

Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2023



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1. Introduction

We are continuing to take action to secure Scotland's position as a global leader in human rights and equality. Our ambition is for strong communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe, and where human rights are respected. We will continue to take action to mainstream equality, inclusion and human rights and take forward specific actions to address discrimination.

What is Mainstreaming?

Mainstreaming is the process of embedding equality, inclusion and human rights considerations and practices in the course of all that we do when exercising public functions.

What is the Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report?

This report sets out the continuing progress we are making to mainstream equality, inclusion and human rights as an employer and as a decision maker.

This report will provide an update to the [Equality outcomes and mainstreaming report 2021](#) for the outcomes set within the 2021 to 2025 reporting period. This document should be read alongside the supporting documents.

Why Report on Mainstreaming?

The Scottish Government is committed to public service, improving outcomes for the people of Scotland and aspiring to be an exemplar in all that it does.

Additionally, in making decisions that affect the lives of people in Scotland, the Scottish Government has a duty under the law to eliminate discrimination, advance equality, and to foster good relations.

Equality is an integral part of our business and the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#) provide a supporting framework to help us deliver this more effectively.

These duties are a key element in tackling inequality and in shaping decisions that will affect the lives of people in Scotland. Under these duties, the Scottish Government's reporting requirements in 2023 are:

- To report on progress on making the Public Sector Equality Duty integral to the exercise of its functions (Regulation 3);
- To update on progress to meet equality outcomes set in 2021 (Regulation 4);
- To outline the composition of the workforce, and use of that information (Regulation 6); and
- Information on the gender pay gap (Regulation 7).

Structure of the Report

This report expands upon the Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2023 'At A Glance' Summary Document. This report should be read in conjunction with that document to provide a comprehensive overview of our work to mainstream equality, inclusion and human rights and take forward specific actions to address discrimination.

The following report is split into three sections:

- **Part 1: The Scottish Government as a Policy Maker**

Part 1 outlines our strategic direction, processes and plans across the organisation to mainstream equality inclusion and human rights across our functions.

This section highlights a sample of key work with case studies and provides a breakdown of particular actions the Scottish Government is taking to advance equality and address specific inequalities. We also outline specific actions we plan to take over the next two year period ahead of the next reporting cycle in 2025.

- **Part 2: The Scottish Government as an Employer**

Part 2 provides an overview of progress being made and highlights on-going work to embed and advance equality and diversity in relation to our people.

This includes our corporate activity as an employer; specific action plans to place our people at the heart of mainstreaming; recruitment, internship and mentoring; and staff policies and networks. In this section we also provide data on the composition of the workforce and pay gap information, alongside how this data is being used to improve our policies and practices.

In previous years, each Equality Mainstreaming report has contained a data annex with tables of data about the Scottish Government workforce. This data is now contained in a separate Official Statistics publication covering diversity and inclusion in the Scottish Government workforce. A full breakdown of workforce composition and pay gap information can be found via:

<https://data.gov.scot/workforce-diversity-2022/>

- **Part 3: Equality Outcomes**

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 requires public authorities including the Scottish Government to publish equality outcomes which it will work to achieve. In 2021, the Scottish Government set out a suite of equality outcomes to cover the period up to 2025. This section provides a summary of progress and next steps for the 2021 to 2025 reporting period.

This report should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of work that the Scottish Government is undertaking to promote and advance equality and human rights but instead should be viewed as a snapshot of progress being made to ensure equality, inclusion and human rights are integral to the exercise of our work.

The supporting Annex, published alongside this report provides an update on Mainstreaming Equality in Scottish Government Agencies.

2. Part 1: The Scottish Government as a Policy Maker

2.1 Mainstreaming Policy

1. Building on policies and legislation already in place, the Scottish Government continues to seek to promote and advance equality and human rights in all that it does.
2. This report provides a picture of this ongoing work and examples of good practice across the organisation to mainstream equality and human rights. It also provides information on how as an organisation we ensure that equality, inclusion and human rights has been central to our ongoing work.

2.1.1 Public Sector Equality Duty Review

1. We recognise that for specific equality duties to work well and to deliver tangible benefits we need to fully understand how they are working in practice and how they can be strengthened in order to deliver positive change.
2. This is why, the Scottish Government is committed to reviewing policies and practices in an effort to advance equality, which includes undertaking a review of the effectiveness of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Scotland.
3. While the subject matter of the PSED is reserved to the UK Government, Scottish Ministers have used their powers to support compliance with the PSED by placing specific duties on Scottish public authorities. Scottish Ministers used these powers to make The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
4. A staged approach to the PSED Review is being undertaken. Stage One involved engagement between Scottish Government and equality stakeholders and listed authorities in 2021 to understand which aspects of the PSED were working well and to identify areas for improvement.
5. The Stage Two [public consultation](#) sought views on specific and detailed proposals to improve the current regime. Our consultation ran from December 2021 to April 2022. The [independent analysis](#) of the responses to the consultation were published on 30 November 2022.
6. We will undertake further engagement with stakeholders and research into international comparative duties, to ensure that any proposed regulations – and the implementation environment around them – can help to deliver our goal of better outcomes for those who continue to experience inequality.
7. It is our intention that any regulatory changes will come into effect in 2025, in line with the current reporting period (2021 to 2025). A lead in period will be used to ensure that listed authorities understand and can prepare for what will be required of them under a new regulatory regime and for new guidance to be developed to support effective implementation.

8. The Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy will also be a vehicle to take forward some of the non-legislative changes that were consulted upon.

2.1.2 Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy

1. We are driving an ambitious and progressive agenda to ensure equality, inclusion and human rights are embedded in all we do. In the 2020/21 Programme for Government, we committed to develop and take forward implementation of an equality and human rights mainstreaming strategy to be in place by the end of 2024. The [Programme for Government 2022/23](#) reaffirmed our commitment to mainstreaming equality, inclusion and human rights throughout government and the public sector.
2. The strategy will be underpinned by improvements in how we collect and use data. We will also look at how we can make improvements in how we harness lived experience to ensure that policy works for protected characteristics. This will help us ensure that fundamental human rights are protected, respected and fulfilled.
3. We also want to continue to learn from the impacts and the Government response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as our work to mainstream equality and human rights over the past decade. By doing this we will seek to strengthen and align Scottish Government policy making and extend its reach across all protected characteristics.
4. We will seek to strengthen this in Scottish Government policy-making as a single joint endeavour, and align our work with that of:
 - Our ongoing review of the operation of the Scottish Specific Duties in delivering the Public Sector Equality Duty;
 - Our ongoing capability development work in equality and human rights;
 - The development of a Human Rights Bill; and
 - The recommendations of the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, the Social Renewal Advisory Board, the COVID-19 and Ethnicity Expert Reference Group, and the Human Rights Taskforce.
5. We have worked with key equality and human rights stakeholders to shape this work so far and will continue to do so as we move to formal written consultation on the Strategy. We will work across different groups to promote equality, recognising intersectional inequality, drawing from the expertise of key stakeholders, and being guided by national fora such as the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls.

2.1.3 Organisational Capability, Capacity and Culture

1. Stakeholders have recognised that developing the capability and capacity of Scottish Government and Public Sector staff in embedding equality, inclusion and human rights is a critical element of continued improvements. Therefore, we are building on organisational capability, capacity and culture and this will

form part of the Mainstreaming Strategy, a draft of which will be consulted on in 2023.

