

# Labour supporting **Muslim Communities**



*Councillor Ebrahim Adia, Labour candidate for the European Parliament, discusses policy with members of the Muslim community.*

***Find out what Labour has  
done for your community and  
about the right to protection  
from discrimination at work.***

# Muslim rights in the workplace

Labour in Government has introduced new protection against direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief.

Employers and vocational training providers have to ensure that people from **every** faith are not discriminated against on religious grounds.

Employers should aspire to help Muslims in the workplace by acting to:

- Provide for different dietary requirements in the workplace canteen.
- Accommodate cultural or religious holidays either as annual or unpaid leave.
- Offer flexible working to attend a local mosque for Friday prayers.
- Provide on-site washing facilities and a quiet area for prayer.
- Offer rest breaks to coincide with prayer times.

- Offer flexible working during Ramadhan especially to accommodate Iftar.
- Treat sympathetically requests for annual leave to perform the pilgrimage to Mecca.
- Accommodate refusals to work in the alcohol, tobacco or meat section of a store that are due to religious belief.
- Develop a dress code that accommodates religious dress such as headscarves and accommodates the need to dress modestly.

It is your duty to ensure that your requests are reasonable since no organisation is expected to accept unreasonable disruption to its activities.

**For further advice for your workplace, contact your trade union.**

**For general advice or to find the union that's best for you, call the TUC's 'Know your rights' line on 0870 600 4882 or visit [www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)**

## How your trade union can help you



Javed Iqbal

Your union can help get you the conditions you need at work.

Usdaw, the shopworkers' union, has negotiated extended leave agreements with many national employers, giving staff the right to take several weeks off work, not just for religious reasons such as pilgrimages, but for family reasons as well, such as weddings or other important family occasions.

Javed Iqbal, an Usdaw member in the Midlands, said: *"If Usdaw hadn't negotiated an extended leave agreement with my employer, it would have been virtually impossible for me to visit my family in Pakistan."*

See Usdaw's web site for advice on:

- Extended Leave – an advice booklet.
- Rights to Religious Observance – including examples of facilities negotiated for observant Muslims in the workplace.
- Challenging racial discrimination at work.

All at [www.usdaw.org.uk/resource\\_library](http://www.usdaw.org.uk/resource_library) (section on equality)

# ***What's the Labour Party ever done for the Muslim community?***

The Labour Party is committed to creating a fairer society and to supporting religious and cultural diversity. The Muslim community is therefore always better off with Labour.

## ***Labour supports the Muslim community in Britain:***

- The Employment Equality Regulations require employers to accommodate the religious needs of Muslims in the workplace.
- The Crime and Disorder Act (1998) introduces several new racist offences and increases the punishment for racially motivated crimes.
- The Race Relations (Amendment) Act requires public sector bodies to eradicate institutional racism.
- Several state funded Islamic schools have been established.
- The primary purpose rule has been abolished, making the system fairer.
- The reform of stamp duty will encourage more financial institutions to offer Islamic mortgages.

## ***Labour supports Muslims abroad:***

- The military intervention in Kosovo saved thousands of Muslim lives.
- The cancellation of 100 per cent debt owed by the world's poorest countries and the increase in overseas development aid has benefited Muslims around the world.
- Labour is committed to finding a peaceful and just solution in the Middle East.

## ***Labour is committed to creating a fairer society:***

Labour's commitment to a fairer society is shared with the Muslim community and brings real benefits to Muslim families:

- The record investment in education means that all children have a real opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- All pensioners are better off with the introduction of the Minimum Income Guarantee, pensioner credit, the winter fuel allowance, free eye tests and record investment in the NHS.
- The increases in child benefit and the introduction of tax credits support family life – the fundamental unit in Islam.
- The regeneration of urban areas has created more secure and thriving communities, with better housing, an improved environment and less crime and anti-social behaviour.



*Muslim families are better off with Labour*

## **Make sure you get your rights – join a union**

The best way to make sure that your employer respects your rights at work is to join a trade union. Trade unions negotiate for the rights of people of all faiths at work.

**Your employer cannot prevent you from joining a trade union, or from carrying out trade union activities.**

Trade unions such as Usdaw can offer you lots of help and advice on getting **all** your rights at work, as well as **free** expert legal services if you have an accident or injury at work, or if you suffer from a work-related illness.

**Staff represented by a trade union are more likely to have better wages and conditions than those who aren't.**

To find the union that's appropriate for your job, call the TUC on **0870 600 4882** or visit **[www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)**



*Campaigning with Usdaw*

### **Join Usdaw today**

Usdaw represents over 335,000 members, many in the retail sector. We actively encourage Muslims to join and participate in the union.

The best way to protect and improve your rights at work is to join Usdaw. At only £1.80 a week (full-time rate) or £1.16 a week (part-time rate), it's probably the best investment you'll ever make.

**To join or find out more about Usdaw, call 0845 6060640\* or visit our web site at [www.usdaw.org.uk](http://www.usdaw.org.uk)**

### **The Labour Party**

To help Labour carry on the good work, you can join the Labour Party  
**Call 08705 900 200 or visit [www.labour.org.uk](http://www.labour.org.uk)**

The Labour Party actively encourages supporters from all communities.

'Muslims for Labour' is an organisation to support Muslims in the Labour Party. You can contact them at the office of Stephen Timms MP on **020 7219 4000**

**Usdaw**  
*Union of Shop, Distributive  
and Allied Workers*

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\* Calls charged at local rates