrid belief systems that blend elements from multiple ideological viewpoints, conspiracy theories, political, gender and other identity-based narratives.²⁸ In the year ending March 2025, the majority of referrals to Prevent specified ‘no ideology identified’ or ‘no ideology–other susceptibility to radicalisation identified’.²⁹

Figure 3 Prevent referrals by type of concern, year ending March 2025



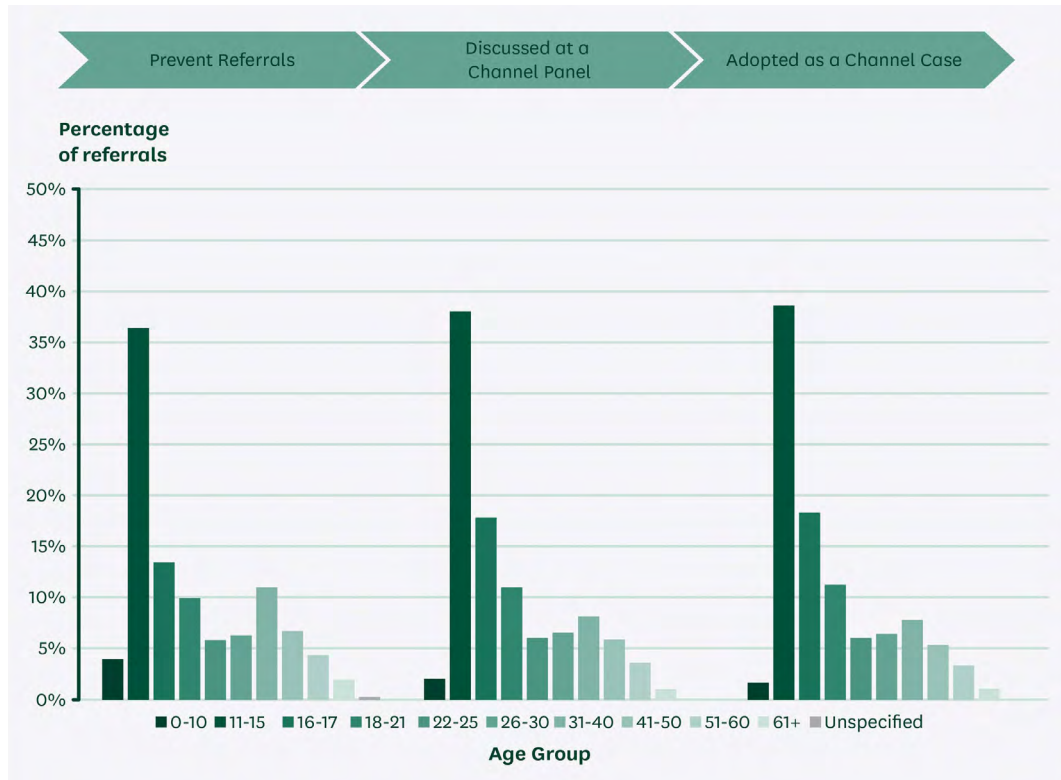
Source: Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/individuals-referred-to-prevent-to-march-2025), gov.uk. 6 November 2025

28 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)); Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)); Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)); Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#))

29 Type of concern may be updated at a later stage if new information comes to light. For example, in some cases a referral indicating no ideology will later be found to fit within an ideologically-based category.

- 16. Children aged 11–15 years represented the highest numbers of those discussed at a Channel panel and adopted as a Channel case. Figure 4 shows that children aged 17 and under accounted for 4,715 of all referrals (8,778) to Prevent in year ending March 2025.

Figure 4 Age group from youngest to oldest of those referred, discussed at a Channel panel and adopted as a channel case, year ending March 2025



Source: Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

- 17. The following chapters explore these trends in more detail and scrutinise whether the Home Office is prioritising and fulfilling its role in delivering a cohesive, cross-government and whole-of-society approach to combatting new forms of extremism.

2 Trends in extremism

18. Extremism in the UK is evolving rapidly. This chapter looks at trends in extremism, drivers of extremism, and the role of enduring themes of antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories in driving new forms of extremism. We also consider the research and evidence base that supports our analysis of these trends and drivers.
19. Key trends highlighted during this inquiry were:
- **Increasing involvement of young people:** A growing prevalence of young people (under 18s) being drawn into extremism, including rising numbers of youth referrals to Prevent;³⁰
 - **Hybridised and conflicted ideological belief systems:** Extremism is increasingly characterised by fluid or hybrid ideological frameworks and a shift toward nihilistic violence and violence fixation or fascination. Individuals are combining elements from different, sometimes contradictory, narratives and becoming radicalised along pathways that challenge traditional categorisation based on fixed ideologies;³¹
 - **The role of online spaces, social media and influencers:** The online environment is playing a central role in the spread of extremist narratives. Social media platforms and gaming platforms, online forums, influencers and creative tools such as memes, humour, and coded messaging are used to spread extremist content in a way that is accessible and appealing, particularly to younger audiences, and with the aid of algorithms that promote and push a steady stream of harmful content to users;³²

30 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)); Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)); Community Security Trust (CST) ([COM0024](#)); Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#))

31 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)); Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)); RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)); The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)); onEvidence Ltd ([COM0046](#))

32 See for example, RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)); Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)); The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)); Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)); Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#)); Resilience in Unity ([COM0031](#)); Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)); Dr Ashley A. Mattheis, Lecturer of Digital Media and Culture at The University of Manchester ([COM0050](#)); Professor Gabe Mythen (Professor of Criminology at University of Liverpool); Dr Laura Naegler (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Liverpool); Jacob Astley (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Salford) ([COM0055](#))

- **Use of technology, including generative AI:**³³ Advances in technology are creating new opportunities for extremist actors. Generative AI is being used to produce large volumes of tailored content and disinformation. These tools lower entry barriers to creating and disseminating appealing, high-quality content;³⁴
- **Over-representation of neurodiverse individuals and those with mental health conditions:** Prevent statistics show a disproportionate number of referrals involving neurodivergence, particularly Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The link between neurodiversity and vulnerability to extremism is poorly understood, raising concerns that individuals may be inappropriately referred to Prevent and around appropriate means of intervention and safeguarding;³⁵ and
- **Rising anti-blasphemy extremism, anti-Israel extremism, anti-Muslim hostility**³⁶ **and eco-extremism:** There has been an increase in hate crimes and incidents in the UK that are linked to anti-blasphemy activism, anti-Israel extremism, anti-Muslim hostility and eco-extremism. Individuals and groups are adopting divisive rhetoric and using increasingly hateful, inflammatory and apocalyptic language that exploits public anxieties and provokes confrontation.³⁷

20. In both oral and written evidence, witnesses identified a range of underlying factors driving the increase in extremism in the UK. These include geo-political events, most notably the Israel-Hamas conflict,

33 Generative AI is any AI model that generates text, images, audio, video or other media in response to prompts. It uses machine learning techniques to create new data that has similar characteristics to the data it was trained on. Generative AI applications include chatbots, photo and video filters, and virtual assistants. (See Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, [Artificial intelligence \(AI\) glossary](#), parliament.uk, 23 January 2024)

34 See for example, The Alan Turing Institute (CETaS) ([COM0005](#)); Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#)); RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)); Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)); Oxford Disinformation & Extremism Lab ([COM0018](#)); Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)); Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#)); Community Security Trust (CST) ([COM0024](#)); onEvidence Ltd ([COM0046](#))

35 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)); Child Rights International Network (CRIN) ([COM0012](#)); Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)); Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#)); Dr Alice Siberry (Neurodiversity Consultant at Creased Puddle) ([COM0053](#)); The Association of Directors of Children’s Services Ltd. (ADCS) ([COM0054](#))

36 MHCLG, [A Definition of Anti-Muslim Hostility](#), gov.uk, 9 March 2026

37 See for example, Jewish Leadership Council ([COM0011](#)); Dr. Lluís de Nadal (Lecturer in Media, Culture and Society at University of Glasgow) ([COM0014](#)); Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#)); Labour Friends of Israel ([COM0016](#)); Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Robin Simcox ([COM0035](#)); Dr Daniel Allington (Reader in Social Analytics at King’s College London) ([COM0038](#)); Board of Deputies of British Jews ([COM0039](#))

and the rapid spread of mis- and disinformation.³⁸ Witnesses highlighted the mainstreaming of extremist language in public discourse, including normalisation of antisemitic and anti-Muslim rhetoric, the effects of social and personal exclusion, discrimination and isolation, and the power of grievance-based narratives to mobilise individuals. Finally, we heard that malign actors, notably Russia and Iran and its Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), are using mis- and disinformation to sow fear and mistrust and spread extremist ideologies targeting young people in the UK. The involvement of state actors in spreading extremism is blurring the lines between state threats, terrorism and non-ideologically motivated violent extremism.³⁹

21. Jonathan Emmett, Director, Counter-Terrorism Directorate, Home Office, told us that in addition to the enduring threat of terrorism, trends in extremism include increasing threats such as well-documented increases in hate crime against both Muslim and Jewish communities, and emerging threats such as the “prevalence of individuals fascinated by mass violence”. He noted an increasingly wide range of emergent extremist ideologies, the prevalence of young people being radicalised to extremism, the “significant incidence” of individuals with mental ill health and people who are neurodivergent being referred to Prevent and the role of online spaces in spreading extremist narratives.⁴⁰

Antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories

22. Antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories play a significant role in shaping contemporary extremist narratives and behaviours. Witnesses emphasised that antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories act as

38 Misinformation is fake news that is created and spread by mistake including by individuals who didn’t realise the information was false. Disinformation is the creation and spread of false and/or manipulated information that is intended to deceive and mislead people, either for the purposes of causing harm, or for political, personal or financial gain. (see: Cabinet Office and DSIT, [Fact Sheet on the Counter Disinformation Unit and Rapid Response Unit](#), gov.uk, 9 June 2023)

39 See for example, Professor Tahir Abbas (Professor of Radicalisation Studies at Leiden University) ([COM0001](#)), Professor Aurelien Mondon (Professor of Politics at University of Bath) ([COM0002](#)), Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#)), Labour Friends of Israel ([COM0016](#)), United Against Nuclear Iran ([COM0033](#)), Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Robin Simcox ([COM0035](#))

40 [Q210](#)

a gateway to extremism by intersecting with other drivers of extremism, reinforcing grievances, legitimising hostility, and creating unique radicalisation pathways for individuals.⁴¹

- 23.** We heard that antisemitism forms a core component of a multitude of extremist narratives. Dr Daniel Allington, Reader in Social Analytics at King’s College London, told us that antisemitic discourse operates “as a lingua franca” that transcends the British political left and right.⁴² The Jewish Leadership Council, a charity and umbrella body representing UK Jewish organisations, and Dr Allington told us that antisemitism should be viewed as a risk factor of radicalisation to extremism.⁴³ During our inquiry, the terrorist attack at Heaton Park Hebrew Congregation synagogue on 2 October last year was a tragic example of the risks posed by antisemitism in the UK.
- 24.** Misogyny was described to us as a persistent and pervasive feature of online extremism.⁴⁴ It gains traction in online subcultures within the broader ‘manosphere’—a loosely connected network of groups, influencers and online communities, including incels⁴⁵—influencing attitudes and behaviours.⁴⁶ Dr Allysa Czerwinsky, Research Fellow in AI Trust and Security, University of Manchester, told us that misogyny underpins and intersects with other forms of extremist and gender-based violence.⁴⁷

41 See for example, Dr Beatriz Lopes Buarque (Fellow at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)); Dr Ashton Kingdon (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Southampton); Allysa Czerwinsky (PhD candidate at University of Manchester); Dr Julia Ebner (Lab Group Leader, Postdoctoral Researcher and Tutor at University of Oxford); Dr Aaron Winter (Senior Lecturer in Sociology (Race and Anti-Racism) at Lancaster University); Dr Robert Topinka (Senior Lecturer in Culture and Communication at Birkbeck, University of London); Dr Meropi Tzanetakis (Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Digital Criminology at University of Manchester) ([COM0007](#)), Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#))