2. Additionally, we are implementing revised training, guidance, tools and resources to ensure that our staff are able to develop policy and deliver services which advance equality and respect, protect and fulfil human rights. This includes an introduction to human rights training, virtual workshops and wider guidance on completing Impact Assessments.
3. We are working to establish centres of expertise across Government in equality and human rights relevant to the respective areas of policy responsibility. Recent focus has been on establishing this model in Economy.
4. We are also supporting the Mental Health Champions network, who are embedding a centre of expertise style approach in their work by identifying internal champions and working with an external stakeholder group. Building on the learning from this work as it develops, we will consider the best means and models to deliver centres of expertise throughout the Scottish Government.
5. Additionally, we are reviewing our approach to Impact Assessments to ensure they have the greatest required impact. A project to drive an overall improvement in Policy Impact Assessments has been established. This is focusing on identifying best practice in impact assessments to date; opportunities for improvement, and practical means to implement them in support of policy making; guidance and training; and measures to strengthen accountability and oversight and ensure quality.
6. We have been working to strengthen our approach to Equality Impact Assessments (EQIA). New guidance is accompanied by a new video based training resource. This resource enables users to hear first-hand the experiences of their colleagues in completing impact assessments and enables them to hear about best practice. Our intention is to launch these resources later by the Summer of 2023.

Case Study: National Strategy for Economic Transformation

The [National Strategy for Economic Transformation \(NSET\)](#) is a route to a strong economy with good, secure and well-paid jobs and growing businesses, maximising Scotland's strengths and natural assets to seize the opportunities of achieving net zero and becoming a fairer country. It articulates an ambition that Scotland's economy will significantly outperform the last decade, both in terms of economic performance and tackling structural economic inequalities.

NSET was accompanied by an Equality Position Statement, which summarised the evidence that helped to inform the development of the strategy concerning economic inequalities and the experiences of people with protected characteristics in relation to Scotland's economy.

Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) for each of the strategy's programmes, as well as an overarching EQIA for the strategy as a whole were published in October 2022. These will be kept under review, informed by new evidence as data collection improves, to monitor the impact that delivery of NSET is having on people with protected characteristics.

A key commitment within NSET was to establish a Centre of Expertise in Equality and Human Rights to advance our understanding and embed equality and human rights within the economic policy-making process. The Centre aims to work with stakeholder organisations and academic experts to build capacity, knowledge and skills in equality and human rights among economic policy officials.

A network of economic policy officials has been established to provide peer-to-peer support and to support continuous improvement, and a training programme for economic policy officials began with a foundation session on equality, human rights and the Fairer Scotland Duty in August 2022.

Delivery plans set out how we will work with partners to implement the strategy, and the new NSET Delivery Board will publish annual progress reports, which will include equalities monitoring. The Board is part of the new, robust governance structure we have put in place to increase transparency and hold delivery partners across Scotland to account.

It is co-chaired by the Economy Secretary and is representative of the people of Scotland, including a gender balanced approach to membership, with ethnic minority representation and a voice for those in rural communities. It also includes third sector expertise, which is championing and driving forward the fairer and more equal society agenda across the delivery of NSET to ensure that no one is left behind.

2.1.4 Equality Data and Evidence

1. The Scottish Government and its agencies collect, analyse and publish evidence by equality characteristics across a wide range of policy areas. However, there are many barriers and challenges to collecting, analysing and

reporting intersectional equality data. Despite improvements in recent years, there remain significant gaps in Scotland's equality evidence base.

2. In April 2021, we launched the first phase of our [Equality Data Improvement Programme \(EDIP\)](#) to lay the groundwork for the development of an ambitious cross-professional data improvement plan for the future. The EDIP took action to make equality evidence more wide-ranging and robust across a number of projects, enabling policy makers to develop sound, inclusive policy.
3. Through the EDIP, officials undertook an audit of key datasets used by the Scottish Government to assess the extent to which data on the nine protected characteristics, and intersections between characteristics, are collected and published. We used this information to produce improvement plans for each analytical area, which include immediate and longer-term improvements to fill gaps.
4. In March 2023, we published Scotland's new [Equality Evidence Strategy](#), covering the period March 2023 to December 2025. This Equality Evidence Strategy marks the conclusion of the first phase of the EDIP. The strategy sets out a range of actions to strengthen the equality evidence base that will be carried out by the end of 2025, along with a refreshed vision and direction that have been developed based on stakeholder views and feedback. This included a public consultation, carried out between July and October 2022, and series of stakeholder engagement events. An analysis of the 116 consultation responses received and the views raised at the events was carried out by an independent research consultancy.
5. We are continuing work to progress understanding and applications of intersectionality. This builds on our [literature review](#) of what is meant by intersectionalities and how the concept of overlapping/interconnected protected characteristics can be utilised when analysing data and developing policy. The review was published in March 2022.
6. A stronger and more complete equality evidence base will support the collective effort across the public sector to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Case Study: Scotland's Census 2022

Scotland's Census 2022 is a complex programme of work which collects data from every household in Scotland on the characteristics of Scotland's people and homes. This information is collected through a number of phases, including the main census collection period and the Census Coverage Survey.

The census collected information relevant to a number of the protected characteristics. It included questions relevant to the protected characteristics of sex, age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, religion, and race. Scotland's Census 2022 asked new questions about sexual orientation and a person's trans status or history.

National Records of Scotland (NRS) are aiming to publish the first census outputs one year after the census data collection phases ended. There has been on-going consultation with data users over recent months to ensure that census outputs are accessible and provided in a format which meets the needs of census data users. An innovation for Scotland's Census 2022 will be the availability of a flexible table builder tool.

This will allow users to create their own tables from census data. Any information that may identify an individual or household will not be available in the table builder tool.

2.1.5 Equality Budget Process

1. We have committed to further embedding equality, inclusion and human rights within all stages of the Scottish Government's budget process. This includes continuously reviewing the remit of the Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group and implementing improvements to the process for the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement.
2. The current cost of living crisis and challenging financial circumstances emphasises the importance of this work. We recognise that the impacts of the crisis will not be felt equally and disproportionately affect some households and groups.
3. The [Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group \(EHRBAG\)](#) is a non-statutory advisory group convened by the Scottish Government. It advises, shapes and informs the Scottish Government's approach to the governance and structures of the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement, and to equality and human rights budgeting more widely.
4. The Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement (EFSBS) is an integral part of the Scottish Government's budget process. Alongside the [Scottish Budget 2023-24: equality and Fairer Scotland statement](#) we published four supporting documents:
 - [Equality, Human Rights and Fairer Scotland Budgeting](#)
 - [Social and Economic Context](#)
 - [Equality and Fairer Scotland and the Resource Spending Review](#)

- [Detailed analysis of equalities and Fairer Scotland issues by portfolio](#)

5. This year's EFSBS draws on extensive analysis from across the Scottish Government. The analysis of budget proposals is important, as we aim to make the best use of public money in order to deliver positive outcomes and help those who need it most. It also helps us to discharge our legal responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Fairer Scotland Duty.
6. The Scottish Government has received recommendations to improve equality and human rights budgeting from a number of stakeholders is developing a coherent approach that delivers practical improvements to the budget process, which translate into better outcomes for Scotland's communities, especially for those most marginalised.
7. We have begun to take further steps to analyse the Scottish budget from both a gender and wider equality, inclusion and human rights perspective, and have sought to continually improve how equality is embedded in the budget process. We have accepted the principle of the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls' recommendation to further integrate intersectional gender analysis into the Scottish Budget process as part of our wider work on equality and human rights budgeting.
8. Work continues on the response to the formal recommendations made by EHRBAG. These recommendations cover a range of aspects from budgetary processes to culture to the wider eco-system of impact assessment. The response will outline a set of improvement actions to further embed equality and human rights budgeting.

Case Study: Raised In Scotland. Spent In Scotland

The 'Raised in Scotland. Spent in Scotland.' animated video was produced to show the link between taxes and public spending in Scotland so that it is better understood by all.

In developing this resource, stakeholders from different sectors were convened to help guide the script and the tone of the animation. The group included membership from the; Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group (EHRBAG); Low Incomes Tax Reform Group; University of Edinburgh; Scottish Tax Clinic; the Fraser of Allander Institute; and the Scottish Parliament Information Centre.

The stakeholders were asked what should be included in the video to help make tax more understandable and to assist in the refinement of the script to ensure that it was factual, apolitical and understandable – meeting the needs of those who do not understand the tax system.

This project concluded in March 2022, with the video [now published](#) and used on various Scottish Government communication platforms.

