

MEMO+

Minority Ethnic Matters Overview+



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MEMO+ is an occasional series of briefing papers on topics of interest to minority ethnic communities in Scotland. It is produced by the [Scottish Council of Jewish Communities](#) in partnership with the [Black and Ethnic Minority Infrastructure in Scotland](#), and is supported by the Scottish Government.

Briefing: 2010 General Election The Parties and their Policies

The General Election, to select Members of the UK Parliament, will take place on Thursday 6 May 2010. The UK Parliament consists of 650 MPs (four more than at the last general election), of whom 59 represent Scottish constituencies. It is important that as many people as possible vote to ensure that the views of Scottish people are represented at Westminster.

Please circulate this issue of MEMO+ among your membership and encourage everyone to vote!

For information about how MPs are elected see [MEMO+ Voting in the 2010 UK General Election](#) and [click here](#) to find out who is standing in your constituency.

Each of the political parties has published a manifesto describing what they would do if they won the election and became the new UK Government, and the main parties have also published separate Scottish manifestos.

Not everything that the UK Parliament does is directly relevant in Scotland because many issues, such as health and education, are **Devolved**, and are therefore the responsibility of the Scottish Parliament. Other issues, such as foreign policy and immigration, are **Reserved** to the UK Parliament, and laws about these apply throughout the whole of the UK.

The UK Parliament can only pass laws that affect devolved matters in Scotland if the Scottish Parliament gives it permission by means of a Legislative Consent Motion.

The key policies of each party are summarised below, and there are also links to each party's full manifesto.

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Party websites and manifestos		Constitution	Defence
Economy	Education	Employment	Energy
Environment	Equality	Foreign Policy	Health
Housing	Immigration & Asylum	Law and Order	Local Government
Sport and Arts	Welfare	Other policies	Useful Links

Political Parties

Figures in brackets show how many MPs each party had at the end of the last Parliament.

Labour Party (346 MPs, 49 representing Scottish constituencies)

[UK website](#)

[UK Manifesto](#)

[Scottish website](#)

[Scottish Manifesto](#)

Conservative Party (195 MPs, 1 representing a Scottish constituency)

[UK website](#)

[UK Manifesto](#)

[Scottish website](#)

[Scottish Manifesto](#)

Liberal Democrat Party (63 MPs, 12 representing Scottish constituencies)

[UK website](#)

[UK Manifesto](#)

[Scottish website](#)

[Scottish Manifesto](#)

Scottish National Party (7 MPs, all representing Scottish constituencies)

[Website](#)

[Manifesto](#)

Green Party (no MPs)

[UK website](#)

[UK Manifesto](#)

[Scottish website](#)

[Scottish Manifesto](#)

Scottish Socialist Party (no MPs)

[Website](#)

[Manifesto](#)

United Kingdom Independence Party (no MPs)

[Website](#)

[Manifesto](#)

British National Party (no MPs)

[Website](#)

[Manifesto](#)

There are also several small, sometimes single issue, parties, as well as independent candidates who are not affiliated to any political party.

[TOP](#)

What do the parties say about the Constitution?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK.

Conservative

- Replace the Human Rights Act with a UK Bill of Rights.
- Reduce the number of MPs by 10%.
- Give voters the right to recall MPs who are guilty of wrongdoing.
- Ban Scottish and Welsh MPs from voting on UK Parliament legislation that does not affect Scotland and/or Wales (sometimes referred to as the “West Lothian Question”)
- Enable members of the public to veto excessive council tax rises, demand local referendums in their communities and debates in Parliament, and to table legislation in the House of Commons.

LibDem

- Introduce a written constitution subject to final approval in a referendum.
- Introduce a federal system of shared governance and competence to manage relations between different governments in the UK.
- Set up a Constitutional Convention to address the status of England within a federal Britain.
- Give the National Assembly for Wales primary legislative powers.

SNP

- Campaign for Scotland to become independent.
- Press for the Scottish Government to be able to deal directly with relevant UK departments on issues like employment and the economy.
- Replace the House of Lords with an elected second Chamber.
- Press for the abolition of the Act of Settlement.
- Oppose plans to repeal the Human Rights act.

Green

- Introduce proportional representation using the Additional Member System for Parliamentary elections, and introduce fixed term Parliaments.
- Introduce an all-elected House of Lords in which members may only stand for a maximum of one 10 year term.
- Introduce referendums to decide local government issues.
- Reduce the voting age to 16.