42 Dr Daniel Allington (Reader in Social Analytics at King’s College London) ([COM0038](#))

43 [Q11](#), Jewish Leadership Council ([COM0011](#))

44 Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)), Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#))

45 In a study on predicting harm among incels: the roles of mental health, ideological belief and social networking, Joe Whittaker, William Costello and Andrew G. Thomas, describe incels as “a sub-culture community of men who forge a sense of identity around their perceived inability to form sexual or romantic relationships.” See, Commission for Countering Extremism, [Predicting harm among incels \(involuntary celibates\): the roles of mental health, ideological belief and social networking](#), gov.uk, 22 May 2024

46 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)), Dr Ashley A. Mattheis, Lecturer of Digital Media and Culture at The University of Manchester ([COM0050](#)), Dr Allysa Czerwinsky, Research Fellow in AI Trust and Security, University of Manchester ([COM0049](#))

47 [Q11](#), Dr Allysa Czerwinsky, Research Fellow in AI Trust and Security, University of Manchester ([COM0049](#))

25. Submissions to our inquiry repeatedly cited conspiracy theories as a significant driver of radicalisation, especially online. The Jewish Leadership Council told us most forms of extremism are underpinned by conspiracy theories, many of which are “rooted in antisemitism”.⁴⁸ We heard that conspiracy theories often resonate by appealing to genuine grievances and can be used by extremist groups to create distrust and polarisation within communities.⁴⁹
26. Although several witnesses highlighted the significant role of conspiracy theories in spreading extremism, Dr Joe Whittaker, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Sociology, and Social Policy at Swansea University and Director at Vox Pol Institute, made the point that, given the sometimes high levels of public support for some conspiracy theories (“up to around 10%”), belief in conspiracy theories alone is “never going to predict violence”.⁵⁰

Research and evidence base

27. Notwithstanding the excellent evidence we received from witnesses based on their own research, we heard that the research and evidence base on terrorism, extremism and new forms of extremism is sorely lacking. Dame Sara Khan, former Counter Extremism Commissioner from 2018–2021 and former Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience for the UK Government 2021–2024, warned that Britain is “so much in the dark” about what is happening, where it is happening (both online and in communities), and how to effectively counter new forms of extremism.⁵¹
28. Witnesses highlighted that online extremism is an area where the evidence base significantly lags behind real world developments. Adam Hadley, Executive Director at Tech Against Terrorism (TAT), a civil society group supporting collaboration between government and the tech sector to combat terrorism online, told us:

48 Jewish Leadership Council ([COM0011](#))

49 See for example, [Qq11-12](#) [Dr Whittaker, Dr Allington, Professor Smith], Dr Beatriz Lopes Buarque (Fellow at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)); Dr Ashton Kingdon (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Southampton); Allysa Czerwinsky (PhD candidate at University of Manchester); Dr Julia Ebner (Lab Group Leader, Postdoctoral Researcher and Tutor at University of Oxford); Dr Aaron Winter (Senior Lecturer in Sociology (Race and Anti-Racism) at Lancaster University); Dr Robert Topinka (Senior Lecturer in Culture and Communication at Birkbeck, University of London); Dr Meropi Tzanetakis (Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Digital Criminology at University of Manchester) ([COM0007](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#))

50 [Q12](#)

51 [Qq176-177](#)

[W]e know that in every, or almost every, case of terrorism in this country over the past five years, the internet has played a fundamental role—not an incidental role; it has been fundamental. Yet our understanding of that journey, what sites people have been on and what content they have consumed, is extremely poor.⁵²

29. Dr Daniel Allington told us there is a “terrible lack” of independent empirical research.⁵³ This applies to research relating to both terrorism and extremism. Extremism is not an easy space in which to conduct research. Researchers can face barriers in the form of academic institutions that are risk-averse or reluctant to support areas of research that are politically controversial; limited access to relevant data and subjects; the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs) by groups looking to halt research into their activities; and efforts by platforms to prevent research being conducted on their systems.⁵⁴ As referred to above, we heard that the ways in which neurodevelopmental conditions might relate to engaging with extremist content are under-researched.⁵⁵

30. **CONCLUSION**

Extremism is evolving rapidly and becoming more complex. Long-standing terrorist threats remain but new forms of extremism are emerging and give rise to growing concern. The impact of geo-political events is likely to intensify in light of continuing conflict in the Middle East. There has been a marked rise in the prevalence of young people being drawn into extremism, often radicalised through a toxic mix of antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories combining to form hybridised belief systems, nihilism and violence fascination. This has profound implications for national security, public order, and social cohesion.

31. **CONCLUSION**

Good policy making relies upon data and evidence. At the moment the UK lacks the evidence base and up-to-date research needed to keep pace with these developments. The impediments to supporting rigorous, independent empirical research have limited our understanding of the extremist threat. This presents challenges for the government, police and other local authority, health and education professionals attempting to identify, assess and intervene in the most effective way. Strengthening the research foundation will be essential if policy and the on-the-ground response is to keep pace with the evolving nature of the extremist threat.

52 [Q55](#)

53 [Q25](#)

54 [Qq65–66](#) [Imran Ahmed, Adam Hadley], [Q148](#), Dr Daniel Allington (Reader in Social Analytics at King’s College London) ([COM0038](#))

55 [Q24](#), [Q25](#)

32.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Home Office establishes a coherent, long-term research and evidence programme on emerging forms of extremism. It should ensure that sufficient support and resources are available to enable independent, empirical research to be commissioned, whether by the Home Office itself, the Commission for Countering Extremism or the Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner. Research conducted should be published and the Home Office should include mechanisms for regularly reviewing and updating the evidence base. We expect the Home Office to set out its plans for such a research and evidence programme in its response to this report.

3 Online spaces, AI and other technology

33. This chapter looks at the role of online spaces in spreading extremism. We look at how extremist content spreads online, the prevalence of legal but harmful content, the role of influencers and how algorithms shape exposure to extremist narratives. We consider com networks—online networks of predominantly teenage boys seeking to inflict harm and which engage in a range of criminality—as an example of how the online extremism landscape is evolving.⁵⁶ We also examine measures to curb the spread of extremism online including technological interventions, the application of the Online Safety Act, and efforts to build resilience through improved digital and media literacy.

Legal but harmful content and algorithms

34. We heard compelling evidence that legal but harmful content plays a significant role in exposing children and young people to extremist narratives. Legal but harmful content can include, for example, the promotion or encouragement of self-harm or eating disorders, and content that is inappropriate or harmful for children including pornographic material or material that depicts graphic violence, abuse, harassment or bullying that does not pass the threshold of a criminal offence.⁵⁷
35. There are several factors that make the spread of legal but harmful content incredibly potent. One is the huge volume of content that children are being exposed to and how it is presented. Robin Simcox, former Commissioner for Countering Extremism, told us that the scale of extremist content being disseminated online is “unrecognisable” compared to previous decades.⁵⁸ Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams, Research Fellow at the University of Huddersfield, told us extremist content is often disguised as empowerment, self-improvement or social critique, using coded language and aspirational

56 National Crime Agency, [Sadistic online harm groups putting people at unprecedented risk, warns the NCA](#), gov.uk, 25 March 2025

57 DSIT, [Understanding and reporting online harms on your online platform](#), gov.uk, 29 June 2021. The Online Safety Act defines “harm” as physical or psychological harm. Content that is harmful includes harm arising from the nature of the content and the fact or manner of its dissemination (S 234, [Online Safety Act 2023](#))

58 [Q37](#)

storytelling that is both engaging and difficult to detect on mainstream platforms.⁵⁹ It causes harm by normalising and escalating harmful messaging and reinforcing narratives of grievance and social isolation.⁶⁰

- 36.** A second factor is the evolution of the extremist ecosystem online toward decentralised networks where those navigating within this ecosystem move between platforms and are drawn increasingly to closed and private digital spaces.⁶¹ Several witnesses also raised concerns about the use of gaming platforms to recruit, radicalise and disseminate extremist propaganda.⁶² The Institute for Strategic Dialogue, an international think tank focused on extremism, polarisation and disinformation, noted that certain gaming environments can serve as spaces for extremists to socialise, reinforce harmful ideas and recruit young people.⁶³
- 37.** A third factor is the role of influencers. Influencers looking to spread extremist messaging are highly adept at packaging harmful content into engaging material that uses humour, memes and coded language. Influencers may create and share content that stays within legal limits but can act as an entry point to more harmful communities, guiding individuals towards smaller, private, unmoderated and encrypted platforms or messaging apps where extremist attitudes and more explicit content can be shared and reinforced with greater freedom.⁶⁴ Influencers can also play a significant role in creating conditions that provoke violence, particularly through their framing of socio-political events.⁶⁵ RAND Europe, a not-for-

59 Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#))

60 Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)), Oxford Disinformation & Extremism Lab ([COM0018](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)), Deterrence Center ([COM0040](#))

61 Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#))

62 Antisemitism Policy Trust ([COM0003](#)), Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#))

63 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

64 The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#))

65 See for example, Antisemitism Policy Trust ([COM0003](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)), Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#)), Dr Andrew Whiting (Senior Lecturer in Criminology at Royal Holloway, University of London); Professor Stuart Macdonald (Professor of Law at Swansea University); Professor Lee Jarvis (Professor of International Politics at Loughborough University) ([COM0027](#)), Home Office ([COM0041](#)), Dr Allysa Czerwinsky, Research Fellow in AI Trust and Security, University of Manchester ([COM0049](#)), Dr Ashley A. Mattheis, Lecturer of Digital Media and Culture at The University of Manchester ([COM0050](#)), Professor Gabe Mythen (Professor

profit research institute, explained that the tools used by influencers—humour, memes and coded language—are powerful devices for normalising extremist ideas and bypassing automated moderation tools.⁶⁶

- 38.** Another highly significant factor is the role of algorithms.⁶⁷ Algorithms are designed to maximise user engagement and often determine the content that is promoted and recommended to individuals. Dr Williams, University of Huddersfield, noted that algorithms designed to promote online engagement identify and promote emotionally charged, sensationalist and polarising content.⁶⁸ Extremist actors often craft content designed accordingly to provoke outrage or fear, anticipating that such material will be favoured by algorithms.⁶⁹ Dr Whittaker at Swansea University told us that although larger platforms are improving their capacity to “algorithmically downrank” extremist content, legal but harmful content continues to be actively promoted by algorithms.⁷⁰
- 39.** The business model of major platforms rewards content that attracts attention and engagement. This creates a powerful incentive for the circulation of legal but harmful content. Adam Hadley, Executive Director at Tech Against Terrorism (TAT), told us that the purpose of social media is to generate advertising revenue and it achieves this by sharing content that elicits emotional reactions.⁷¹ Professor Gabe Mythen, University of Liverpool, Dr Laura Naegler, University of Liverpool, and Jacob Astley, University of Salford, noted that profit seeking, rather than an underlying ideological orientation, can create an incentive for some people to develop and share extremist content.⁷²

of Criminology at University of Liverpool); Dr Laura Naegler (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Liverpool); Jacob Astley (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Salford) ([COM0055](#))

66 RAND Europe ([COM0013](#))

67 Algorithm: A set of instructions used to perform tasks (such as calculations and data analysis) usually using a computer or another smart device. For example, algorithms can analyse and sort content that is then promoted on social media feeds to maximise user engagement. (See Parliamentary Office for Science and Technology, [Artificial intelligence \(AI\) glossary](#), parliament.uk, 23 January 2024)

68 Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#))

69 Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#))

70 Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#))

71 [Q51](#)

72 Professor Gabe Mythen (Professor of Criminology at University of Liverpool); Dr Laura Naegler (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Liverpool); Jacob Astley (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Salford) ([COM0055](#))