2.1.6 Procurement

1. Equality sits at the heart of public procurement through our [Sustainable Procurement Duty](#), requiring public bodies to consider and act on opportunities to improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing, with a particular focus on reducing inequality within procurement activity.
2. We take a holistic approach to ensuring we support and enable equality through procurement spend. Whether that is driving Fair Work First and the real Living Wage in contracts and supply chains; embedding equality outcomes in community benefits through procurement; or reserving contracts for supported businesses, ensuring fair and ethical procurement and protecting human rights. We routinely consider equality alongside other social, economic and environmental risks and opportunities in our procurement activity.
3. Our commitment to equality is laid out in our [Scottish Government Procurement Strategy](#) and in the national procurement policies we set for Scotland. The sustainable procurement duty provides a mechanism for the Scottish Government and other public bodies to comply with the general equality duty set out (section 149) in the Equality Act 2010 (“the 2010 Act”) and with the specific duties in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012.
4. We enable compliance through our national [sustainable procurement tools](#), guidance and support. We also we require organisations to track compliance, against their corporate procurement strategies, in their Annual Reports.
5. Scottish Government routinely acts on opportunities to further advance equality, diversity and inclusion through its procurement activity. Examples of which can be found in the case studies below.

Case Study: Facilities Management Services

In the tender for our Facilities Management Services, bidders were required to demonstrate how they will support the Scottish Government in achieving its equality outcomes around preventing discrimination, promoting equality, increasing diversity and fostering inclusive workplace culture. This included providing details of relevant policies, systems and processes; staff and sub-contractor/supply chain training in relation to equality and diversity; and demonstrating how equality of opportunity may be objectively monitored and reported throughout the contract duration.

Case Study: Temporary and Interim Staff Services

In our Temporary and Interim Staff Services tender, bidders were required to demonstrate a positive approach to building a workforce of people (including agency and interim workers) representative of the people of Scotland. That means having a workforce that includes people of different age groups, socio-economic backgrounds, faith and beliefs. People who are trans, disabled, from minority ethnic backgrounds. People who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual or another sexual orientation. This included providing details of strategy and processes in place to ensure as best as possible temporary / interim workers with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives and experiences.

6. We have a range of programmes to help drive our policies and approaches, from our work 'Mainstreaming Sustainable Procurement' and leading the 'Procurement and Commercial Improvement Programme' to our various capability-related strategies and underpinning governance. We also take stock through global benchmarking, research and surveys to validate our impact and where we can or need to do better.

2.2 Protected Characteristics and Addressing Inequalities

We know there is inequality in outcomes for people on the basis of their protected characteristics. Combinations of different protected characteristics can layer, reinforce and entrench poor outcomes for people.

Taking an ['intersectional approach'](#) can be best understood as a way of identifying, understanding and tackling structural inequality in a given context that accounts for the lived experience of people with intersecting identities. Intersectionality helps us to understand how people experience services, such as education and healthcare, differently as a result of their identity and unequal power dynamics. Understanding these differences facilitates the development of more effective policy that tackles structural disadvantage experienced by marginalised groups.

An intersectional approach is not just about considering the experiences of those at the intersection of multiple characteristics. It is also about policymakers and analysts assessing their own experiences and how this impacts on their ability to develop, deliver and evaluate policies.

Actions we are taking to support policy making as we mainstream equalities and human rights are set out below. While these are outlined under protected characteristics or inequalities we also understand the important need for an intersectional approach to policy making.

Protected Characteristics

2.2.1 Age

The Scottish Government recognises the positive contribution people of all ages make to their communities and sees the value in bringing generations together. We aim to enable better access to a range of services for older people as and when they need them. We want to ensure people are financially secure and supported as they age. Age is a protected characteristic but, importantly, individual older people may also identify with other protected characteristics. They may therefore experience multiple inequalities due to these intersections.

Older People

1. [A Fairer Scotland for Older People - A Framework for Action](#) was published in April 2019. The framework was developed to challenge the inequalities older people face as they age and to celebrate older people in Scotland. The Scottish Government has continued to work with the [Older People's Strategic Action Forum \(OPSAF\)](#), comprised of our key stakeholders. A progress report was published in 2021 with the final report due to be published later in 2023.
2. Our Equality and Human Rights Fund, totalling more than £21 million over three years (2021 to 2024) supports 48 organisations that deliver work focused on tackling inequality and discrimination, furthering equality, and advancing the realisation of human rights in Scotland. Over £2.2 million of that funding is providing support for older people's organisations and age equality projects and programmes.

3. Throughout the pandemic we kept fairness and human rights at the heart of our approach as we worked to keep older people safe, cared for and connected, with access to the essentials they need. We provided funding of over £1.3 million to organisations directly supporting the needs of older people during the COVID-19 pandemic, including funding for helplines, food distribution and keeping people connected.
4. Our new five-year [Social Isolation and Loneliness Plan](#) was launched in March. This plan will focus on reconnecting people. Additionally, a [new Social Isolation and Loneliness Fund](#) was launched in conjunction with the plan.
5. In 2023 we will deliver a Festival of Ageing. Building on feedback from the inaugural event, the 2023 Festival is aimed at an audience including business, public sector, third sector and communities. The event will celebrate ageing and highlight the benefits and opportunities of our ageing population, directly linking to the Government's work to improve outcomes for older people.
6. In 2023, we will also conduct a strategic review of the existing approach to tackling inequalities older people face in Scotland, to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that the approach to age equality in Scotland remains relevant for, and responds to, the complex and uncertain environment that exists now and will likely continue to unfold in coming years.

Case Study: Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People

In March 2021, we published the Statement of Intent, setting out a plan to develop a new integrated health and social care strategy for older people. We committed to developing the strategy with older people, and the people and organisations which support them.

We have engaged with a wide range of older people from multiple organisations and groups that support them, as well as individuals through a questionnaire which ran from September-November 2021.

Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, this engagement took place online. We recognise that this may have led to many older people being disengaged in this part of our engagement – however, this was the initial part of our engagement, and we will engage further on this consultation paper to ensure we get a wide range of views.

During these sessions we listened and gathered views from attendees on the priorities set out in our Statement of Intent. Views and opinions expressed during this engagement process were used in the development of a formal written consultation paper and the questions within it.

The Scottish Government launched its written consultation on a Health and Social Care Strategy for Older People on 8 March 2022 and it closed on 27 June 2022.

The consultation process also included 30 online and in person engagement events which took place between May and August 2022 including a range of organisations that support older as well as professional groups.

Young People

1. Equalities has remained a key focus of the Young Person's Guarantee (YPG). Through strategic oversight from the Equalities Subgroup we have worked with delivery partners to embed the actions outlined in the [YPG Equalities Action Plan](#) to ensure the Guarantee has supported tailored opportunities for young people with protected characteristics. As we start to mainstream elements of the YPG, there will be a renewed focus on disadvantaged young people who face the greatest barriers to accessing the labour market.
2. Local Employability Partnerships (LEPs) continue to provide supported employment, education and training programmes for young people, with many working in partnership with third sector organisations, such as Project Search, Penumbra, Who Cares? Scotland and Young Minds.
3. As part of funding arrangements, Local Authorities are required to provide their EQIAs for the employability support provided via the YPG. In 2022-23, we funded a pilot, delivered by the Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Sector Organisations (CEMVO), to help embed race equality within the delivery of the YPG at a local level.
4. We continue to grant fund a range of specialist and third sector partners and organisations to support young people furthest from the labour market,

including for challenges related to disability, care experience, race, gender and child poverty. By developing the Young Workforce School Coordinators, all of whom complete equalities training, we are bringing together tailored individual support for young people with the needs of employers.

5. Additionally, we are working to implement the Children (Scotland) Act 2020 which amongst other things aims to improve how the voice of the child is heard in family court cases.