Labour

- Legislate to introduce fixed-term Parliaments.
- Hold referendums for moving to the Alternative Vote system (under which candidates need 50% support to be elected) for General Elections, and to establishing a democratic and accountable Second Chamber.
- Set up an All Party Commission to work towards a Written Constitution.
- Reduce the voting age to 16.

TOP

What do the parties say about Defence?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK.

LibDem

- Rule out the like-for-like replacement of the Trident nuclear weapons system.
- Raise the pay of lower ranks in the armed forces in line with the starting salary of their emergency services counterparts.
- Reduce the number of civilian staff in the Ministry of Defence and reduce numbers of top brass officers.
- Reach out to the communities most at risk of radicalisation to improve the relationships between them and the police and increase the flow of intelligence

SNP

- Actively participate in the Strategic Defence Review to reverse a trend that has seen Scotland lose UK defence investment.
- Oppose developing a replacement for Trident, and remove all nuclear bases from Scotland.
- Retain all Scotland's current military bases, and locate units recruited in Scotland as close to home as is practical.
- Restore Scotland's historic infantry regiments.

Green

- Decommission Trident.
- Leave NATO.
- Reduce defence expenditure.

Labour

- Maintain an independent nuclear deterrent.
- Introduce a Forces Charter to enshrine in law the rights of forces, their families, and Veterans.
- Reform defence procurement, make further reductions in civilian staff, and cut lower-priority spending on headquarters costs, travel and consultancy.
- Increase defence co-operation with international partners.
- Provide free further or higher education up to first degree level for service leavers with at least six years of service.

Conservative

- Create a National Security Adviser and a new National Resilience Team for Homeland Security, and establish a new Permanent Military Command for Homeland Defence and Security.
- Ban organisations that advocate hate or the violent overthrow of our society, such as Hizb-ut-Tahrir, and close down organisations which attempt to fund terrorism from the UK.
- Ensure servicemen and women are treated in dedicated military wards in hospital.
- Provide university and further education scholarships for the children of servicemen and women killed while on active duty, backdated to 1990.

TOP

What do the parties say about the Economy?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK.

Labour

- Increases in some areas of public spending next year, followed by cuts to reduce the deficit by more than 50% by 2014, and 66% by the end of the next parliament.
- 50p tax rate on earnings over £150,000.
- 1% National Insurance increase in 2011
- No extension of VAT to food, children's clothes, books, newspapers or public transport.

Conservative

- £6 billion cuts to eliminate most of the deficit by 2015 (but spending on health and foreign aid will be protected).
- No increase in National Insurance for people earning less than £35,000.
- Increase the Inheritance Tax threshold to £1m.
- Fund a two-year Council Tax freeze.
- Cut Civil Service costs by 33% over five years. This will include a public sector pay freeze during 2011 for all except one million of the lowest paid workers.

LibDem

- £15 billion cuts each year whilst protecting frontline services.
- Raise the Income Tax threshold to £10,000.
- Set a £400 pay rise cap for all public sector workers, initially for two years, ensuring that the lowest paid are eligible for the biggest percentage rise.
- Increase Capital Gains Tax in line with Income Tax.

SNP

- Press for fiscal autonomy for Scotland, including allowing the Scottish Government to borrow.
- Guarantee no cuts in frontline services.
- Protect funding for health, education, and jobs.
- Reduce spending on government by abolishing the Scotland Office, Trident, ID cards, and 25% of quangos.

Green

- Increasing taxation, including on share dividends and National Insurance for high earners, in order to reduce the deficit by 50% by 2013.
- Gradually merge National Insurance into Income Tax.
- Protect frontline services.
- Support mutual financial institutions such as building societies, co-operatives, credit unions, and local community banks.
- Build a sustainable agricultural and manufacturing base.

TOP

What do the parties say about Education?

With the exception of those proposed by the SNP, these policies are not directly relevant in Scotland.

Labour

- Give parents the power to trigger a ballot on whether they want to bring in new leadership at their child's school.
- Increase the number free nursery places for two year olds, and provide 15 hours per week of flexible, free nursery education for three and four year olds.
- Introduce a '3Rs Guarantee' that every pupil who falls behind at primary school and early in secondary school will receive special one-to-one or small-group catch-up provision.
- Ensure that every secondary school pupil has a personal tutor.