40. Imran Ahmed, Chief Executive at the Center for Countering Digital Hate, a non-profit research and advocacy organisation, told us that “social media companies are turning a blind eye” to their role in spreading extremism, and gave an example of the inaction demonstrated by tech companies to deal with legal but harmful content:

When you go home tonight, I want you to record a video of yourself and put five seconds of Taylor Swift’s latest song in the background and try uploading it to YouTube and see how fast their algorithms can identify her song and [shut down your video]. They [tech companies] know exactly how to do this. They have been doing it for a decade when it comes to copyrighted material, and yet when it comes to content that make our kids cut themselves or might lead to a terrorist attack, they somehow cannot do it.⁷³

41. The Science, Innovation and Technology Committee has similarly raised concerns about the adverse incentives embedded in the business models of tech companies, the lack of transparency around how algorithms work, and the limited ability of regulators to provide effective oversight. Their report, ‘Social media, misinformation and harmful algorithms’, explores the challenge of regulating technology companies and the ability to hold them accountable for content disseminated on their platforms. That Committee identified five key principles that are crucial for the regulation of social media and related technologies: public safety, free and safe expression, responsibility, control, and transparency.⁷⁴
42. The cumulative effect of these dynamics—legal but harmful content, influencer-driven dissemination, and algorithmic amplification—poses a particular risk to children and other vulnerable groups. It is also clear that the number of people exposed to extremist content who go on to become radicalised will be a small proportion of the whole. Identifying potential risk among the vast amounts of noise on the internet therefore presents a significant challenge.⁷⁵ Dr Alice Siberry, a Neurodiversity Consultant, further cautioned that we do not have a good understanding of the ways in which neurodivergent people interact with extremist content online and risk misinterpreting behaviour and potentially criminalising neurodivergent young people.⁷⁶

73 [Q51, Q60](#)

74 Science, Innovation and Technology Committee, Second Report of Session 2024-25, [Social media, misinformation and harmful algorithms](#), HC441

75 Commissioner for Countering Extremism, Robin Simcox ([COM0035](#))

76 Dr Alice Siberry (Neurodiversity Consultant at Creased Puddle) ([COM0053](#))

Com networks

43. We heard that one of the most disturbing online developments is the emergence of ‘com networks’: loose, decentralised groups of predominantly teenage boys, whose online presence provides them with the reach and tools to “inflict very serious harm”.⁷⁷ The Institute for Strategic Dialogue explained that com networks form part of a wider shift in the extremism ecosystem towards nihilistic violence, distinguished by its absence of ideological motivation and driven by a desire for acceptance and validation within peer communities.⁷⁸
44. Com networks present a significant risk because they are “rooted in obsessions with violence”, normalise extremist content, and blend elements of gang and cult-like behaviour, where members groom participants to engage in escalating criminal behaviours including vandalism, arson, and sometimes more serious violent or abusive acts.⁷⁹ For example, we heard that the com network 764 engages in sextortion, glorifies violence, coerces minors into producing child sexual abuse material, blackmails victims into committing acts of violence, animal abuse or self-harm and carries out harassment and intimidation campaigns.⁸⁰ Its operational model involves identifying victims on mainstream messaging apps or gaming and social media platforms, before moving conversations to encrypted or less regulated platforms where manipulation and coercion can continue unchecked.⁸¹
45. There was debate among witnesses about whether com networks should be considered a new form of extremism. Professor Laura Smith, Director at the Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath, noted that they occupy a “tri-threat area” at the intersection of terrorism-related offending, cybercrime and child sexual abuse and exploitation. She and others warned, therefore, that treating com networks as an extremism issue could risk “policy creep”, whereby tools to counter terrorism or extremism may be deployed in areas they were not designed for, and which can lead to ineffectual responses and unintended consequences.⁸²

77 Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#))

78 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

79 [Q50](#), [Q51](#), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)), Deterrence Center ([COM0040](#)), Dr Ashley A. Mattheis, Lecturer of Digital Media and Culture at The University of Manchester ([COM0050](#))

80 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

81 Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#))

82 See for example, [Q22](#), [Q51](#), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Prof. Joel Busher (Professor of Political Sociology at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Matthew Francis (Professor of Practice (Security and Resilience) at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Rachel Monaghan (Professor of Peace & Conflict at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Andrew Glazzard (Professor of

46. Jonathan Emmett, Director, Counter-Terrorism Directorate, Home Office, told us that efforts are underway to improve data sharing and international cooperation to target com networks and that a multi-agency taskforce, bringing together law enforcement, Ofcom and the Home Office, has already had some success in improving intelligence sharing on com network activity.⁸³ Given the deeply concerning nature of com networks and the age groups involved we would expect this to be a priority for the government and for the multi-agency taskforce to be reaching out to other departments including the Department for Education, Department for Health and Social Care and the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, and local authorities.

AI and other technology

47. Evidence we received argued that, while AI and other technology-based tools present both opportunities and risks when it comes to tackling extremism, the risks outnumber the opportunities. Starting with the potential opportunities, the Alan Turing Institute told us that AI tools are combatting online extremism by:
- improving the detection of online extremist content and networks;
 - supporting predictive analysis and developing counter-narrative to aid deradicalisation; and
 - fact-checking and debunking extremist content.⁸⁴
48. On the other hand, RAND Europe and the Center for Countering Digital Hate, told us that technological advancements in AI, algorithms and privacy-enhancing technologies are lowering entry barriers to creating high-quality content and disinformation which can be rapidly disseminated online.⁸⁵ We heard that technology-based tools were fuelling the spread of extremism

National Security Policy and Practice at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Hanna Munden (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Bianca Slocombe (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Imogen Bayfield (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Daniel Range (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University) ([COM0019](#)), The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)), Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)), Deterrence Center ([COM0040](#))

83 [Q220](#)

84 The Alan Turing Institute (CETaS) ([COM0005](#))

85 RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)), Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#))

online through means such as AI chatbots, triggering,⁸⁶ doxing,⁸⁷ source-hacking,⁸⁸ high-quality deepfakes⁸⁹ and memes,⁹⁰ and real-time translations of audio and video messages. AI is being used to write manifestos, enhance recruitment, raise funds, plan operations, and produce code to create extremist video games.⁹¹ We also heard that extremist actors are able to exploit generative AI to bypass moderation and safety mechanisms, allowing them to create content and elicit responses from AI that would otherwise be blocked.⁹²

49. Finally, we heard that the pace at which these technologies are developing is outstripping the ability of government to put effective legislative and regulatory frameworks in place. Traditional approaches focused on content removal cannot compete with the scale and speed at which content is being created and disseminated.⁹³ We heard calls for platforms to adopt a safety-by-design approach and to be made more accountable for the content on their sites, and that any regulatory model intended to tackle the spread of extremism online should be grounded in effective risk assessment, transparency, and accountability.⁹⁴

-
- 86 Triggering is when content is designed to deliberately cause a person to relive a traumatic experience or ‘trigger’ a negative emotional response. It can be done to provoke an overreaction from mainstream media or public figures, thereby increasing engagement and visibility for extremist messaging.
- 87 Doxing is when personal information or identifying information about a person or organisation is publicly disclosed without consent. It is done to intimidate and to create a climate of fear that discourages scrutiny of certain groups.
- 88 Source-hacking is the use of techniques to hide the source of false information to try and spread disinformation. Source-hacking can also lead to an erosion of trust in established media sources.
- 89 Deepfakes are pictures and videos that are deliberately altered to generate misinformation and disinformation.
- 90 Memes are images, videos, or pieces of text that are typically humorous and designed to spread rapidly online.
- 91 See for example, The Alan Turing Institute (CETaS) ([COM0005](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)), Oxford Disinformation & Extremism Lab ([COM0018](#)), Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)), Center for Countering Digital Hate ([COM0023](#)), Community Security Trust (CST) ([COM0024](#))
- 92 Antisemitism Policy Trust ([COM0003](#)), Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)), Community Security Trust (CST) ([COM0024](#))
- 93 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))
- 94 See for example, Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#)), Amnesty International UK ([COM0021](#)), Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#)). For online products and services, safety-by-design refers to embedding user safety and rights from the outset of designing the product or service by anticipating and eliminating online threats before they occur.

The Online Safety Act

50. The Online Safety Act 2023 (OSA) is the main legislation to protect children and adults online in the UK. The Act is being implemented in phases and as of July 2025, platforms have a legal duty to protect children online. Under the Act, there are two broad categories of content:

- **illegal content**, which must be removed and applies to all online services; and
- **content harmful to children**, where services have duties to prevent children from accessing such content.

The Act creates further sub-categories. Larger, higher-risk social media platforms are designated as Category 1 and are expected to provide greater control for adult users about what content they see and who they engage with, and to uphold their terms of service.⁹⁵

51. Ofcom is the independent regulator for online safety. It produces guidance in the form of codes of practice for providers to fulfil their duties under the Act and has a range of powers to assess and enforce compliance, including the ability to investigate non-compliance, impose fines and apply to the courts to block services.

52. The Online Safety Act Network, a grouping of civil society organisations, campaigners, academics and experts with an interest in the effective implementation of the Online Safety Act, told us that, while the Act introduces a wide-ranging “duty of care” framework, gaps remain that risk leaving new forms of extremism insufficiently addressed.⁹⁶ They argued that the Act’s “binary model of illegal content versus problem-free content” does not fit with the reality of constant incremental changes to content, nudging people towards harmful ideologies that may be difficult to detect and fall below the threshold for illegal content. This results in content that poses a significant risk falling outside the scope of the Act.⁹⁷

53. Witnesses also raised concerns about the risk posed by smaller platforms. The Antisemitism Policy Trust, a charity focused on combatting antisemitism, told us that the most virulent extremist material is frequently hosted on smaller and encrypted platforms that fall outside the highest levels of regulatory scrutiny.⁹⁸ The Institute for Strategic Dialogue told us that it is essential that Ofcom deal with “a longer tail of smaller platforms” that have “a track record of failing to moderate extremely harmful, violent

95 DSIT, [Online Safety Act: explainer](#), gov.uk, 24 April 2025

96 Online Safety Act Network ([COM0034](#))

97 Online Safety Act Network ([COM0034](#))

98 Antisemitism Policy Trust ([COM0003](#))

and often illegal material”.⁹⁹ Dr Whittaker at Swansea University, said that several smaller platforms known to host extremist content have chosen to geo-block UK users since the Act came into force, meaning that users in the UK are unable to access them. However, he argued that that the ease with which geo-blocking can be bypassed suggests that platforms should not be exempt from compliance where they continue to be effectively accessible in the UK.¹⁰⁰

54. We also heard that enforcement of the Act remains limited. Imran Ahmed, at the Center for Countering Digital Hate, told us that Ofcom “is doing nothing” to address social media companies turning a blind eye to rising levels of extremism.¹⁰¹ Tech Against Terrorism noted that Ofcom’s remit is “passive by design” with no mechanism for requiring the removal of specific pieces of content. In their opinion, reliance on users or civil society organisations to report harmful material leaves significant gaps in detection.¹⁰² We heard recommendations for the Act to be strengthened, including: clearer reporting mechanisms for flagging harmful content; the creation of a dedicated unit within Ofcom to monitor mis- and disinformation and AI-amplified extremist content; and for minimum standards for companies’ ‘terms of service’ to be introduced and enforced.¹⁰³ The Home Office told us that Ofcom is making progress in implementing the Act and that the government “will not hesitate to go further” if needed.¹⁰⁴
55. On 12 March 2026, Ofcom announced that it had written to Facebook, Instagram, Roblox, Snapchat, Tik Tok and YouTube setting out four demands and a deadline of 30 April to report back. The companies are expected to implement the following:
- **Effective minimum age policies:** platforms are expected to put in place effective age assurance measures;
 - **Failsafe grooming protections:** this means ensuring strict controls to stop strangers being able to contact children they do not know;

99 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

100 Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#))

101 [Q51](#)

102 [Q65](#)

103 Dr Beatriz Lopes Buarque (Fellow at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)); Dr Ashton Kingdon (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Southampton); Allysa Czerwinsky (PhD candidate at University of Manchester); Dr Julia Ebner (Lab Group Leader, Postdoctoral Researcher and Tutor at University of Oxford); Dr Aaron Winter (Senior Lecturer in Sociology (Race and Anti-Racism) at Lancaster University); Dr Robert Topinka (Senior Lecturer in Culture and Communication at Birkbeck, University of London); Dr Meropi Tzanetakis (Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Digital Criminology at University of Manchester) ([COM0007](#)), Online Safety Act Network ([COM0034](#))

104 [Q211](#)

- **Safer feeds for children:** this will involve assessing information about algorithms used by platforms and the type of content that is promoted to children; and
- **An end to product testing on children:** this includes testing of new AI tools without parents knowing if they have been tested for safety.¹⁰⁵

56. In March 2026 the government launched a consultation on children’s social media use, and is looking closely at Australia, which banned social media for under-16s in December 2025.¹⁰⁶ The consultation will run until 26 May 2026. Parliament is considering the Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill, which contains provisions that would introduce restricted access by children to certain features or functionalities on certain online services.¹⁰⁷ Children’s access to harmful content via social media is persistent and growing, with the evidence we’ve heard suggesting that any effective solution will need to address the practices of both larger and smaller platforms.