Child Poverty

6. In March 2022, we published [Best Start, Bright Futures](#), our second Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan for the period 2022 to 2026. Best Start, Bright Futures is a Plan for all of Scotland and sets out how we will work in partnership with the public, private and third sectors, together with people and communities to deliver progress against the targets set in statute through the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.
7. The plan is built on the strong foundations of our work to tackle child poverty since 2018 and was informed by consultation with stakeholders and families in poverty. The plan retains a sharp focus on supporting the six priority family types identified as being at greatest risk of poverty and ensuring that systems work for these families in particular.
8. The plan sets out action to provide immediate support to families, with the value of the Scottish Child Payment to £25 per child per week from 14 November 2022, as well as wide ranging action to deliver the change needed in the longer term to support families. This includes the delivery of enhanced employability support for parents and the investment of Whole Family Wellbeing Funding which aims to deliver transformational change to improve holistic whole family support.

2.2.2 Disability

We are committed to promoting the rights of disabled people and ensuring that they benefit from all that we are doing. Disabled people continue to experience inequality and barriers to independent living and so cannot enjoy their rights on an equal basis to others. We believe that a fairer Scotland can only be realised when we secure equal rights for everyone. Effective solutions to the problems and barriers faced by disabled people must be drawn from the lived experience of disabled people.

1. [‘A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People’](#) ran from 2016 to 2021. A progress report for a Fairer Scotland for Disabled People was published in March 2021 which outlined five longer-term ambitions and 93 practical actions with our progress against them.
2. The report notes key progress under each of the five ambitions in the Action Plan, including:
 - An increase in the number involved in choosing and controlling their Social Care support through Self-directed Support options;

- The success of Fair Start Scotland helping over 9000 people into employment;
 - The new Child Disability Payment was rolled out in summer 2021 and fully delivered in autumn 2021;
 - Adult Disability Payment has been delivered by summer 2022; and
 - The Human Rights Taskforce Report recommending incorporation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
3. We are also developing a new Disability Equality strategy and a steering group was convened in 2022. The membership of the steering group is made up of Disabled People's Organisations. Disabled People's Organisations are those controlled and led by disabled people with at least 51% of the board and membership being disabled people. In light of the current impact of the cost crisis on disabled people, the former Minister for Equalities and Older People approved an immediate priorities plan and set up a Short Life Working Group to focus on progressing this work. The overarching strategic plan will continue to be developed simultaneously as we will consult with wider stakeholders prior to publication.
 4. The group is following co-design principles to develop the strategy. The group are currently defining priorities and identifying key stakeholders with the intention of collaborating on the progress of the priorities across all areas of Scottish life. They will also be considering the measurement and governance of the strategy in later meetings.
 5. Alongside our new strategy, £5 million of our Equality and Human Rights Fund (2021-2024) provides support for disabled people's organisations to deliver work focused on tackling inequality and discrimination, furthering equality, and advancing the realisation of human rights in Scotland.

Case Study: Access to Elected Office Fund (Scotland)

We established an Access to Elected Office Fund (Scotland) (AEOFS), supporting those who wished to stand in the 2017 local government elections. In 2021, 28 disabled people received awards to run for party selection and as candidates in the 2021 Scottish Parliament elections. A further two disabled people received awards to run for party selection in Scottish local council by-elections. Of these, one candidate was elected in Scottish local council by-election as the first deaf BSL user councillor in Scotland, 14 AEOFS recipients became regional list candidates or dual constituency/regional list candidates for the Scottish Parliament.

In Scottish Council elections in 2022, 54 received awards, 46 people became candidates and 22 people were elected.

2.2.3 Religion and Belief

Scotland is a multi-faith and multi-cultural society. Our vision is for a place where people of all faiths and beliefs can follow their traditions freely and flourish in resilient communities. We recognise the need for improved knowledge, awareness and understanding of religion and belief across Scottish Government and in policy development.

1. In 2021 we established a dedicated Faith and Belief policy team to support mainstreaming and inclusion of faith and belief interests across Scottish Government.
2. Delivering on our 2021/22 Programme for Government commitment, we established the Faith and Belief Representatives Group, which meets with government officials bi-monthly. It discusses a range of policy issues, supports multi-faith collaboration at a strategic level, and has helped develop a new approach to engagement.
3. In March 2023, we published our [Faith and Belief Engagement Strategy](#) which was been produced in collaboration with the Faith and Belief Representatives Group as well as other stakeholders. This will strengthen communication, engagement and collaboration between Scottish Government and Scotland's diverse faith and belief communities.
4. From the strategy, a workplan will be developed to progress the following key objectives: improving our understanding of faith and belief communities in Scotland; developing external and internal engagement on faith and belief; developing interfaith work in Scotland; reviewing funding for faith and belief organisations; and improving the EQIA process in relation to faith and belief.
5. We will continue to integrate knowledge and understanding of faith and belief in policy across Scottish Government. Alongside this we will facilitate and support engagement through the Faith and Belief Representatives Group on a number of key policy and legislative issues that have potential impacts in relation to religion or belief, including in 2023: Assisted Dying, Ending Conversion Practices, Safe Access Zones (Abortion Services) and the Human Rights Bill.

2.2.4 Race

The Scottish Government is determined to show leadership in advancing race equality, tackling racism and addressing barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic communities realising their potential; as well as supporting them to realise their human rights. Understanding racism and taking a truly anti-racist position means acknowledging the existence of formal and informal structural, institutional and cultural processes that place minority ethnic and migrant groups at a disadvantage within Scotland in relation to the majority.

From 2023 onwards our focus is on developing anti-racist infrastructure and bringing about system change. By system change, we mean fundamentally challenging and changing established ways of working, including policies and processes, and establishing clear expectations and objectives to work towards. More effective oversight, governance, and accountability will come from the establishment of an independent Race Observatory.

The Race Equality Action Plan (REAP)

1. The [Race Equality Action Plan \(REAP\)](#) final report mapped progress throughout the three years of the REAP from 2017 to 2021. The REAP consisted of 120 initial actions devised in 2017, as well as 57 updated actions,

some of which are updated versions of some of the original 120, and some of which were entirely new actions stemming from a reprioritisation exercise at the end of Year 2. The final year of the REAP took into account the considerable and momentous changes resulting from COVID-19, the reality of the UK's exit from the European Union and the light shone on systemic racism as part of the Black Lives Matter protests in summer 2020. Section 4 of the final report highlights the mainstreaming approach taken by the Scottish Government to embedding lasting change and ensuring policy coherence, and the foregrounding of race equality in our policy, legislation and services across the Scottish Government.

2. In September 2021 we published our [Race Equality: Immediate Priorities Plan \(IPP\)](#). It set out the actions required to tackle structural disadvantages faced by minority ethnic communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19, including fulfilling the [recommendations](#) of the [Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity](#) (ERG). The IPP consists of 39 key actions with over 90 deliverables and encompasses anti-racist work ongoing across Health and Social Care, Employment, Education, Housing, Poverty as well as other policy areas. It also acts as a foundation for the development of a long-term anti-racist programme of systemic change, to ensure that by 2030 Scotland's minority ethnic communities experience greater equality as outlined in our Race Equality Framework (2016-2030).

Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racist Infrastructure

3. The IPP is being guided by our independent [Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racist Infrastructure](#) (AIGG). The AIGG was established in April 2022 and will conclude in May 2023. The AIGG is an independently-chaired group of public appointees whose role is to scrutinise the Government's delivery of anti-racist outcomes for minority ethnic people in Scotland and to provide recommendations on how the Scottish Government can embed anti-racism into the infrastructure of government.

Race Observatory

4. The establishment of the Observatory will represent a significant step in our collective ambition to bring about meaningful system change for minority ethnic communities. It will provide strategic oversight of anti-racism approaches in Scotland; act as repository to ensure we effectively maintain institutional memory and will harness the potential of collaborative and co-production approaches involving those with expertise in the anti-racism field as well as those with lived experience. To provide the necessary commitment to establish, implement and continue the Observatory, Scottish Government has committed £1.5 million for 2023-2024.

Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan

5. Alongside the IPP, we have continued to implement the [Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan](#), which was extended to September 2023. The plan is a joint one between the Scottish Government and COSLA, with work being undertaken with partners across the public and third sectors. It aims to improve the lives

of Scotland's Gypsy/Traveller community, with a focus on the main areas that Gypsy/Traveller communities have identified as being important to them.

Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation

6. The Scottish Government is providing up to £20 million to local authorities from 2021 to 2026, through the Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Fund. The Fund is intended for both significant renovation and improvements of standards on existing sites and the building of new sites.
7. Aberdeen City Council, Clackmannanshire Council and Fife Council have received funding to develop sites as demonstration projects in 2021/22 and 2022/23. Further demonstration projects will progress in 2023/24 and 2024/25 in Highland Council, Perth & Kinross Council and South Lanarkshire Council.
8. To drive a significant improvement in the quality of sites going forward, we have published an Interim Site Design Guide for Gypsy/Traveller sites, developed in conjunction with local authorities and with input from members of Gypsy/Traveller communities. We plan to commission an evaluation of the Fund and Design Guide in 2023 which will aim to gather the key points of learning from the demonstration projects to inform future projects and a final Site Design Guide.
9. In 2023 we plan to commission research on an accommodation needs toolkit with a practical focus, aimed at improving the way that Housing Need and Demand Assessments, Local Housing Strategies and Development Plans reflect the needs of Gypsy/Travellers and help local authorities meet their duties under the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 in relation to Local Development Planning and Evidence Reports.

Case Study: Vaccine Information Fund

As Scotland moved through its COVID-19 Vaccination Programme, it was crucial that all of the people of Scotland had informed and equal access to information about the vaccine. Through the evidence developed as part of BEMIS Scotland and the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network Health and Vaccination Survey, it was apparent that not all individuals and communities have or are able to access information in the same way.

To help address this, the Scottish Government provided funding to a variety of organisations working with minority ethnic communities to reach those most unlikely to take up their vaccine offer. Similar to Test and Protect, the work of community organisations supporting minority ethnic groups was essential to ensure vaccine information was accessible and culturally appropriate – and delivered by trusted voices such as community leaders.

Scottish Government provided over £100,000 to support various efforts – including translating vital health information; facilitating focus groups and sessions with experts to debunk myths. This included sessions with AstraZeneca developers, and developing innovative and accessible materials to reach out to various minority ethnic communities who were reluctant to take up vaccine offers.

Data published by [Public Health Scotland](#) shows that vaccination uptake between 1st May 2021 and 24th Aug 2021 increased across Asian, African and Caribbean or Black communities;

- Asian: from 39.8% to 76.5%
- African: from 34% to 66.4%
- Caribbean or Black: from 37.8% to 66.5%

Fair Work

10. In March 2021, the Scottish Government held the Public Sector Leadership Summit on Race Equality in Employment which produced a [Joint Commitment](#) pledging Scottish Government and public sector leaders to take action to address racial inequality in the workplace. We have since continued engagement with public sector leaders to support and encourage the delivery of the Joint Commitment, including the National Conference on Race Equality in Employment which took place in December 2021 and follow-up workshop in April 2022 on improving the disclosure of ethnicity workforce data to support employers to build their evidence base to identify and address barriers for racialised minorities.

11. The Joint Commitment now sits within the broader context of our new Anti-Racist Employment Strategy, which we published in December 2022. The strategy seeks to support employers through practical guidance and case studies and build capability and understanding of the issues affecting racially minoritised staff. The strategy feeds into our refreshed Fair Work Action Plan, which takes an intersectional and interconnected approach across Fair Work and workplace equality policies to realising our ambition to become a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025.

12. As part of delivering against the strategy, we have so far developed the first stage of a race equality workplace training framework, which will enable employers to assess their training needs, develop their own learning pathways and access good quality race equality training for all levels in an organisation. We have also developed guidance on how to apply Positive Action as per the Equality Act 2010 to encourage greater use of this measure among employers to improve the representation of racialised minorities in the workplace.

Case Study: John Smith Minority Ethnic Emerging Leaders Programme

In 2022, in partnership with the John Smith Centre, the Scottish Government funded fifty places on the John Smith Minority Ethnic Emerging Leaders Programme. The programme provided young people with a nine-month long internship across the public, third or private sector organisations, backed by mentoring, and living wage placements. Its focus was on developing the professional and personal skills of participants, including negotiating and communication with the aim of breaking down barriers for minority ethnic young people wishing to access and contribute to public service. At the end of the programme, over 95% of the programme participants reported an improvement in their leadership, negotiation and influencing, presentation, organisational and research skills while on the programme.

By the end of their internships 11 participants had secured full time employment, seven has secured part time employment and three were undertaking a new internship or placement. A further ten participants were in tertiary education and three had applied to study at degree level. Due to its success the Minority Ethnic Emerging Leaders Programme has been nominated for a SAMEE Award.

Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums

13. In the 2020/21 Programme for Government, Scottish Government set out a commitment to sponsor an independent expert group to recommend how Scotland's existing and future museum collections can better recognise and represent a more accurate portrayal of Scotland's colonial and slavery history. Since then an [Empire, Slavery and Scotland's Museums Steering Group](#) led by Sir Geoff Palmer was established to consider what form the museum would take, its scope, and, whether a physical museum is recommended. To inform this process, the expert group led a national consultation in collaboration with the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER) and Glasgow Life to understand both public and expert perspectives, and to ensure all views on how Scotland's museums can contribute to our understanding of the legacies of empire, colonialism, and slavery were considered. The consultation launched on 16 September and closed on 7 November 2021.
14. In June 2022, informed by the consultation analysis, the expert group made six [recommendations](#) about how Scotland's involvement in empire, colonialism, and historic slavery can be addressed using museum collections and museum spaces. Consideration around how Scottish Government and relevant stakeholders will take forward these recommendations is currently underway.

2.2.5 Sex

Gender inequality has a wide-reaching impact on individuals, families, communities, and the economy. It can lead women to experience a lack of education opportunity, access to healthcare and social protection, greater vulnerability to exploitation and violence, and reduced economic productivity. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that everyone in Scotland is treated fairly and has the same opportunities to reach their potential, regardless of their sex.

National Advisory Council on Women and Girls

1. The independently co-chaired National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG) was established in 2017. Phase One of activity resulted in three reports and recommendations being published. All recommendations for Scottish Government have been accepted and actions underway to respond to them.
2. Phase Two NACWG launched on 31 March 2022, focussed on a programme of scrutiny of the implementation of recommendations from Phase One. Phase Two NACWG have a dedicated Participation Panel of women. The overarching objective for the Panel is to work with the NACWG during Phase Two by providing lived experience expertise in relation to the implementation of Phase One's recommendations, and how they need to be implemented to make a tangible positive difference to women's lives.

Women's Justice Leadership Panel

3. A Women's Leadership Panel was established in January 2022, to address gender inequality and improve women's experiences within the justice system. This Panel has brought together expert women from all aspects of the Justice System to discuss the experience and unique needs of women, and what this means for criminal justice processes. The Panel will examine the experiences of women as both victims and offenders in a range of settings including policing, community justice, criminal and civil courts, tribunals and prisons. Its remit is to demonstrate that the experience of women in the justice system is different to men's and to promote consistent understanding of gendered issues within the justice system.
4. This work builds on a call for evidence by the Scottish Government which has been used to identify themes for discussion. The Panel has been exploring these themes in detail, creating a better understanding of the impacts on women and building the case for fundamental system change to better reflect these needs. This work will promote the development of strategic outcomes which can guide and enhance the scope and uptake for gender competent policy making, and the design of justice policies which can go further for women.

Equally Safe

5. Equally Safe is Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. It focuses on the need for prevention of violence and recognises that violence against women and girls is a cause and a consequence of women's inequality. The strategy was updated in April 2018 and will be refreshed during the course of 2023.