Conservative

- Make it much easier for educational charities, groups of parents and teachers, cooperatives and others to start new Academies (independent, non-selective state schools).
- Abolish the legal requirement of 24 hours' notice for detentions; reform the exclusion process; and give headteachers the power to ban, search for, and confiscate any items they think may cause violence or disruption.
- Provide 10,000 extra university places in 2010.
- Establish a Community Learning Fund to help adults who want to learn new skills or restart their careers.

LibDem

- Invest £2.5 billion in 'Pupil Premium' to improve education for the most disadvantaged pupils.
- Guarantee Special Educational Needs diagnostic assessments for all 5-year-olds.
- Give 14–19 year-olds the right to take up a course at college instead of attending school.
- Create a General Diploma to bring GCSEs, A-Levels and vocational qualifications together, to enable pupils to mix vocational and academic learning.

SNP

- Oppose changes in English university fees that will result in reduced Barnett formula funding for Scotland.
- Reduce class sizes to a maximum of 18 children in P1-P3.
- Continue to support the 16+ Learning Choices programme that offers every pupil the chance of continuing their education beyond the age of 16.

Green

- Reduce maximum class sizes to 20 pupils by the end of the next parliament.
- Abolish student tuition fees.
- Remove charitable status from private schools, and encourage them to become state schools.
- Abolish SATS, and give teachers freedom to develop a wider curriculum.

TOP

What do the parties say about Employment?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK

Labour

- Guarantee employment or training to people who have been unemployed for more than six months.
- Guarantee job placement for everyone who has been unemployed for more than two years.
- Gradually increase the National Minimum Wage to be at least in line with average earnings by 2015.
- Use tax credits to ensure that people coming off benefits will be at least £40 a week better off working than not working.

Conservative

- Fund 200,000 apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships, 100,000 work pairings, and 100,000 further education college places.
- Build a network of business mentors, and offer substantial loans to would-be entrepreneurs.
- Provide seed funding to establish a network of Work Clubs where people can receive mentoring, skills training, and help to find local job opportunities.
- New businesses started in the first two years of a Conservative government will pay no Employers' National Insurance on the first ten employees hired during its first year.

LibDem

- Invest £3.1 billion in green technology to create 100,000 jobs.
- Establish a work placement scheme, paying £55 per week for up to three months, to provide young people with an opportunity to gain skills, qualifications and work.

SNP

- Increased Scottish government responsibility for employment policy.
- Increase capital spending to fund 5,000 new jobs in Scotland.
- Increase low carbon employment in Scotland by 60,000 by 2020

Green

- Create one million extra jobs and training places within one year of introducing the "New Green Deal".
- Increase the Minimum Wage to 60% of average earnings.
- Work towards ensuring that the maximum wage in any organisation is no more than ten times the minimum wage in that organisation.
- Introduce equal pay audits for large employers.
- Ensure that workers' rights apply to part-time, casual workers and the self-employed, and from the first day of employment.

[TOP](#)

What do the parties say about Energy?

Not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

SNP

- Demand fiscal autonomy to create an Energy Fund from revenue from North Sea oil.
- Demand the release of Fossil Fuel Levy money to deliver £200 million investment in renewables.
- Harness over 11 GW of offshore wind capacity by 2020.
- Continue to support the £10 million Saltire Prize for marine renewables, and provide £12 million for renewable energy research and development.

Green

- Ensure that half of all energy used will be from renewable sources by 2020.
- Phase out the use of nuclear power.
- Introduce individual carbon quotas for all adults and children.
- Abolish standing charges on fuel bills.

Labour

- Generate around 40% of electricity from low-carbon sources by 2020.
- Build a new generation of nuclear power stations, and a four clean coal plants.
- Devolve power to local councils to hold energy companies to account for community energy efficiency programmes, and give them powers to develop local energy systems.
- Push for a strengthening of Europe's 2020 emission reductions from 20% to 30% by 2020

Conservative

- Clear the way for new nuclear power stations, but without any public subsidy.
- Give every home up to £6,500 for energy improvement measures.
- Allow communities that host renewable energy projects such as wind farms to keep the additional business rates they generate for six years.
- Introduce incentives for small-scale energy generation.
- Introduce an Emissions Performance Standard to set a legal limit on permitted emissions from power stations.