Digital and media literacy

57. Written submissions to our inquiry argued that strengthening digital and media literacy was crucial to countering the evolving nature of online extremism. Witnesses stressed that young people and adults need skills to critically analyse online material, recognise and interpret manipulative content and communication strategies, evaluate and fact-check sources, and recognise emotive and manipulative language.¹⁰⁸ RAND Europe emphasised the need for digital literacy education to respond to the rapid development of AI.¹⁰⁹ Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt, Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Manchester, suggested that digital literacy education should also offer young people “stories that affirm dignity, agency and belonging”.¹¹⁰

105 Ofcom, [Keep underage children off your platforms, Ofcom tells tech firms](#), 12 March 2026

106 DSIT, [Landmark consultation seeks views on major measures to protect children on social media, gaming platforms and AI chatbots](#), gov.uk, 2 March 2026

107 [Children’s Wellbeing and Schools Bill, HL Bill 166 \(as amended on Report\) \(2024026\), Clause 32](#)

108 See for example, Professor Tahir Abbas (Professor of Radicalisation Studies at Leiden University) ([COM0001](#)), Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)), Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)), Child Rights International Network (CRIN) ([COM0012](#)), onEvidence Ltd ([COM0046](#)), Metropolitan Police Service ([COM0048](#)), Dr Ashley A. Mattheis, Lecturer of Digital Media and Culture at The University of Manchester ([COM0050](#))

109 RAND Europe ([COM0013](#))

110 Dr Mihaela Popa-Wyatt (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at University of Manchester) ([COM0036](#))

58. There was support for the provision of digital and media literacy taught in schools to be enhanced and improved.¹¹¹ We also heard that it should form part of a bigger educational approach aimed at building social cohesion and resilience. The Runnymede Trust emphasised to us that education should equip children “for responsible life in a diverse, democratic society, cultivating respect, equality, peace and cooperation across all communities.”¹¹² The Institute for Strategic Dialogue told us that countering extremism should incorporate “resilience-building initiatives” such as digital citizenship, and youth engagement programmes.¹¹³
59. In November 2025 the Department for Education announced steps to reform the national curriculum that include embedding digital and media literacy in primary schools and teaching children skills in spotting mis- and disinformation, and critical thinking to identify and protect themselves from online harms. The new curriculum will be introduced from September 2028.¹¹⁴ We note that the teaching of media digital literacy is also covered in the government’s new social cohesion strategy.¹¹⁵

111 See for example, Henry Jackson Society ([COM0006](#)), Dr Beatriz Lopes Buarque (Fellow at London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)); Dr Ashton Kingdon (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Southampton); Allysa Czerwinsky (PhD candidate at University of Manchester); Dr Julia Ebner (Lab Group Leader, Postdoctoral Researcher and Tutor at University of Oxford); Dr Aaron Winter (Senior Lecturer in Sociology (Race and Anti-Racism) at Lancaster University); Dr Robert Topinka (Senior Lecturer in Culture and Communication at Birkbeck, University of London); Dr Meropi Tzanetakis (Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Digital Criminology at University of Manchester) ([COM0007](#)), Dr Thomas James Vaughan Williams (Research Fellow at University of Huddersfield) ([COM0009](#)), RAND Europe ([COM0013](#)), Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#))

112 Runnymede Trust ([COM0026](#))

113 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

114 Department for Education, [New curriculum to give young people the skills for life and work](#), gov.uk, 4 November 2025

115 MHCLG, [Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom](#), gov.uk, 9 March 2026.

60. CONCLUSION

Harmful extremist content is circulating widely online, driven by engagement and profit-maximising algorithms, influencer-led dissemination, and decentralised extremist ecosystems. These systems promote content designed to provoke outrage and fear, often purely for commercial reasons, and the speed and scale of dissemination have outpaced the capacity of moderation and removal tools. Content designed to attract, recruit and radicalise individuals is often targeted at young people and other vulnerable users. This is contributing to emerging trends in extremism, including the increasing engagement of young people and the rise of hybrid belief systems, nihilistic violent extremism and violence fixation. The emergence of com networks represents a serious and escalating threat, with decentralised groups incentivising violence, coercion and criminality among predominantly young males. The evolving and cross-cutting nature of com networks requires an agile, coordinated, cross-government approach to avoid siloed responses that would be fragmented and ineffective.

61. CONCLUSION

The Online Safety Act contains gaps that limit government's ability to address new forms of extremism, particularly when harmful content falls below criminal thresholds. We are concerned that smaller, high-risk platforms are not receiving sufficient regulatory scrutiny. Alongside more robust implementation and enforcement of the Online Safety Act, there is a clear need to equip children and adults with the skills required to critically analyse and interpret extremist content online. This should form part of a wider educational effort to strengthen social cohesion and build resilience to counter extremism both online and within our communities and we welcome the reforms to the national curriculum as a step in the right direction.

62. RECOMMENDATION

The Home Office should engage more closely with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and Ofcom to ensure effective implementation of measures around online safety for children and to ensure that extremist content is among the types of online harmful content that technology companies are expected to address and be held accountable for. In addition, the Home Office should lead a cross-government, multi-agency approach to shut down com networks, building on existing cooperation between law enforcement, security services, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and other relevant departments and safeguarding partners. We expect the Home Office to update us on progress in its response to this report.

63.

RECOMMENDATION

We welcome the inclusion of enhanced digital and media literacy in the new curriculum. It should be embedded consistently across education settings and equip children with the skills to identify, analyse and scrutinise online content, including the operation of algorithms and AI-generated material. We expect the Home Office to engage with the Department for Education to provide analysis and research to ensure that education materials keep pace with changes in technology and tactics used to spread extremism online.

4 Effective methods for identifying and intervening to combat new forms of extremism

64. This chapter looks at the government’s approach to identifying and intervening to counter extremism, particularly new forms of extremism. We first examine the prevalence of young and neurodiverse people in Prevent referrals. We then look at the role of Prevent and the Prevent duty and consider its effectiveness in identifying and ensuring the appropriate intervention for individual cases. We also look at how Prevent works with the wider safeguarding system.
65. As noted in Chapter One, Prevent is part of the government’s counter-terrorism strategy CONTEST. The role of Prevent is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism; it looks for early indicators that someone may be at risk of radicalisation. Once a Channel panel has identified someone as being at risk of radicalisation, Prevent can offer early intervention support to address the personal, ideological and social factors which make people more susceptible to radicalisation.

Young people in Prevent referrals

66. Young people constitute a significant proportion of those referred to Prevent. In the year ending March 2025, there were 8,778 Prevent referrals—a 27% increase on the previous year. Eighty percent (6,999) were deemed not suitable for Channel consideration. Individuals aged 11 to 15 represented the largest share of referrals where age was known, accounting for 3,192 referrals (36%). This age group also made up 38% (657 out of 1,727) of cases discussed at Channel panels and 39% (568 of 1,472) of cases adopted as Channel cases.¹¹⁶ There are also concerning trends in the

116 Figures for “adopted” Channel cases are not comparable to previous years due to a change in methodology—adoption is now recorded at the point of the Channel Panel’s decision rather than when consent is provided. This has resulted in higher figures for the number of cases adopted compared to previous years. Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

number of young people arrested under terrorism laws. Arrests of children aged 17 and under for terrorism-related offences reached a record high in 2023 with 42 arrests (19% of 219 total arrests). Figures for 2025, the latest available, show 40 individuals aged 17 and under were arrested under terrorism legislation; one of those arrests was linked to supporting Palestine Action. Minors made up 15% of non-Palestine Action arrests (39 of 253).¹¹⁷

- 67.** While these figures point to increasing engagement of young people in extremism, we were cautioned against drawing overly broad conclusions from Prevent data alone. Several witnesses noted that Prevent’s largest referral pathway is through referrals made under the Prevent duty via the education system, meaning that high referral numbers may partly reflect the programme’s design rather than the true scale of risk.¹¹⁸ We also heard how volumes and types of referrals to Prevent can be a response to events that heighten public awareness, such as the Southport attack and cultural moments like the release of the Netflix series *Adolescence*.¹¹⁹ The Youth Justice Board noted the low rates of referrals of young people that go on to be adopted as Channel cases and highlighted that “over half of under-18s convicted of terrorism offences over the past five years were charged with nonviolent offences”.¹²⁰
- 68.** Notwithstanding the need to be cautious about inferring too much from Prevent data, the trends in extremism discussed in Chapter Two, the role of online spaces in radicalising people, notably young people, discussed in Chapter Three and the increase in terrorism-related arrests of young people point to a very concerning picture of young people increasingly being targeted and drawn into extremism. The Institute for Strategic Dialogue and the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales told us that children can be

117 Home Office, [Operation of police powers under the Terrorism Act 2000 and subsequent legislation: Arrests, outcomes, and stop and search, Great Britain, quarterly update to December 2025](#), gov.uk, 12 March 2026

118 See for example, [Q94](#), Rights & Security International ([COM0004](#)), Child Rights International Network (CRIN) ([COM0012](#)), Prof. Joel Busher (Professor of Political Sociology at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Matthew Francis (Professor of Practice (Security and Resilience) at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Rachel Monaghan (Professor of Peace & Conflict at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Andrew Glazzard (Professor of National Security Policy and Practice at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Hanna Munden (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Bianca Slocombe (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Imogen Bayfield (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Daniel Range (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University) ([COM0019](#)), Amnesty International UK ([COM0021](#)), Prevent Watch ([COM0029](#)), Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Liverpool ([COM0045](#))

119 [Q22](#), [Q43](#), Professor Gabe Mythen (Professor of Criminology at University of Liverpool); Dr Laura Naegler (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Liverpool); Jacob Astley (Lecturer in Criminology at University of Salford) ([COM0055](#))

120 Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#))

vulnerable in this regard due to impressionability, low self-esteem, social isolation, thrillseeking, adverse childhood experiences, community tensions, and identity-seeking behaviour.¹²¹

Neurodiversity and mental health in Prevent referrals

- 69.** Prevent statistics indicate that neurodivergent people or those with mental health conditions are significantly overrepresented in referrals. In the year ending March 2025, 2,955 (34% of 8,778 referrals), had at least one mental health or neurodiversity condition recorded on the Prevent Case Management Tracker. Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) was the most frequently recorded condition, accounting for 14% of referrals (1,226 cases) of which 65% (797) were classified as confirmed diagnoses.¹²² Dr Whittaker at Swansea University noted that this compares to around 1% of the general population who are on the autism spectrum.¹²³ A group of academics from Coventry University noted that the “increased societal rates of diagnosis of forms of neurodiversity are likely contributing to the high numbers of people with identified neurodiversity referred to Prevent.”¹²⁴
- 70.** Despite these high referral rates, witnesses reminded us that there is no evidence to suggest a causal link between neurodiversity and engagement in acts of violence or terrorism.¹²⁵ Laurence Taylor, Assistant Commissioner,

121 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#)). Identity-seeking behaviour refers to the process through which young people search for understanding of who they are, their values, beliefs and place in society.