6. In June 2022, the Scottish Government and COSLA published a new short-life [Equally Safe Delivery Plan](#) which will run until Autumn 2023. This plan builds on the many achievements of its predecessor, consolidates existing priorities and commitments, and considers what needs to be achieved for the sector to fully recover from the pandemic.
7. We are investing record levels of funding, including in frontline services, to support victims of violence against women and girls. Through the Delivering Equally Safe (DES) fund, the Scottish Government is providing £19 million per year to support 121 projects from 112 organisations that focus on early intervention, prevention as well as support services.
8. Through our Victims Centred Approach Fund, we have bolstered funding to Rape Crisis Scotland's National Advocacy Project, with £6 million over three years to provide specialist advocacy support in every centre in Scotland.
9. Since starting in October 2021, the Delivering Equally Safe Fund has already produced substantial results. In its first six months, almost 20,000 survivors were provided with emotional and practical support by DES funded projects. In addition to those provided with direct support, over 22,500 people engaged in education and awareness raising sessions over this period.

Strategic Funding Review

10. The Scottish Government aims to ensure that the funding provided works most effectively to improve outcomes for those using services. An Independent Strategic Review of Funding and Commissioning of Violence Against Women and Girls Services, chaired by Lesley Irving, is underway and will report its recommendations by June 2023.
11. The principal role of the review is to develop a more consistent, coherent, collective, and stable funding model that will ensure high quality, accessible specialist services across Scotland for women, children and young people experiencing any form of violence against women and girls.

Transport

12. The Scottish Government undertook a programme of research in 2022 on women and girls' safety on public transport. The primary part of the work was an in-depth qualitative study to understand women and girls' experiences accessing and using public transport, as well as those working on public transport. The research contains 10 recommendations for operators, police authorities and local government to improve women and girls' experience of public transport and enable them to feel safer and travel freely, whenever, and however they prefer. The [report and recommendations](#) were published on 7 March 2023 and we will continue to work with stakeholders to identify actions from the recommendations.

Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities

13. We are working with colleges and universities to ensure that they are places where students and staff are free from Gender Based Violence, misogyny, bullying and discrimination. We continue to work with the [Equally Safe Colleges and Universities Core Leadership Group](#) to deliver their agreed and published Strategic Plan, to ensure that institutions put in place measures to keep students safe and engaged with their studies while meeting the needs and considering the diversity of survivors.

Gender-Based Violence in Schools Working Group

14. We established a Gender Based Violence in Schools Working Group, jointly chaired by Scottish Government, Rape Crisis Scotland and Zero Tolerance. The Working Group is developing a framework document to help ensure consistency in messages on sexual harassment and gender based violence for everyone working with children and young people. It will also carry out a review of existing resources for schools and identify examples of effective practice, as well as developing new resources. This work is expected to be completed in 2023.

Women and Girls Foreign Policy

15. In line with the 2021/22 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government is in the process of developing a feminist approach to foreign policy. We want to make sure that our policies and actions abroad are consistent with our focus on fairness and inclusion at home, ensuring that our international work reflects a feminist approach to policymaking. This means putting the rights and empowerment of women and girls, and other marginalised groups, at its heart. Listening to, and learning from, others we will also take an intersectional approach seeking to understand how multiple interconnected social categories, such as sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, religion and socio-economic status, interact.
16. Recognising that women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate change but underrepresented in decision making, the Former First Minister launched the Glasgow Women's Leadership Statement at a high-level event at COP26 in Glasgow. The Statement was developed in partnership with UN Women and informed by experts in gender and climate change in Scotland and around the world. It has attracted signatures from women leaders in Scotland and globally who have committed to increase support for women to address climate change in their communities and meaningfully participate in decision-making structures at local, national and international levels.
17. The Scotland Pakistan Scholarship Scheme for Young Women and Girls is a five-year commitment (2019 to 2024) to provide scholarships to women and girls at secondary school, undergraduate and masters level of education; we are supporting a project in Rwanda for victims of sexual and gender-based violence; and the Scottish Government's partnership with Comic Relief in their joint 'Levelling the Field' Programme in Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia uses the power of sport to tackle social issues experienced by women and girls, developing essential life skills, fostering confidence and improving their self-esteem.

Case Study: Lived experience informing policy development related to commercial sexual exploitation

The Scottish Government has a Programme for Government commitment to develop a model for Scotland which effectively tackles and challenges men's demand for prostitution. This work aims to reduce stigma and criminalisation of those with experience of prostitution and encourage better access to services. This is part of a series of policy actions that are being taken to tackle misogynistic behaviours in society and has relevance to the aims of the [Justice Vision](#) and the [Equally Safe](#) strategy, in that we must ensure a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse, as well as the attitudes that perpetuate it.

We are taking this forward through a Framework for Scotland to challenge men's demand for prostitution and support those with experience of prostitution. To underpin the Framework, we have worked with a [group of stakeholders](#) (across the public and third sector) to develop fundamental principles which will ensure that equality, human rights and safety are at its heart. The [principles](#) were published in December 2022, and highlight that in addition to the crucial aim of challenging and deterring men's demand, it is equally important that we develop a collective approach to tackling the structural inequalities that can lead to women and girls becoming at risk of sexual exploitation.

The principles and the developing Framework have also been informed by Scottish Government commissioned [lived experience engagement](#) (published July 2022), taken forward by an independent research team. The project aimed to better understand current support service provision and the needs of service users in Scotland. The lived experience [report](#) highlights the need to better understand and tackle the stigma that many feel, and the need to raise awareness amongst mainstream services of the support needs that those with experience of prostitution may have. The Scottish Government Delivering Equally Safe fund supports the [CSE Aware project](#), which aims to raise awareness of CSE across the public and third sector.

Our policy approaches continuing to be informed by lived experience is at the heart of the principles.

2.2.6 Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

The Scottish Government is committed to advancing equality for LGBTI people, and promoting, protecting and realising the rights of every LGBTI person in Scotland. We continue to work with a wide range of third sector equality organisations to ensure that the voices of those with lived experience can help to improve outcomes for LGBTI communities across Scotland. We are funding a range of projects to tackle inequality and realise rights for LGBTI people across all areas of Scottish life. For example, through the Equality and Human Rights Fund over £3 million is being provided to five organisations working to promote LGBTI equality in Scotland for the years 2021-2024.

In line with our commitment in the [Programme for Government 2021/22](#), we also introduced the [Gender Recognition Reform \(Scotland\) Bill](#) to provide a more

streamlined process for trans men and women applying for legal gender recognition which was passed by the Scottish Parliament on 22 December 2022. However, The Secretary of State for Scotland has made an Order under section 35 of the Scotland Act 1998 that prevents the Presiding Officer from submitting the Bill for Royal Assent.

Conversion Practices

1. The 2021/22 Programme for Government, and Bute House Agreement, commits to introduce legislation to ban conversion practices that is as comprehensive as possible within Scotland's devolved powers. This commitment has recently been reiterated in the 2022/23 Programme for Government.
2. The Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice, Housing and Local Government announced in November 2021 that an Expert Advisory Group on Ending Conversion Practices would be established to inform Scotland's approach to ending conversion practices, which aim to change a person's sexual orientation or gender identity.
3. The group was established in March 2022 and was composed of experts in their field from LGBTI organisations, faith and belief organisations and communities, mental health, the law, human rights, academia, and people with personal lived experience of conversion practices.
4. In October 2022, the group published their report which sets out 32 guiding principles to inform the Scottish Government's approach to ending conversion practices in Scotland. Each of the guiding principles is supported by detailed recommendations.
5. Members also conducted further research to understand more about conversion practices in minority ethnic communities. A [report](#) was published alongside the main expert advisory group report to provide further detail and context around the impact proposed measures to end conversion practices would have within these communities.
6. We are in the process of developing proposals for legislation banning conversion practices which will be subject to public consultation. We are analysing and interpreting the recommendations of the Expert Advisory Group fully as we move forward with both the Bill and other non-legislative measures, to ensure that all the measures that we take are deliverable and bring about real and lasting change to the lives of LGBTI people in Scotland.