LibDem

- Set a target of 40% of UK electricity to be generated from clean, non-carbon-emitting sources by 2020, rising to 100 per cent by 2050.
- Reject a new generation of nuclear power stations.
- Encourage community-owned renewable energy schemes where local people benefit from the power produced.
- Begin a ten-year programme of home insulation, offering a home energy improvement package of up to £10,000 per home.
- Launch an 'Eco Cash-Back' scheme, for one year only, which will give £400 to people who install double glazing, replace an old boiler, or install micro-generation.

What do the parties say about the Environment?

Not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

Green

- Introduce a system of domestic carbon quotas.
- Introduce VAT and fuel duty on aviation. Introduce water taxes for businesses.
- Double spending on recycling and waste disposal. Aim to recycle 70% of domestic waste by 2015.
- Provide free compost bins.

Labour

- Designate new areas for protected landscape and habitat status, focusing on green corridors and wildlife networks to link up existing sites.
- Maintain the Green Belt, and increase forest and woodland areas.
- Extend the Right to Roam to the whole of the English coastline.
- 60% of new developments to be on brownfield sites.

Conservative

- Launch a national tree planting campaign.
- Introduce a voluntary arrangement among producers to cut back on the production of waste and improve its disposal.
- Improve flood defences, prevent unnecessary building in areas of high flood risk, and ensure the country is better equipped when flooding does take place.

LibDem

- Create a new designation – similar to Site of Special Scientific Interest status – to protect green areas of particular importance or value to the community.
- Set targets for ‘zero waste’, aiming to end the use of landfill.
- Protect the world’s forests by pressing for an international target of zero net deforestation by 2020.
- Work with other countries to develop an international labelling system for the environmental impact of products.

SNP

- Reduce carbon emissions by developing the UK high speed rail network as an alternative to domestic flights.

TOP

What do the parties say about Equality?

With the exception of some of the SNP policies, which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK.

However, although equality policy is the responsibility of the UK Parliament and Government, it is the Scottish Government's responsibility to implement the policy in Scotland.

Green

- Promote legal changes to make it much easier for women to take equal pay cases to court, and to allow women to take such cases as a group.
- Require 40% of board members of larger companies to be female within five years.
- Provide comprehensive training for teachers and educational staff on all diversity and inclusion issues.
- Oppose all opt-outs from equality and antidiscrimination laws by religious organisations.

Labour

- Take forward recent proposals to ensure that the House of Commons reflects the diversity of modern Britain.
- Actively combat extremist groups who promote fear, hatred and violence on the basis of faith or race.

Conservative

- Support legislation to empower the police and courts to combat racism.
- Extend the right to request flexible working to every parent with a child under the age of eighteen

LibDem

- Require name-blind job application forms to reduce sex and race discrimination in employment, initially for every company with over 100 employees.
- Introduce fair pay audits for every company with over 100 employees to combat discrimination in pay.
- Reform Access to Work so disabled people already have funding in place for the equipment and adaptation they need when they apply for a job.

SNP

- Provide £81,700 for the delivery of 152 anti-Islamophobia workshops in secondary schools across Scotland over the next two years.
- Provide Show Racism the Red Card with £465,000 to develop its work in Scotland.

[TOP](#)

What do the parties say about Foreign Policy?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable to Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK

Conservative

- Introduce a UK Sovereignty Bill, to ensure that overall authority is not ceded to Europe.
- Rule out joining the Euro.
- Negotiate a full opt-out from the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the Working Time Directive.
- Strengthen the Commonwealth as a focus for promoting democratic values and development.
- Increase foreign aid to 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2013.

LibDem

- Support the establishment of an International Arms Trade Treaty.
- Support the provision of UN Adaptation Funds for developing countries, financed from international emissions markets.
- Increase the UK's aid budget to reach the UN target of 0.7% of Gross National Income by 2013.

SNP

- Set up a Scottish Centre for Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution, to promote peaceful alternatives to armed conflict.
- Commitment to meet the UN target of 0.7% of national wealth devoted to overseas development.

Green

- Reform the UN by abolishing all permanent seats on the Security Council and introducing decision-making by majority vote.
- Oppose introduction of the Euro.

Labour

- Support the enlargement of EU membership.
- Press for fundamental reform of the EU budget and for further changes to the Common Agricultural Policy
- Support the Euro in principle, but only adopt it if approved in a referendum.
- Support the campaign for a legally binding global arms trade treaty in 2012.
- Believe that Europe should play a key role in conflict resolution.