122 Home Office, [Individuals referred to Prevent: to March 2025](#), gov.uk, 6 November 2025

123 [Q25](#)

124 Prof. Joel Busher (Professor of Political Sociology at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Matthew Francis (Professor of Practice (Security and Resilience) at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Rachel Monaghan (Professor of Peace & Conflict at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Andrew Glazzard (Professor of National Security Policy and Practice at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Hanna Munden (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Bianca Slocombe (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Imogen Bayfield (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Daniel Range (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University) ([COM0019](#))

125 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Prof. Joel Busher (Professor of Political Sociology at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Matthew Francis (Professor of Practice (Security and Resilience) at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Rachel Monaghan (Professor of Peace & Conflict at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Prof. Andrew Glazzard (Professor of National Security Policy and Practice at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Hanna Munden (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Bianca Slocombe (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr. Imogen Bayfield (Research Fellow at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University);

Metropolitan Police, told us that neurodivergence may be one factor shaping an individual’s experience but that it “does not mean you are more likely to become a terrorist, and it is dangerous if we start labelling people in that sense”.¹²⁶ The Institute for Strategic Dialogue noted that neurodiverse conditions such as autism have only been found to play an exacerbating role in the radicalisation process when combined with other social factors.¹²⁷ The need for secondary factors to indicate a risk of radicalisation was echoed by Dr Whittaker and Professor Laura Smith from the Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath.¹²⁸ Given the lack of a causal connection witnesses warned that, where neurodivergence or mental health conditions are present, a counter-terrorism approach such as Prevent may be unhelpful and stigmatising.¹²⁹ Instead, several witnesses suggested that many of the referrals to Prevent involving neurodiverse individuals would benefit from a more nuanced approach, that is not part of the counter-terrorism system, to assess the risk they present and provide the support they need.¹³⁰ The Home Office told us it has completed the first stage of a strategic policy review of Prevent to improve support and management of people referred to Prevent who are neurodiverse or have mental health conditions.¹³¹

Effectiveness of Prevent

71. We heard that assessing the effectiveness of Prevent and its interventions is challenging. For example, Lord Anderson of Ipswich, interim Independent Prevent Commissioner, told us that it is difficult to isolate Prevent’s role from other factors that may be at play in determining whether someone goes on to commit an act of terrorism or extreme violence.¹³² Leo Ratledge, Co-Director, Child Rights International Network cited a lack of publicly available data about the Prevent programme as a challenge with evaluating Prevent’s effectiveness.¹³³ Jonathan Emmett, Director, Counter-Terrorism Directorate,

Dr. Daniel Range (Assistant Professor at Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University) ([COM0019](#)), The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath ([COM0020](#)), Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Youth Justice Board for England and Wales ([COM0037](#))

126 [Q84](#)

127 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

128 [Q25](#)

129 [Q8](#), [Q64](#), Professor Tahir Abbas (Professor of Radicalisation Studies at Leiden University) ([COM0001](#))

130 Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#)), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Resilience in Unity ([COM0031](#)), Dr Sam Cole (Assistant Professor in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham); Dr Laura Noszlopy (Research Fellow at University of Birmingham); Dr Marianne Wade (Reader in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham) ([COM0032](#))

131 Home Office ([COM0041](#))

132 [Q44](#)

133 [Q130](#), Child Rights International Network (CRIN) ([COM0012](#))

Home Office, told us that the Home Office has “a very significant programme of evaluation” to measure the delivery of Prevent and associated work to reduce permissive environments.¹³⁴ The Home Office has not set out how it is able to effectively evaluate the impact of Prevent and the Home Office’s reassurances that effective evaluations take place is at odds with the views expressed by the experts we heard from.

- 72.** The effectiveness of Prevent as a counter-terrorism tool is also being challenged by the sharp rise in referrals for cases involving no clear ideology, referred to in past frameworks as mixed, unclear or unstable (MUU) ideologies. The Institute for Strategic Dialogue described the influx of nonideological cases as a “category error [...] where new and emerging risks are funnelled into Prevent because there was nowhere else for them to go”.¹³⁵ The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner, Simon Foster, said that the influx of non-ideological cases risked oversaturating Channel panels.¹³⁶ Robin Simcox, the former Commissioner for Countering Extremism told us:

The trend at the moment is for Prevent to take on fewer ideological cases, and more referrals around what used to be known as mixed, unstable, and unclear—now different categorisations, but broadly what we could understand as including a large amount of those with violence fixation ideas, or perhaps violence fixation interests. That seems to me to be a pretty fundamental shift in what Prevent is, which is part of the counter-terrorism strategy, [...] and a whole load of consequences stem from that. If that is the direction of travel, I think that Prevent had better brace itself for an awful lot of referrals, because the terrorist or potential terrorist cohort in this country is relatively small, thankfully. Those with a broader interest in violence will be a bigger issue, and the system is going to have to be able to take the strain of this potentially large amount of referrals we will see.¹³⁷

- 73.** Witnesses also raised concerns about Prevent’s ability to identify troubling behaviours that occur online, despite online spaces being central to contemporary radicalisation pathways. Dr Whittaker described the online space as a “blind spot” for Prevent.¹³⁸ Tech Against Terrorism told us that

134 [Q217](#) The government states that “a ‘permissive environment’ may be characterised as being tolerant of behaviour or practices strongly disapproved by others, such as an environment where radicalising ideologies are permitted to flourish. Radicalisers create and take advantage of permissive environments to promote or condone violence and to spread harmful ideologies that undermine our values and society. Permissive environments can exist both online and offline. Permissive online environments can contribute to radicalisation.” Home Office, [Glossary of terms](#), gov.uk, 6 March 2024

135 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

136 West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner ([COM0008](#))

137 [Q41](#)

138 [Q19](#), Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#))

those receiving Prevent referrals need to develop a better understanding of online social environments to differentiate statements of serious intent from “idle attempts to fit in” within online communities.¹³⁹ Identifying risks from within the huge volume of content and activity that is taking place online, while respecting rights to freedom of expression, presents a crucial challenge for policy makers.

The Prevent duty

- 74.** While anyone can make a referral to Prevent, the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 establishes the Prevent duty on specified authorities¹⁴⁰ to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism”.¹⁴¹ Training is mandatory for those subject to the Prevent duty and covers different forms of extremism and terrorism; the risk around radicalisation and the trainee’s role in addressing the risk; making a Prevent referral that is both informed and made with good intention; and the interventions and support available.¹⁴²
- 75.** In a November 2025 written statement, the Security Minister, Dan Jarvis MP, set out steps taken by the government to improve the ability of frontline professions under the Prevent duty to spot signs of radicalisation:
- A new Prevent Assessment Framework rolled out in September 2024 to support Counter-Terrorism (CT) Police to strengthen the quality and consistency of decision making on Prevent referrals;
 - A new ideology training programme launched in November 2024 for frontline staff to help identify extremist ideologies;
 - Creation of the role of the Independent Prevent Commissioner in December 2024 to provide additional scrutiny and oversight of Prevent policy and delivery; and
 - Issuance of new guidance in September 2025 clarifying Prevent thresholds for practitioners.¹⁴³
- 76.** Of all those sectors under the Prevent duty, education is the source of the highest number of referrals and was the sector we received the most evidence about. Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at the University of Liverpool, told us that teachers are facing huge pressure to

139 Tech Against Terrorism ([COM0022](#))

140 Specified Authorities include bodies from local government, criminal justice, education, child care, health and social care, and police. [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#), Schedule 6

141 [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

142 Home Office, [Prevent duty training](#), gov.uk, updated 25 July 2023

143 [Prevent Statistics 2025](#) HCWS1045, 12 November 2025

identify and report any safeguarding concerns, however minor.¹⁴⁴ Although Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools provide oversight before a referral is made against this backdrop of “hypervigilance”¹⁴⁵ we heard concerns that the poor standard of training received by those under the Prevent duty can lead to poor decision making and misguided referrals. Criticisms included: inadequate quality and amount of training received; ambiguous, wide-reaching criteria for considering a referral; and a lack of competence and confidence among referees to spot signs of radicalisation and make good quality referrals.¹⁴⁶ Dr Whittaker told us:

Prevent is not very adept at identifying new forms of extremism because the current level of training for the people who are under the Prevent duty is seriously lacking. [...] I am not sure exactly how many millions of people are under the Prevent duty, but for almost everyone these days it usually includes an hour’s online learning and then a quiz the first week that you start a role, and it is very rarely revisited after that. [...] I am not sure I have much faith in the general competence of the referees.¹⁴⁷

- 77.** The poor training of those under the Prevent duty is not the only factor that can lead to unnecessary and misguided referrals. We heard that high-profile public events (such as the Southport attack), bias and discrimination can influence decision making and lead to poor or misguided referrals.¹⁴⁸ We were also told that when a referral is not progressed it can still have a negative, stigmatising and alienating impact, particularly on children. It can also have a negative impact on wider community relations.¹⁴⁹ Dame Sara Khan told us that despite 10 years of the Prevent duty in the education sector youth radicalisation is increasing. She told us that building trust among parents and communities and adopting a safeguarding approach

144 [Q93](#), Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Liverpool ([COM0045](#))

145 Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Liverpool ([COM0045](#))

146 See for example, [Q26](#), [Q124](#), Amnesty International UK ([COM0021](#)), Runnymede Trust ([COM0026](#)), Prevent Watch ([COM0029](#)), Dr Joe Whittaker ([COM0030](#)), Resilience in Unity ([COM0031](#)), Dr Sam Cole (Assistant Professor in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham); Dr Laura Noszlopy (Research Fellow at University of Birmingham); Dr Marianne Wade (Reader in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham) ([COM0032](#)), Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Liverpool ([COM0045](#)).

147 [Q22](#)

148 Professor Tahir Abbas (Professor of Radicalisation Studies at Leiden University) ([COM0001](#)), Nicole Lees ([COM0010](#)), Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#)), Amnesty International ([COM0021](#)), Runnymede Trust ([COM0026](#)), Prevent Watch ([COM0029](#)) Dr Sam Cole (Assistant Professor in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham), Dr Laura Noszlopy (Research Fellow at University of Birmingham); Dr Marianne Wade (Reader in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham) ([COM0032](#)), Dr Jane Horton, ESRC Post Doctoral Research Fellow at University of Liverpool ([COM0045](#))

149 [Q167](#), [Q201](#), Amnesty International UK ([COM0021](#))

(as opposed to a counter-terrorism approach where law enforcement takes the lead) would be a “far more effective” way to counter extremism among young people and within society more broadly.¹⁵⁰

Prevent in the wider safeguarding system

78. Local authorities play a key role in countering terrorism at the local level and supporting people who are susceptible to radicalisation. The government’s Prevent duty toolkit for local authorities encourages multi-agency partnership working to oversee delivery of Prevent at local level. Partners supporting delivery of Prevent are responsible for:

- Overseeing all statutory Prevent delivery, including referral pathways and Channel;
- Agreeing and updating risk assessments, which are reviewed against the counter terrorism local profile and other data sources;
- Developing and agreeing partnership plans, which outline the role of each local partner in Prevent delivery objectives;
- Facilitating the sharing of information among other partners; and
- Monitoring and reviewing performance.¹⁵¹

The toolkit notes that an existing partnership group such as a Community Safety Partnership¹⁵² could oversee Prevent delivery but that in most cases this is done via a standalone Prevent multi-agency partnership group. Prevent partnership groups must have an agreed pathway in place for dealing with referrals of individuals identified as susceptible to radicalisation.