Non Binary Equality

7. As set out in the Bute House Agreement and the 2021/22 Programme for Government, we committed to developing an action plan in 2023 to improve Non Binary Equality.
8. We established a Working Group on Non-Binary Equality, which was independently chaired and was composed of key stakeholder organisations,

academics, and a number of non-binary people. The Group submitted its [recommendations](#) to Ministers in March 2022.

9. The Scottish Government issued its [response](#) to the Working Group on Non-Binary Equality's Report and Recommendations on 13 July 2022, accepting or partially accepting 24 out of 35 recommendations.
10. We want to improve equality and bring about real, positive and lasting change to the lives of non-binary people. We are now in the process of developing an action plan, based on the group's recommendations, which will set out more fully how we intend to do this.

Mixed Sex Civil Partnerships

11. We implemented mixed sex civil partnerships in Scotland in June 2021.
12. Of the 169 civil partnerships registered in the fourth quarter of 2022, 141 involved mixed-sex couples.

Cross-cutting Inequality

Inequalities exist across all aspects of our society and have a significant impact on people's lives. Addressing these inequalities is essential for creating a fair and just society.

This report will examine four key themes of cross-cutting inequality: education; employment; refugees and people seeking asylum; and socio-economic. We recognise that this list is not exhaustive, but our aim is to highlight some of the most pressing issues facing our communities today, and to explore policy developments that can help to address them.

Additionally, we are committed to taking an intersectional approach, recognising the connections between these inequalities and protected characteristics such as race, gender, and sex. By examining how various inequalities intersect and impact individuals, we can develop targeted policies and interventions that address underlying systemic issues and create real change for marginalised communities.

2.2.7 Education

All learners have a right to learn in an equitable environment where all cultures, identities and languages are recognised and valued, and where the curriculum, ethos of the school and workforce represents the diversity of individual learners and their communities.

The Curriculum for Excellence presents a range of opportunities to articulate and embed equality, diversity, social justice and children's rights in its design and implementation. The curriculum aims to support the development of rounded and engaged global citizens. Understanding and addressing inequalities, injustice, prejudice and discrimination is threaded throughout learning and teaching.

Children's Rights within education, Learning for Sustainability and the approach to Anti-Racism in the Curriculum in particular focus to the values and ethos of a school,

addressing systemic barriers to equality and diversity, and the importance of centring lived experience and participation in creating change.

Improving Gender Balance

1. We continue to tackle the under-representation of women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) courses and careers. An Improving Gender Balance and Equalities team based in Education Scotland is working with schools and Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) settings to provide professional learning and ongoing support in delivering actions to tackle gender bias and improve gender imbalances in participation, subject choice and learner pathways. Improving Gender Balance Action Guides for teachers and ELC practitioners and a self-evaluation framework designed to support schools/settings to reflect, discuss and plan for an ongoing and sustainable approach to improving gender balance for all learners has been developed to further embed the approach.
2. Recent developments have secured the permanent status of this team in Education Scotland and a commitment to expand the focus to other priorities such as anti-racism and building racial literacy.

Learner Participation

3. According to Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously. In 2021, to strengthen the voice of learners in Scottish education decisions, the Scottish Government committed to developing a Children and Young People's Education Council.
4. A new and meaningful platform for engaging children and young people in education policy will be developed. We will consider the findings of the children and young people engagement report to inform this.

Case Study: National Discussion on Education

The National Discussion "Let's Talk Scottish Education" was an unprecedented opportunity for children, young people and those who support them to have their voices heard in a debate designed to establish a compelling and consensual vision for Scottish education. The output is a 20 year vision for the education system and an accompanying Call to Action, setting out the short, medium and long term steps we need to take to realise our vision.

The National Discussion is the biggest engagement exercise to have been held in Scottish education. It resulted in events and debates taking place in every part of Scotland, 5,741 survey and email responses were received, and 26,000 pupils and students attended online school assemblies. We invited all of Scotland's schools to take part in the national discussion. We developed discussion guides in a range of languages and formats to make engaging in the National Discussion as accessible as possible.

A compelling and consensual vision and Call to Action have been developed which places learners at the centre. The Scottish Government will consider the National Discussion report and respond in the Autumn of 2023.

British Sign Language Toolkit

5. As part of the British Sign Language (BSL) National Plan 2017 to 2023, work was undertaken by Education Scotland, British Deaf Association and Edinburgh University to develop a British Sign Language Toolkit.
6. Funded by the Scottish Government, it is aimed at practitioners within early learning and childcare settings and schools who support all Deaf children, young people and their families, parents and carers who use British Sign Language and Tactile BSL, or who may consider using it, in education.

2.2.8 Employment

Fair Work is underpinned by the principles of equity and equality of opportunity for all. We know, however, that structural barriers persist in and beyond our labour market, and not everyone benefits from the same opportunities.

1. In December 2022, we published our refreshed Fair Work Action Plan, [Becoming a leading Fair Work Nation by 2025](#), which sets out actions to promote fair and inclusive workplaces across Scotland. This incorporates actions on tackling the gender pay gap, the disability employment gap, and our anti-racist employment strategy, driving fair work practices for all. This means better Fair Work outcomes for all, as well as specific improvements in the experience of work and the workplace for women, disabled people, and minority ethnic people.
2. Accessing and sustaining Fair Work can be even harder for people who face intersecting inequalities, for example, disabled racialised minorities, or women over 50. This is why we have taken an intersectional approach to this refreshed action plan, seeking to ensure the actions being taken can benefit as many people as possible.
3. We are making progress in achieving our vision:
 - the Disability Employment Gap is 31.2 percentage points, the lowest it has been since our baseline year in 2016 when it was 37.4 percentage points;
 - the latest 2022 Gender Pay Gap figures for full-time employees (3.7 per cent) show that we are still outperforming the UK as a whole (8.3 per cent) and have been since 2003.
 - the Gender Pay Gap for all employees (12.2 per cent) is also below the UK gap (14.9 per cent) and has been since 1997¹; and
 - Scotland has over 2,900 accredited real Living Wage employers, which is proportionately five times as many as in the rest of the UK with 91 per cent of workers in Scotland now earning at least the real Living Wage.
4. The lived experience of disabled people in the labour market, including understanding the impacts of the pandemic, was a very important contribution to inform our refreshed plan, as well as going forward with the implementation phase.

5. By end of 2023 we will update the Fair Work First criteria to reflect priority action required to address labour market inequalities faced by disabled people, women, and people from racialised minorities, ensuring people can enter, remain, and progress in work.

2.2.9 Displaced People, Refugees and People Seeking Asylum

The Scottish Government is working in partnership with COSLA and Scottish Refugee Council to support refugees, people seeking asylum and our communities through the pioneering and collaborative approach of the New Scots refugee integration strategy. Experience of inequality is often shared by people who have been forced to seek a place of safety.

Displaced People from Ukraine

1. The Ukraine war has resulted in a crisis that has set in motion a humanitarian response from countries across the globe. From the outset, the Scottish Government has offered its unwavering support for Ukraine and created its Super Sponsor Scheme to provide a quicker and safer route to sanctuary for those fleeing war.
2. The Scottish Government's immediate priority has been to secure suitable accommodation for displaced people, and to ensure they can access the help, support and services available to them in Scotland. Over time, our focus is now shifting towards integration and supporting displaced people to settle in our communities, and we will work closely with colleagues leading on New Scots in this space.
3. To date, Scotland has sponsored more Ukrainians, per head of population, than any other nation of the UK. As of 4 April 2023, more than 19,500 arrivals to the UK have been sponsored by the Scottish Government through the successful super sponsor scheme – providing a fast and safe route to safety and sanctuary.
4. We have made £11.2 million available in funding to help local authorities increase capacity of their teams to welcome and support arrivals from Ukraine.
5. On 22 September 2022, the Former First Minister announced the £50 million Ukraine Longer Term Resettlement Fund. Through the fund, councils and registered social landlords can apply for funding to bring void properties back into use for displaced people from Ukraine.
6. We will refine our accommodation offer for displaced people from Ukraine with a shift in focus from shorter term accommodation to longer term and more options. We will work closely with colleagues leading on the New Scots strategy to support wider integration of displaced people into our communities.