TOP

What do the parties say about Health?

Only the SNP policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

LibDem

- Ensure that local GPs provide out of hours care.
- Reform payments to GPs so that those who accept patients from areas with the worst health and deprivation receive extra payment.
- Link payments to GPs more directly to measures to prevent illness.
- Cut the size of the Department of Health by half, abolish unnecessary quangos, cut others' budgets, and seek to limit the pay and bonuses of top NHS managers.
- Prioritise dementia research within the health research and development budget.

SNP

- Introduce a £1 billion programme of investment in new community health facilities, and an £840 million investment in Glasgow's Southern General hospital.
- Introduce waiting time guarantees to ensure that, by next year, no patient will wait more than 18 weeks in total from being referred by a GP to receiving treatment.
- Abolish prescription charges in 2011.
- Restrict cigarette displays and remove vending machines.

Green

- Put local government in charge of local healthcare decisions.
- Abolish prescription charges, and charges for dental care and eye tests.
- Provide the right to an assisted death.
- Introduce free social care for the elderly.

Labour

- Introduce legally binding guarantees for patients, including the right to cancer test results within one week of referral, and a maximum 18 weeks' wait for treatment or, if that is not achievable, the offer of private treatment.

Conservative

- Ensure access to a GP from 8am to 8pm, seven days a week.
- Provide NHS dentists for an additional million people, and free dental checks for all five year-olds.
- Cut the cost of NHS bureaucracy by 33%.
- Introduce a voluntary insurance scheme so people are no longer forced to sell their homes if they need residential care.

TOP

What do the parties say about Housing?

Not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

SNP

- Invest in new council housing.
- Develop the National Housing Trust to provide more affordable homes to rent.

Green

- Direct investment in social housing.
- Replace the Right to Buy with a Right to Rent housing.
- Introduce a free scheme for people to insulate their home.
- Develop "brownfield" sites, and protect "greenfield" areas.
- Increase rights for homeless people, and end the practice of declaring people "intentionally homeless".

Labour

- No Stamp Duty on houses costing up to £250,000 for the next two years, but increase Stamp Duty to 5% on houses worth more than £1 million.
- Invest £7.5 billion to build new houses in the next two years.
- Establish a new National Landlord Register, and guarantee tenants of private landlords the right to a written tenancy agreement.
- Provide homeless 16 and 17 year olds with supported accommodation and training.
-

Conservative

- No Stamp Duty for first time buyers on houses costing up to £250,000.
- Strengthen shared ownership schemes that allow those on low-to-middle incomes to own or part-own their home.

LibDem

- Bring 250,000 empty homes back into use by providing grants or cheap loans for their renovation; grants if the home is to be used as social housing, and loans if for private use.
- Allow councils to borrow money against their assets in order to build new council homes.
- Promote schemes for affordable homes, for example, equity mortgages, and 'Home on the Farm' which encourage farmers to convert existing buildings into affordable housing.
- Change court powers to ensure that repossession of a house only ever used as a last resort.

TOP

What do the parties say about Immigration?

With the exception of some SNP policies which are only applicable in Scotland, these policies apply throughout the UK.

SNP

- Devolve responsibility for immigration to the Scottish Parliament to develop a system that meets Scotland's needs.
- Introduce an earned citizenship system.
- End the detention of asylum-seekers' children in immigration detention centres.

Green

- Develop a foreign policy that reduces immigration by reducing the economic, political, and environmental factors that force people to migrate.
- Prioritise obligations to refugees and asylum-seekers.
- Enable illegal immigrants who have been in the UK for more than three years to remain in the country legally.

Labour

- Continue to tighten the newly-created points-based immigration system
- Make the English language test harder, and insist that all applicants pass the test before they arrive in the UK.
- Expand the Migration Impacts Fund, paid for by contributions from migrants, and channel the money to areas that take in the most migrants.
- Introduce a points-based citizenship system to break the automatic link between staying in the UK for a set period and being able to settle or gain citizenship.
- Increasingly reserve access to benefits, and social housing for British citizens and permanent residents.

Conservative

- Reduce immigration to 1990s levels.
- Establish an annual limit for non-EU economic migrants, and only admit those who bring the most value to the economy.
- Introduce an English language test for anyone coming to the UK to get married.
- Require foreign students to leave the country and reapply if they want to switch to another course or apply for a work permit.