79. The Home Office explained that all local authorities are required to deliver Prevent and that those local authorities identified as facing the highest threat from radicalisation to terrorism can bid for additional funding.¹⁵³ It also explained that there are multiple non-Prevent routes to which people can make referrals about non-terrorism concerns. These include:

150 [Q189](#), [Q201](#)

151 Home Office, [Prevent duty toolkit for local authorities](#), gov.uk, 12 February 2024, [Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015](#)

152 Community Safety Partnerships (CSP) bring together local partners to formulate and implement strategies to tackle crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour in their communities. The responsible authorities that make up a CSP are police, fire and rescue authorities, local authorities, health partners and Probation Service. (See: Home Office, Community Safety Partnerships, gov.uk, 13 May 2024)

153 Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

- Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and adult mental health services to assess and address concerns about someone’s mental health, including where this involves a risk of harm to themselves or others;
- Crime prevention initiatives (in some areas) which can support people, in particular vulnerable children and young people, away from involvement in crime, including violent crime;
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs) which handle safeguarding referrals. In some areas a referral can be made to Early Help who offer family support;¹⁵⁴ and
- Statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and colleges setting out responsibilities for staff in education settings to identify children who may benefit from early help.¹⁵⁵

80. The Home Office also noted that safeguarding referrals should flag concerns of radicalisation to Prevent, with Prevent in turn flagging safeguarding concerns to other appropriate services. In some areas, Prevent referrals are sent to both the local authority and the police at the same time, depending on their agreed process, which allows safeguarding support to be considered simultaneously.¹⁵⁶ In addition, the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 (PCSC Act) introduces a Serious Violence Duty to ensure that relevant services share information and work together to target interventions, where possible through existing partnership structures, collaborate, and plan to prevent and reduce serious violence within their local communities.¹⁵⁷

81. Despite these good intentions, we heard that local multiagency structures are not consistently functioning as an integrated system. Milo Comerford, Director of Policy and Research, Counter-Extremism at the Institute for Strategic Dialogue warned that local authority-led forums such as Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs), Channel boards, Prevent Oversight Boards, Serious Violence Boards and Community Safety

154 The Home Office also drew attention to launch of the Young Futures Panels pilot in the Autumn, which are identifying young people vulnerable to being drawn into crime at local authority level and providing them with diversionary support at the right time in over 50 local areas across the UK.

155 Home Office further explained that this includes, among many other issues, children showing signs of being drawn into anti-social or criminal behaviour, including being affected by gangs and county lines and organised crime groups and/or serious violence, including knife crime. Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

156 Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

157 [Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, Chapter 1](#)

Partnerships “tend to exist in siloes”.¹⁵⁸ The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner stressed that the proliferation of multiagency panels risks duplication without national coordination or consistent thresholds.¹⁵⁹ The Association of Directors of Children’s Services (ADCS) argued that local authority-led agencies often work to different departmental priorities, legislation, regulations and guidelines creating a disjointed approach:

Some ADCS members have seen shifts in local policing behaviours after recent updates to Prevent guidance. This is resulting in an increasing number of boys and young men who are fascinated with violence, who have mental health needs and/or a level of neurodiversity being referred to Channel without any clear practice guidance or support. Additionally, some Prevent police colleagues are seeking ‘dual pathway referrals’ to children’s social care without consent, which illustrates the disconnect between the Home Office and Prevent direction of travel and Department for Education’s children’s social care reforms.¹⁶⁰

82. We heard that the patchy, poorly funded and overstretched safeguarding system is creating perverse incentives to refer cases to Prevent. In 2023 William Shawcross’s independent review of Prevent found that Channel was being used as a “fast track” to other support services, particularly mental health services.¹⁶¹ Dr Whittaker described Prevent as “the only game in town if you see some kind of problematic behaviour.”¹⁶² This appears to be particularly true for neurodiverse individuals or those with mental health needs. Several witnesses agreed that Prevent is being used as a way to expedite access to mental health services.¹⁶³ However, Jonathan Emmett at the Home Office, stressed to us that Prevent “sits as part of a broader safeguarding network” saying, “[i]t is absolutely not the case that Prevent, as it is conceived today, or as it operates today, is that sole gateway. It is simply not.”¹⁶⁴

83. Dame Sara Khan warned that the Home Office’s focus on Prevent risks missing the warning signs of extremist behaviour that falls below the threshold for terrorism. She said:

158 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

159 West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner ([COM0008](#))

160 The Association of Directors of Children’s Services Ltd. (ADCS) ([COM0054](#))

161 Home Office, [Independent Review of Prevent](#), gov.uk, 20 February 2023

162 [Q26](#)

163 See for example, Child Rights International Network (CRIN) ([COM0012](#)), Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#)), Local Government Association ([COM0025](#)), Prevent Watch ([COM0029](#)), Joe Whittaker (Director at Vox Pol Institute) ([COM0030](#)), Resilience in Unity ([COM0031](#)), Dr Sam Cole (Assistant Professor in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham); Dr Laura Noszlopy (Research Fellow at University of Birmingham); Dr Marianne Wade (Reader in Criminal Justice at University of Birmingham) ([COM0032](#))

164 [Q229](#)

The reality is that the rest of those people [cases where there may be signs of concerning behaviour but are not progressed by Prevent due to a lack of clear ideology]—thousands of people—could be displaying and holding serious extremist views. That has been my concern for a long time. We are not following these people into whether they are engaging in other extremist activity, whether that is engaging in forms of extremism-related hate crime, violence or riots on our streets, or other forms of extremist activity. We are not looking at the link. There is no safeguarding scheme to deal with those people, so it is really important to understand where Prevent starts and stops. We have got to break this assumption and this view that Prevent is dealing with extremism—it is not, and it is not doing so effectively.¹⁶⁵

- 84.** In response to questions about its ability to monitor cases that are not progressed in Prevent, the Home Office told us that, between April 2024 and March 2025, 50% of Prevent referrals (4,363) were signposted to other support services and a further 2% (163) were signposted to other services at the Channel panel stage. Cases may also be referred on after a Channel case has been closed. The Home Office explained that in cases referred to other support services after the Channel case is closed, Channel panels will conduct reviews at a minimum of six and 12 months and sometimes up to two years after the closure of a case “to assess a person’s susceptibility to being drawn into terrorism”. However the Home Office noted that, once a referral is no longer considered to have risk relevant to Prevent, it would be inappropriate to continue to monitor the person.¹⁶⁶ In addition, the Home Secretary commissioned His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) in October 2025 to look at counter-terrorism safeguarding measures for those under 25 and other vulnerable people.¹⁶⁷
- 85.** The Home Office also pointed to a “Below Thresholds Pilot” to “provide assurance” that cases that do not meet the threshold for Prevent but show signs of concern are being progressed appropriately through other support routes.¹⁶⁸ The pilot has been extended until March 2026 and is currently being evaluated.¹⁶⁹ The West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner described their involvement with the Below Prevent Threshold Panels, noting that “any extension of these pilots must consider other existing and

165 [Q186](#)

166 Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

167 His Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS), [Terms of reference: inspection of counter-terrorism safeguarding](#), gov.uk, 19 November 2025

168 [Q240](#), Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

169 Letter from the Security Minister to the Chair relating to combatting new forms of extremism, [2 February 2026](#)

emerging multi-agency panels” or it risks duplicating other work being conducted, for example by Violence Reduction Partnerships and other government programmes.¹⁷⁰

- 86.** Several witnesses emphasised that Prevent and efforts to counter-extremism would benefit by having Prevent more firmly embedded within the broader safeguarding and violence prevention system, consistent with the findings of Lord Anderson of Ipswich’s report ‘Lessons for Prevent’. Based on his reviews of the murder of Sir David Amess and the Southport attack, Lord Anderson of Ipswich recommended establishing a Cabinet Office taskforce to explore “formally connecting Prevent to a broader safeguarding and violence prevention system”.¹⁷¹ In his report, Lord Anderson of Ipswich recommends that Prevent remains open to individuals who do not appear to have a clear ideology but that, “[i]n the longer term, the more promising direction of travel may be towards a “big front door”, focused on the individual rather than the crime type, behind which triage could be performed and the appropriate disposal decided upon”.¹⁷² Professor John Denham, Professor at the University of Southampton and member of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law’s Independent Commission on UK Counter-Terrorism Law, supported the “big front door” model noting that it would allow individuals to enter a general safeguarding system before being triaged to the appropriate agency, of which Prevent would be only one.¹⁷³
- 87.** Dame Sara Khan suggested that this could be achieved, for example, by broadening Channel to perform a safeguarding triage role that identifies the most suitable route for individual cases.¹⁷⁴ Councillor Sara Conway, Joint Chair, Local Government Association’s Special Interest Group on Counter Extremism, offered the example of Barnet Council using Prevent panels as a forum to filter individuals into the appropriate specialist support route.¹⁷⁵ The Metropolitan Police recommended consideration of statutory Potentially Dangerous Persons (PDP) panels which would place less emphasis on ideology and more on a person’s pathway towards harm.¹⁷⁶

170 West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner ([COM0008](#))

171 Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner, [Lessons for Prevent](#), gov.uk, 16 July 2025

172 Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner, [Lessons for Prevent](#), gov.uk, 16 July 2025, para 5.28–5.29

173 [Q159](#)

174 [Q187](#)

175 [Q159](#)

176 Metropolitan Police Service ([COM0048](#))

88. CONCLUSION

The escalation in Prevent referrals involving no clear ideology and no clear signs of radicalisation to terrorism represents a significant challenge to a system designed to address the ideological roots of terrorism. Prevent and Channel are becoming saturated with such individuals, many of whom show no commitment to any particular ideology and some of whom are neurodiverse. The Home Office is allowing the Prevent system to drift beyond its remit without providing any strategic direction to meet these challenges.

89. CONCLUSION

Prevent is poorly adapted to deal with the digital world. We have outlined how online spaces are now central to the radicalisation process, particularly for young people, yet Prevent lacks the specialist knowledge or framework for identifying and assessing credible risk signals from online behaviour. Integration of Prevent into wider safeguarding systems is being hampered by poorly resourced, over-stretched and siloed agencies working against mis-aligned priorities. Against this backdrop, Prevent has become a fast track to support, even where concerns are not terrorism-related, and particularly in relation to accessing mental health support.

90. RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Home Office makes a clear, specific statement to clarify the role of Prevent in addressing non-ideological cases, and makes any necessary updates to relevant Prevent guidance and training to reflect that position. The government should also set out a plan to anchor Prevent more firmly within the wider safeguarding system. To deliver this, the Home Office should look to implement Lord Anderson of Ipswich's recommendation to connect Prevent to a broader safeguarding and violence-reduction system. This will require strengthening the capacity of local safeguarding systems and significantly raising the level of training and competence among Prevent duty practitioners.

5 Wider measures to combat new forms of extremism

91. This chapter considers measures to counter extremism beyond counter-terrorism approaches such as Prevent. This includes efforts to strengthen social cohesion and build resilience and tools available for law enforcement to tackle hate crime and activities that fall below the terrorism threshold.

Strengthening social and community cohesion

92. The Home Office told us that there “are a wide range of offences and powers that can be used to counter the threat from extremism, including powers to regulate charities, broadcasting, education, immigration powers and offences such as engagement of terrorism and public order offences”. It further noted that “[b]eyond CONTEST there are elements of counter-extremism work across government policies which address social cohesion, public order, hate crime, misogyny, racism and online harms.”¹⁷⁷ The government’s new strategy, ‘Protecting what matters, towards a more confident, cohesive and resilient United Kingdom’, published on 9 March 2026, addresses many of these issues.¹⁷⁸
93. We heard persuasive evidence that the government’s focus and reliance on counter-terrorism measures such as Prevent is coming at the expense of wider counter-extremism action within communities. For example, Dame Sara Khan told us:

Ministers and officials often talk about “the threat”. They say, “The greatest threat is the Islamist threat, followed by the far right.” [...] It is true that when we are talking about the terrorist threat, the Islamist threat is a far greater threat, but when we are talking about the extremist threat, I would put all my money on saying that I suspect

177 Home Office (COM0041)

178 MHCLG, [Protecting What Matters: Towards a more confident, cohesive, and resilient United Kingdom](#), gov.uk, 9 March 2026

that the far-right extremist threat is the greater hateful extremist threat at the moment. We are not measuring it effectively, and we are not doing enough about it.¹⁷⁹

She added:

Prevent is fundamentally a securitised approach. Extremism is a societal problem; I don't think you should deal with extremism through the securitised approach. It should be dealt with as a societal issue rather than a security push.¹⁸⁰

Laurence Taylor, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police echoed this, telling us that “Prevent is not a counter-extremism programme, it is a counter-terrorism programme, and conflating those two things is a risk.”¹⁸¹

94. The Local Government Association highlighted that local authorities have a central role to play in maintaining community cohesion and delivering counter-extremism programmes.¹⁸² For example, the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) described its Shared Endeavour Fund, launched in 2020, as a successful example of a non-Prevent, community-based programme that encourages Londoners to stand up to hate, protect those vulnerable to radicalisation and stop the spread of hateful ideologies.¹⁸³ However, despite the best efforts of many local authorities, the Local Government Association pointed to central government funding cuts as having constrained local authorities' capacity to counter extremism, resulting in “patchy” provision and reduced capacity for local partnership working.¹⁸⁴

Box 4: The Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) Shared Endeavour Fund

MOPAC's Shared Endeavour Fund (SEF) delivers civil society projects across London to strengthen communities against extremism, encourage Londoners to stand up to hate, protect Londoners vulnerable to radicalisation and stop the spread of hateful ideologies. Features of the SEF are:

- The Fund has invested £3.9 m in 115 projects since it was launched in 2020. These projects have engaged more than 170,000 Londoners, mainly young people, through workshops, educational activities and mentoring;

179 [Q186](#)

180 [Q187](#)

181 [Q90](#)

182 Local Government Association ([COM0025](#))

183 Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime ([COM0042](#))

184 Local Government Association ([COM0025](#))

- The projects address a range of extremist ideologies, identity-based harms and prevention topic areas including antisemitism, Islamophobia, radicalisation, extremist narratives and mis- and disinformation;
- Projects are delivered by grassroots organisations that have a strong understanding of the communities they serve and are able to deliver targeted messaging and activities that increase resilience; and
- The SEF provides opportunities for delivery organisations to meet and share good practice in counter extremism activities and each round of funding is independently evaluated and published online.

Examples of SEF projects include:

- The Future Leaders programme, which delivers a six-month course to a combination of young people who have demonstrated a commitment to social activism and young people who have been referred to the programme because they have been considered vulnerable to extremism. The course includes sessions that raise awareness of extremist narratives, build confidence, skills and knowledge, and conduct field trips to the UK's democratic and legal institutions;
- Communities Countering Hate, which delivers workshops in schools that portray the real-life experiences of two former extremists. The workshop explains how these individuals entered and ultimately exited the far-right and Islamist extremist movements. Participants learn about factors that lead to radicalisation and signs to look out for in their own lives.

Source: Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime ([COM0042](#))

- 95.** The Institute for Strategic Dialogue argued that a cross-government response countering extremism should include community cohesion, health and social security, education, international affairs, digital regulation, intelligence and law enforcement.¹⁸⁵ The Runnymede Trust emphasised the need to empower communities by funding and supporting grassroots, intergenerational, interfaith and intercultural dialogue.¹⁸⁶ Dame Sara Khan called for a cross-government directorate to integrate extremism, social cohesion and democratic resilience work.¹⁸⁷

185 Institute for Strategic Dialogue ([COM0017](#))

186 Runnymede Trust ([COM0026](#))

187 [Q178](#)

96. The Home Office disagreed that the wider extremism landscape was being neglected. Jonathan Emmett at the Home Office said that CONTEST provided a clear framework for the Home Office’s engagement with other government departments with “overlapping responsibilities”.¹⁸⁸ When asked to give a view of whether a wider counter-extremism strategy is needed, the Home Office made no mention of the then forthcoming strategy on social cohesion, on which they were presumably engaged.

Tackling hate crime

97. We have already noted that extremism and hate are closely linked, meaning that tackling hate crime should form a core part of any counter-extremism approach. The Home Office explained that while not all hate crime incidents are driven by extremists, extremists “often seek to propagate such discourse when it fits within the parameters of their core narratives”.¹⁸⁹ Paul Giannasi, Hate Crime Advisor at the National Police Chiefs’ Council, described to us the huge impact that hate crimes can have on a communities, stoking fear and tension.¹⁹⁰

98. Laurence Taylor, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police told us that there is a legislative gap between the space in which local policing addresses hate crime and the threshold at which counter-terrorism powers apply, leaving law enforcement with “no powers or levers” to intervene effectively.¹⁹¹ Dame Sara Khan argued that this gap has created space for hateful extremism to grow.¹⁹² Supporting this view, we heard evidence of a surge in antisemitic and anti-Muslim hate crime incidents.¹⁹³ Laurence Taylor told us that the Counter Terrorism Internet Referral Unit (CTIRU) which removes illegal terrorist content and investigates individuals creating and disseminating terrorist-related material, has seen a 150% increase in public referrals since 2021 and a 48% increase following the terrorist attacks by Hamas on 7 October 2023.¹⁹⁴ However, Jonathan Emmett at the Home Office asserted that the existing legislative framework—covering counter-terrorism, hate crime, public order and online communication—is already robust, and that any additional legislation could risk encroaching on freedom of speech and freedom of expression.¹⁹⁵

188 [Q216](#)

189 Home Office ([COM0041](#))

190 [Q73](#)

191 [Qq72-74](#)

192 [Q180](#)

193 [Q176](#), Community Security Trust (CST) ([COM0024](#)), Muslim Women’s Network UK ([COM0015](#))

194 [Q78](#)

195 [Q211](#)

99. In October 2025 the Metropolitan Police announced that they would no longer investigate non-crime hate incidents (NCHI), which were originally introduced to monitor community tensions and prevent escalation. Laurence Taylor, Metropolitan Police, confirmed that NCHIs are no longer investigated but would continue to be recorded.¹⁹⁶ Paul Giannasi, National Police Chiefs' Council, told us about the College of Policing and National Police Chiefs' Council's review of non-crime hate incidents.¹⁹⁷ We note media reports that the review recommends replacing NCHIs with a new system under which only the most serious behaviours would be recorded.¹⁹⁸ As noted in Chapter One, Lord MacDonald of River Glaven is also conducting an independent review of public order and hate crime legislation.

100. **CONCLUSION**

We have not seen evidence that the Home Office prioritises counter-extremism efforts beyond those which fall within the existing counter-terrorism security infrastructure.

101. **RECOMMENDATION**

The Home Office should assign greater priority to countering extremism and work alongside the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, other relevant departments, and local authorities to implement the social cohesion strategy. It is vital that the Home Office reviews the suite of counter-extremism measures that sit outside the counter-terrorism infrastructure, with a view to expanding its approaches for early intervention and ensuring consistency across the country to identify and intervene to counter extremism. Efforts should be coordinated with programmes such as Prevent but counter-extremism efforts should not exist only as part of counter-terrorism efforts. We expect the Home Office to set out its role and responsibilities for delivering on the government's new social cohesion strategy, including how it is coordinating its work with other departments.

196 [Q88](#)

197 [Q88](#)

198 [Q88](#), Telegraph, [Mahmood abolishes non-crime hate incidents](#), 26 March 2026, [BBC News, Non-crime hate incidents should be scrapped, police leaders to recommend](#), 23 December 2025

Conclusions and recommendations

Trends in extremism

1. Extremism is evolving rapidly and becoming more complex. Long-standing terrorist threats remain but new forms of extremism are emerging and give rise to growing concern. The impact of geo-political events is likely to intensify in light of continuing conflict in the Middle East. There has been a marked rise in the prevalence of young people being drawn into extremism, often radicalised through a toxic mix of antisemitism, misogyny and conspiracy theories combining to form hybridised belief systems, nihilism and violence fascination. This has profound implications for national security, public order, and social cohesion. (Conclusion, Paragraph 30)
2. Good policy making relies upon data and evidence. At the moment the UK lacks the evidence base and up-to-date research needed to keep pace with these developments. The impediments to supporting rigorous, independent empirical research have limited our understanding of the extremist threat. This presents challenges for the government, police and other local authority, health and education professionals attempting to identify, assess and intervene in the most effective way. Strengthening the research foundation will be essential if policy and the on-the-ground response is to keep pace with the evolving nature of the extremist threat. (Conclusion, Paragraph 31)
3. We recommend that the Home Office establishes a coherent, long-term research and evidence programme on emerging forms of extremism. It should ensure that sufficient support and resources are available to enable independent, empirical research to be commissioned, whether by the Home Office itself, the Commission for Countering Extremism or the Office of the Independent Prevent Commissioner. Research conducted should be published and the Home Office should include mechanisms for regularly reviewing and updating the evidence base. We expect the Home Office to set out its plans for such a research and evidence programme in its response to this report. (Recommendation, Paragraph 32)

Online spaces, AI and other technology

4. Harmful extremist content is circulating widely online, driven by engagement and profit-maximising algorithms, influencer-led dissemination, and decentralised extremist ecosystems. These systems promote content designed to provoke outrage and fear, often purely for commercial reasons, and the speed and scale of dissemination have outpaced the capacity of moderation and removal tools. Content designed to attract, recruit and radicalise individuals is often targeted at young people and other vulnerable users. This is contributing to emerging trends in extremism, including the increasing engagement of young people and the rise of hybrid belief systems, nihilistic violent extremism and violence fixation. The emergence of com networks represents a serious and escalating threat, with decentralised groups incentivising violence, coercion and criminality among predominantly young males. The evolving and cross-cutting nature of com networks requires an agile, coordinated, cross-government approach to avoid siloed responses that would be fragmented and ineffective. (Conclusion, Paragraph 60)
5. The Online Safety Act contains gaps that limit government's ability to address new forms of extremism, particularly when harmful content falls below criminal thresholds. We are concerned that smaller, high-risk platforms are not receiving sufficient regulatory scrutiny. Alongside more robust implementation and enforcement of the Online Safety Act, there is a clear need to equip children and adults with the skills required to critically analyse and interpret extremist content online. This should form part of a wider educational effort to strengthen social cohesion and build resilience to counter extremism both online and within our communities and we welcome the reforms to the national curriculum as a step in the right direction. (Conclusion, Paragraph 61)
6. The Home Office should engage more closely with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and Ofcom to ensure effective implementation of measures around online safety for children and to ensure that extremist content is among the types of online harmful content that technology companies are expected to address and be held accountable for. In addition, the Home Office should lead a cross-government, multi-agency approach to shut down com networks, building on existing cooperation between law enforcement, security services, the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and other relevant departments and safeguarding partners. We expect the Home Office to update us on progress in its response to this report. (Recommendation, Paragraph 62)
7. We welcome the inclusion of enhanced digital and media literacy in the new curriculum. It should be embedded consistently across education settings and equip children with the skills to identify, analyse and scrutinise online

content, including the operation of algorithms and AI-generated material. We expect the Home Office to engage with the Department for Education to provide analysis and research to ensure that education materials keep pace with changes in technology and tactics used to spread extremism online. (Recommendation, Paragraph 63)

Effective methods for identifying and intervening to combat new forms of extremism