LibDem

- Assess the needs and resources of UK regions as part of a points-based immigration scheme, to ensure migrants can work only where they are needed.
- Charge businesses more for work permits for immigrant employees, and use the money to pay for training British workers.
- Allow people who entered the UK before 2010, and who have been in Britain without the correct papers for 10 years, but speak English, and do not have a criminal record to earn citizenship.
- Allow asylum seekers to work.
- End the detention of children in immigration detention centres.

TOP

What do the parties say about Law and Order?

Only the SNP policies are directly relevant in Scotland

Conservative

- Give police the power to identify offenders in order to protect the public and prevent crime.
- Introduce mobile knife scanners on streets and public transport.
- Allow councils and the police to shut down permanently any shop or bar found persistently selling alcohol to children, and double the maximum fine for under-age alcohol sales to £20,000.
- Pilot a scheme to create Prison and Rehabilitation Trusts so that just one organisation is responsible for helping to stop a criminal re-offending.

LibDem

- Pay for an additional 3,000 police officers on the beat.
- Hold direct elections for membership of police authorities, and give them the power to sack and appoint Chief Constables, set local policing priorities, and agree and determine budgets.
- Require better recording of hate crimes against disabled, homosexual and transgender people.
- Make prisoners work and contribute from their prison wages to a compensation fund for victims.

SNP

- Increase the number of police on the beat.
- Support longer sentences for people convicted of knife crime.
- Introduce a minimum-pricing strategy for alcohol.

Green

- Raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14.
- Decriminalise the possession, sale, and production of cannabis.
- Provide reading and writing courses for all prisoners.
- Oppose the death penalty in countries where it still exists.

Labour

- Ensure that Police and Community Support Officers spend 80% of their time on the beat and are visible in their neighbourhood.
- Guarantee fast and effective action to deal with antisocial behaviour, including a right to legal injunctions for repeat victims, funded by the police or council who let them down.
- Use the tax system to claw back from higher-earning offenders a proportion of the costs of prison. Asset confiscation will be a standard principle in sentencing, and will be extended from cash to houses and cars. Every community will have the right to vote on how these assets are used to pay back to the community.
- Retain DNA profiles of people arrested but not convicted of any crime for six years.

TOP

What do the parties say about Local Government?

Only the SNP policies are directly relevant in Scotland

LibDem

- Replace Council Tax with a local Income Tax.
- Gradually decentralise taxation and spending, beginning by returning business tax to local councils.
- Abolish central government inspection regimes of local councils.

SNP

- Freeze Council Tax for the third year running.

Green

- Introduce a system of proportional representation for local council elections.
- Give local councils tax-raising powers.
- Allow referendums on any local council policy if called for by at least 20% of the local electorate.

Labour

- Cap excessive increases in Council Tax.
- Reduce the number of ring-fenced budgets and central targets to allow local councils more freedom to decide how money is spent.
- Allow people to demand action from their local council by means of a new petitioning procedure.

Conservative

- Freeze Council Tax for two years.
- Abolish council tax inspectors' rights of entry into people's homes.
- Devolve spending to local councils.

TOP

What do the parties say about Sport and Arts?

Not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

Labour

- Ensure that the Olympics are delivered on time and on budget, to the highest standards.
- Give every child the opportunity to do at least five hours of sport, and five hours of art, music, or cultural activities per week.
- Give public institutions new rights to borrow works of art from the national collection.
- Continue to support free admission to museums and galleries.

Conservative

- Create a system of commercially viable local television stations.
- Deliver nationwide superfast broadband by 2017.
- Ensure a greater share of Lottery funding goes to the arts, sport and heritage.

LibDem

- Close loopholes that allow playing fields to be sold or built upon without going through the normal planning procedures.
- Maintain free entry to national museums and galleries and open up the Government Art Collection for greater public use.
- Reintroduce the rule allowing two performers of unamplified music in any licensed premises without the need for an entertainment licence, allow licensed venues for up to 200 people to host live music without the need for an entertainment licence, and remove the requirement for schools and hospitals to apply for an entertainment licence.

SNP

- Press for the return of £150 million lottery funds diverted from Scotland to help fund the London 2012 games in order to invest in facilities for the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games.