8. The escalation in Prevent referrals involving no clear ideology and no clear signs of radicalisation to terrorism represents a significant challenge to a system designed to address the ideological roots of terrorism. Prevent and Channel are becoming saturated with such individuals, many of whom show no commitment to any particular ideology and some of whom are neurodiverse. The Home Office is allowing the Prevent system to drift beyond its remit without providing any strategic direction to meet these challenges. (Conclusion, Paragraph 88)
9. Prevent is poorly adapted to deal with the digital world. We have outlined how online spaces are now central to the radicalisation process, particularly for young people, yet Prevent lacks the specialist knowledge or framework for identifying and assessing credible risk signals from online behaviour. Integration of Prevent into wider safeguarding systems is being hampered by poorly resourced, over-stretched and siloed agencies working against mis-aligned priorities. Against this backdrop, Prevent has become a fast track to support, even where concerns are not terrorism-related, and particularly in relation to accessing mental health support. (Conclusion, Paragraph 89)
10. We recommend that the Home Office makes a clear, specific statement to clarify the role of Prevent in addressing non-ideological cases, and makes any necessary updates to relevant Prevent guidance and training to reflect that position. The government should also set out a plan to anchor Prevent more firmly within the wider safeguarding system. To deliver this, the Home Office should look to implement Lord Anderson of Ipswich's recommendation to connect Prevent to a broader safeguarding and violence-reduction system. This will require strengthening the capacity of local safeguarding systems and significantly raising the level of training and competence among Prevent duty practitioners. (Recommendation, Paragraph 90)

Wider measures to combat new forms of extremism

11. We have not seen evidence that the Home Office prioritises counter-extremism efforts beyond those which fall within the existing counter-terrorism security infrastructure. (Conclusion, Paragraph 100)
12. The Home Office should assign greater priority to countering extremism and work alongside the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, other relevant departments, and local authorities to implement the social cohesion strategy. It is vital that the Home Office reviews the suite of counter-extremism measures that sit outside the counter-terrorism infrastructure, with a view to expanding its approaches for early intervention and ensuring consistency across the country to identify and intervene to counter extremism. Efforts should be coordinated with programmes such as Prevent but counter-extremism efforts should not exist only as part of counter-terrorism efforts. We expect the Home Office to set out its role and responsibilities for delivering on the government's new social cohesion strategy, including how it is coordinating its work with other departments. (Recommendation, Paragraph 101)

Formal minutes

Wednesday 25 March 2026

Members present

Dame Karen Bradley, in the Chair

Lewis Atkinson

Paul Kohler

Robbie Moore

Margaret Mullane

Peter Prinsley

Jo White

Combatting new forms of extremism

Draft report (*Combatting new forms of extremism*), proposed by the Chair, brought up and read.

Ordered, That the draft Report be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph.

Paragraphs 1 to 101 read and agreed to.

Summary agreed to

Resolved, That the Report be the Seventh Report of the Committee to the House.

Ordered, That the Chair make the Report to the House.

Ordered, That embargoed copies of the Report be made available (Standing Order No. 134).

Adjournment

Adjourned till Monday 20 April 2026

Witnesses

The following witnesses gave evidence. Transcripts can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee’s website.

Tuesday 15 July 2025

Dr Joe Whittaker, Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Sociology, and Social Policy, Swansea University, Director, Vox Pol Institute; **Dr Daniel Allington**, Reader in Social Analytics, King’s College London, Senior Associate Fellow, Counter Extremism Group Fellow, London Centre for the Study of Contemporary Antisemitism, Deputy Editor, Journal of Contemporary Antisemitism; **Professor Laura G. E. Smith**, Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, University of Bath, Director, Bath Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour [Q1-30](#)

Robin Simcox, Commissioner, Commission for Countering Extremism; **Lord Anderson KC**, Interim Independent Prevent Commissioner [Q31-48](#)

Tuesday 28 October 2025

Milo Comerford, Director of Policy and Research, Counter-Extremism, Institute for Strategic Dialogue; **Imran Ahmed**, Chief Executive, Center for Countering Digital Hate; **Adam Hadley CBE**, Executive Director, Tech Against Terrorism [Q49-70](#)

Paul Giannasi OBE, Hate Crime Advisor, National Police Chiefs’ Council; **Laurence Taylor**, Assistant Commissioner, Metropolitan Police [Q71-91](#)

Tuesday 25 November 2025

Dr Jane Horton, Department of Sociology, Social Policy and Criminology, School of Law and Social Justice, University of Liverpool; **Leo Ratledge**, Co-Director, Child Rights International Network (CRIN) [Q92-149](#)

Kenny Bowie, Director for Strategy and MPS Oversight, Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime; **Councillor Sara Conway**, Councillor, Joint Chair of the Local Government Association’s Special Interest Group on Countering

Extremism; **Professor John Denham**, Professor, University of Southampton and member of the Bingham Centre for the Rule of Law's Independent Commission on UK Counter-Terrorism Law, Policy and Practice [Q150-175](#)

Tuesday 20 January 2026

Dame Sara Khan DBE, Former, Counter Extremism Commissioner 2018-2021, Former, Independent Adviser for Social Cohesion and Resilience for the UK Government 2021-2024 [Q176-207](#)

Dan Jarvis MBE MP, Minister for Security, Home Office; **Jonathan Emmett**, Director, Counter-Terrorism Directorate, Home Office [Q208-250](#)

Published written evidence

The following written evidence was received and can be viewed on the [inquiry publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

COM numbers are generated by the evidence processing system and so may not be complete.

- 1 Abbas, Professor Tahir (Professor of Radicalisation Studies, Leiden University) [COM0001](#)
- 2 Allington, Dr Daniel (Reader in Social Analytics, King's College London) [COM0038](#)
- 3 Amnesty International UK [COM0021](#)
- 4 Antisemitism Policy Trust [COM0003](#)
- 5 Buarque, Dr Beatriz Lopes (Fellow, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE)); Dr Ashton Kingdon (Lecturer in Criminology, University of Southampton); Allysa Czerwinsky (PhD candidate, University of Manchester); Dr Julia Ebner (Lab Group Leader, Postdoctoral Researcher and Tutor, University of Oxford); Dr Aaron Winter (Senior Lecturer in Sociology (Race and Anti-Racism), Lancaster University); Dr Robert Topinka (Senior Lecturer in Culture and Communication, Birkbeck, University of London); and Dr Meropi Tzanetakis (Assistant Professor (Lecturer) in Digital Criminology, University of Manchester) [COM0007](#)
- 6 Busher, Professor Joel (Professor of Political Sociology, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Professor Matthew Francis (Professor of Practice (Security and Resilience), Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Professor Rachel Monaghan (Professor of Peace & Conflict, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Professor Andrew Glazzard (Professor of National Security Policy and Practice, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr Hanna Munden (Research Fellow, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr Bianca Slocombe (Assistant Professor, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); Dr Imogen Bayfield

| | | |
|----|--|-------------------------|
| | (Research Fellow, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University); and Dr Daniel Range (Assistant Professor, Centre for Peace & Security, Coventry University) | COM0019 |
| 7 | Board of Deputies of British Jews | COM0039 |
| 8 | Center for Countering Digital Hate | COM0023 |
| 9 | Child Rights International Network (CRIN) | COM0012 |
| 10 | Cole, Dr Sam (Assistant Professor in Criminal Justice, University of Birmingham); Dr Laura Noszlopy (Research Fellow, University of Birmingham); and Dr Marianne Wade (Reader in Criminal Justice, University of Birmingham) | COM0032 |
| 11 | Community Security Trust (CST) | COM0024 |
| 12 | Czerwinsky, Dr Allysa | COM0049 |
| 13 | de Nadal, Dr Lluís (Lecturer in Media, Culture and Society, University of Glasgow) | COM0014 |
| 14 | Deterrence Center | COM0040 |
| 15 | Henry Jackson Society | COM0006 |
| 16 | Home Office | COM0041 |
| 17 | Horton, Dr Jane | COM0045 |
| 18 | Institute for Strategic Dialogue | COM0017 |
| 19 | Jewish Leadership Council | COM0011 |
| 20 | Labour Friends of Israel | COM0016 |
| 21 | Lees, Nicole | COM0010 |
| 22 | Local Government Association | COM0025 |
| 23 | Mattheis, Dr Ashley A | COM0050 |
| 24 | Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime | COM0042 |
| 25 | Metropolitan Police Service | COM0048 |
| 26 | Mondon, Professor Aurelien (Professor of Politics, University of Bath) | COM0002 |
| 27 | Muslim Women's Network UK | COM0015 |
| 28 | Mythen, Professor Gabe (Professor of Criminology, University of Liverpool); Dr Laura Naegler (Lecturer in Criminology, University of Liverpool); and Jacob Astley (Lecturer in Criminology, University of Salford) | COM0055 |
| 29 | onEvidence Ltd | COM0046 |
| 30 | Online Safety Act Network | COM0034 |

| | | |
|----|---|-------------------------|
| 31 | Oxford Disinformation & Extremism Lab | COM0018 |
| 32 | Popa-Wyatt, Dr Mihaela (Senior Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Manchester) | COM0036 |
| 33 | Prevent Watch | COM0029 |
| 34 | RAND Europe | COM0013 |
| 35 | Resilience in Unity | COM0031 |
| 36 | Rights & Security International | COM0004 |
| 37 | Runnymede Trust | COM0026 |
| 38 | Siberry, Dr Alice (Neurodiversity Consultant, Creased Puddle) | COM0053 |
| 39 | Simcox, Robin (Commissioner for Countering Extremism) | COM0035 |
| 40 | Tech Against Terrorism | COM0022 |
| 41 | The Alan Turing Institute (CETaS) | COM0005 |
| 42 | The Association of Directors of Children’s Services Ltd (ADCS) | COM0054 |
| 43 | The Child Rights International Network (CRIN) | COM0052 |
| 44 | The Institute for Digital Security and Behaviour, University of Bath | COM0020 |
| 45 | United Against Nuclear Iran | COM0033 |
| 46 | Vaughan, Dr Thomas James (Research Fellow, University of Huddersfield) | COM0009 |
| 47 | West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner | COM0008 |
| 48 | Whiting, Dr Andrew (Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Royal Holloway, University of London); Professor Stuart Macdonald (Professor of Law, Swansea University); and Professor Lee Jarvis (Professor of International Politics, Loughborough University) | COM0027 |
| 49 | Whiting, Dr Andrew (Senior Lecturer in Criminology, Royal Holloway, University of London); Professor Stuart Macdonald (Professor of Law, Swansea University); and Professor Lee Jarvis (Professor of International Politics, Loughborough University) | COM0028 |
| 50 | Whittaker, Joe (Director, Vox Pol Institute) | COM0030 |
| 51 | Youth Justice Board for England and Wales | COM0037 |
| 52 | Correspondence from Dan Jarvis MBE MP, Security Minister, Cabinet Office and Home Office , following his appearance on 20 January relating to the inquiry on Combatting new forms of extremism, dated 2 February 2026 | |

List of Reports from the Committee during the current Parliament

All publications from the Committee are available on the [publications page](#) of the Committee's website.

Session 2024–26

| Number | Title | Reference |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| 6th | Earned Settlement: Examining the Government's proposed reforms | HC 1409 |
| 5th | Maccabi Tel Aviv fan ban | HC 1553 |
| 4th | The Home Office's management of asylum accommodation | HC 580 |
| 3rd | Tackling violence against women and girls: funding | HC 741 |
| 2nd | Police response to the 2024 summer disorder | HC 381 |
| 1st | Appointment of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration | HC 713 |
| 3rd Special | The Home Office's management of asylum accommodation: Government Response | HC 1642 |
| 2nd Special | Tackling violence against women and girls: Funding: Government Response | HC 1352 |
| 1st Special | Police response to the 2024 summer disorder: Government Response | HC 1099 |