Green

- Spend £1 billion each year on ensuring universal access to quality facilities for music, art, drama, dance and youth clubs, as well as sports.

[TOP](#)

What do the parties say about Welfare?

With the exception of those proposed by the SNP, not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

Green

- Introduce a Citizen's Income to replace means tested benefits.
- Introduce an earnings-linked Citizen's Pension.
- Ensure that needs-based benefits are sufficient to provide dignity and independence for those who cannot take on paid employment.
- Double Child Benefit, but make it taxable.
- Increase Carer's Allowance, and build recognition of the value of volunteering, caring and other unpaid work into the benefits system.

Labour

- Ensure that families will be at least £40 per week better off working than on benefits.
- Reassess the Incapacity Benefit claims of 1.5 million people by 2014, moving those able to work back into jobs.
- Guarantee supported employment after two years on benefit for those with the most serious conditions or disabilities who want to work.
- Require lone parents to begin preparing for work when their youngest child is three years old, and actively to seek employment when the child is seven years old.

Conservative

- Introduce a new system of flexible parental leave so parents can share maternity leave, or both take time off simultaneously.
- Link the basic state pension to earnings.
- Protect the winter fuel payment, free bus passes and free TV licences.
- Bring forward the date at which the state pension age starts to rise to 66, although it will not be sooner than 2016 for men and 2020 for women.

LibDem

- Increase the state pension annually by whichever is the higher of growth in earnings, growth in prices or 2.5 per cent.
- Give people greater flexibility in accessing part of their personal pension fund early.
- Offer a week's respite for the one million carers who spend 50 hours every week looking after a sick relative.
- End government payments into Child Trust Funds.

SNP

- Restore the link between pensions and earnings.
- Guarantee to protect free personal care and concessionary travel for pensioners.
- Campaign against cuts in Attendance and Carer's Allowance.

TOP

What other policies do the parties have?

Not all of these policies are directly relevant in Scotland.

Conservative

- Tackle unacceptable cultural practices by classifying Khat as an illegal drug, closing polygamy loopholes, tackling forced marriages, and ensuring religious courts act in accordance with the Arbitration Act.
- Abolish local authorities' surveillance powers.
- Allow Post Offices to offer a wider range of services.
- Give greater recognition to St George's Day.

LibDem

- Increase regulation of CCTV.

SNP

- Oppose changes to the Royal Mail. Support allowing Post Offices to provide a wider range of banking services.

Green

- Re-open Post Offices that have been shut down.
- Strengthen controls on advertising directed at children.
- Protect smaller local schools and libraries, hospitals and other health facilities.
- Double spending on youth services.

Labour

- All young people to give service to their community, as part of learning to become active and responsible citizens

TOP

Useful Links

- **General Election 2010 (BBC)**
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/election2010/results/default.stm>
Profiles of constituencies including the names of candidates. Results will be posted on the site as soon as they are announced after the polls close at 10pm on 6 May.
- **MEMO+ Voting in the 2010 General Election**
Information about registration and voting procedure for the General Election.
http://www.scojec.org/memo+/2010/10iv_general_election_1.pdf
- **UK Parliament**
<http://www.parliament.uk/>

TOP

Please circulate this issue of MEMO+ among your membership and encourage people to register and to vote in the General Election on 6 May!



Scottish Council of
Jewish Communities

*The **Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC)** is the representative body of all the Jewish communities in Scotland. It advances public understanding about the Jewish religion, culture and community, and also works in partnership with other organisations to promote good relations and understanding among community groups and to promote equality. (Scottish Charity SC029438) <http://www.scojec.org/>*



Empowering Scotland's Ethnic and
Cultural Minority Communities

***BEMIS** is the Scottish national Ethnic Minorities led umbrella body, supporting, empowering, and building the capacity of minority third sector community organisations. As a strategic partner with Government, it is proactive in influencing the development of race equality policy in Scotland, and helps develop and progress multicultural Scotland, active citizenship, democracy, and Human Rights Education at the Scottish, UK, and European levels. <http://www.bemis.org.uk/index.html>*



*The **Scottish Government** is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and social justice for all those who live in Scotland. **One Scotland** is the Scottish Government campaign designed to tackle racism. It aims to raise awareness of racist attitudes, highlight its negative impact and recognise the valuable contributions that other cultures have made to our society – and make Scotland no place for racism. <http://www.scotlandagainstracism.com/>*