New Scots Refugee Integration Strategy

7. The key principle of the distinctive approach of New Scots is to support refugees and people seeking asylum from 'day one' of arrival in Scotland. The current strategy runs from 2018 to 2022, and partners have begun development of the third strategy, with the aim of publishing this in 2023.

8. In 2020, the New Scots partnership secured EU funding for the New Scots Refugee Integration Delivery Project, focused on research and evaluation of the strategy, as well as integration support for New Scots. In August 2021, we announced the award of £2.8 million in grants to refugee projects which support New Scots. In total, 56 projects were awarded funding to deliver initiatives designed to help New Scots settle in their new communities by promoting employability, education, health and social and cultural connections up to November 2022.

People With No Recourse To Public Funds

9. The Scottish Government and COSLA have been working together to improve support for people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF).
10. In March 2021, we jointly published the Ending Destitution Together strategy, which aims to strengthen support provision and service access for people subject to NRPF living in Scotland. The strategy is informed by powerful testimony from people with lived experience, as well as the knowledge and expertise of local authorities and third sector organisations providing frontline support.
11. Work is underway on a range of actions to deliver on essential needs, enable access to specialist advice and advocacy and promote inclusive approaches, so that people can pursue their ambitions and be active members of our communities.

2.2.10 Socio-Economic

We recognise that the impacts of the current cost of living will not be felt equally and the overriding priority is to support, as far as possible, the people and services from the worst impacts of the current cost of living increases.

Maximising Financial Assistance To Those In Need

1. Financial help is one of the most significant measures we can take to support households who are in difficulty or on low incomes. Our five family payments including Scottish Child Payment could be worth around £10,000 by the time an eligible child turns 6 compared to around £1,800 for eligible families in England & Wales and over £20,000 by the time an eligible child is 16.
2. Increasing the amount of the Scottish Child Payment – the most ambitious child poverty reduction measure in the UK – whilst also expanding it to thousands more families, is an important action that can mitigate the cost crisis. From 14 November 2022 the Scottish Child Payment increased to £25 per week per eligible child and extended to all eligible 6-15 year olds.
3. Awarding Best Start Grant, Early Learning Payment and School Age Payment automatically to eligible families in receipt of Scottish Child Payment, without the need to apply, increases take-up and maximises financial assistance for families.
4. Through mitigating the benefit cap as far as possible within devolved powers, further support can be provided for up to 4,000 families with around 14,000 children. On average, the benefit cap takes away almost £2,500 per household

per year. In Scotland, 98% of all households affected by the benefit cap are families with children, and 72% are lone-parent families. This support is not provided on this scale anywhere else in the UK.

5. Scotland's devolved social security system is founded on the principle that social security is a human right. Our new system is as accessible as possible – removing barriers for people, not putting them in their way. We have designed social security policies that address the greatest need, whether this is for individuals living with disabilities, carers, families, or households facing unexpected cost.
6. In summer 2017 the Scottish Government set up the Social Security Experience Panels, made up of people who have experience of one or more of the relevant benefits. The findings from the Experience Panels Research are fed directly into policy, design and service delivery teams making decisions about Social Security Scotland's benefits and services. A key example is that panel members were asked to respond to proposals for the new Winter Heating Payment, including the plan to remove the 'cold spell' requirement. 90% of panel members supported this idea. Findings from the research on Benefit Take-up, and our work on the impact of COVID-19 on communication preferences, are also feeding into the development of local delivery services and inclusive training materials.

Ending the Need for Food Banks

7. The Scottish Government made Programme for Government commitments in 2021-22 and 2022-23 to publish a plan, grounded in human rights, that sets out the action we will take towards ending the need for food banks as a primary response to hardship.
8. Hearing directly from people is central to the human rights approach that underpins the plan. In order to shape a draft plan and design an inclusive consultation process, in August 2021 we invited members of Nourish's Dignity Advisory Team to form a direct experience reference group to support the work of the Steering Group on Ending the Need for Food Banks. The opportunity was also extended to the Govan Community Project's peer researchers to involve people with experience of the asylum process in the discussions.
9. Our [online consultation](#) on the draft plan closed in January 2022 and over 400 people responded. We also ran a series of 10 workshops targeted at reaching people with direct experience of food insecurity and food aid providers. The final version of the plan will be published in the coming months.

3. Part 2: The Scottish Government as an Employer

Our ambition is to be a world-leading, diverse and inclusive employer where people can be themselves at work. We are committed to building a workforce of people with a wide range of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences, who are valued for their unique contributions in an environment that is respectful, supportive and free of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

3.1.1 Workforce Composition and Pay Gap Data

Workforce Composition

1. The Scottish Government is committed to being a progressive employer and to advancing equality within the workplace and building the most inclusive workplace possible.
2. The workforce diversity and inclusion statistics provide open access to data that informs our actions.
3. At the end of December 2022, the diversity of the Scottish Government workforce varied in comparison to Scotland's working age population:
 - Female staff make up 57.3% of the Scottish Government workforce, compared to 50.8% of Scotland's working age population (16 to 65) and 48.8% of Scotland's economically active population and up from 55.0% in November 2020.
 - The Scottish Government workforce aged between 16 and 29 years old make up 18.2% of the workforce, compared to 26% of Scotland's working-age population (16 to 65); staff aged 60 years old or older make up 6.3% of the workforce, compared to 12% of Scotland's working-age population (16 to 65). These are up from 16.5% and down from 7.0% respectively.
 - Disabled staff make up 14.7% of the Scottish Government workforce, compared to 20.7% of Scotland's working-age population (16 to 64) and 16.9% of Scotland's economically active population and up from 13.6% in November 2020.
 - Ethnic minority staff make up 4.1% of the Scottish Government workforce, compared to 5.8% of Scotland's working-age population (16 to 64). and 4.5% of Scotland's economically active population and up from 3.0% in November 2020.
 - Staff belonging to a non-Christian religion make up 3.7% of the Scottish Government workforce, compared to 4.2% of Scotland's working-age population (16 to 64) and up from 2.9% in November 2020.
 - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or any other sexual orientation not including straight/heterosexual staff make up 8.8% of the Scottish Government workforce, compared to 3.5% of the Scottish working-age population (16 to 64) and up from 6.4% in November 2020.

Pay Gap Data

4. In previous years, each Equality Mainstreaming report has contained a data annex with tables of data about the Scottish Government workforce. This data is now contained in a separate Official Statistics publication covering diversity and inclusion in the Scottish Government workforce.
5. A full breakdown of workforce composition and pay gap information can be found via: <https://data.gov.scot/workforce-diversity-2022/>
6. The Scottish Government has three groups of staff each with separate sets of remuneration arrangements. The three pay groups are: Scottish Government Main (SGM); Scottish Government Marine (SGMarine); and Senior Civil Service (SCS).
7. The Scottish Government has delegated authority to determine the pay, and terms and conditions for all staff below SCS. The SCS is reserved to the UK Government. While the members of the SCS are Scottish Government employees, their remuneration is determined and managed in line with UK Cabinet Office pay and performance management framework. Scottish Government aims to ensure that there are coherent pay arrangements between our delegated and SCS grades and that the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is delivered. Within each individual grade (e.g. representing work of equal value) we have either no pay gap or a very minimal pay gap which is ultimately addressed by all staff in that grade reaching a common salary level within a relatively short period of time.

Average pay by sex as at 31 December 2022



8. In SGM, SGMarine and SCS, staff will typically be recruited at the pay range minimum and progress to the maximum. Current progression journeys range from a minimum of two years to a maximum of four years depending on pay range.
9. The Scottish Government pay gap analysis calculates the difference between average full-time equivalent earnings for specified groups. These calculations compare earnings for groups where protected characteristics have been declared. Both mean and median pay and pay gaps are presented below. The

mean is the Scottish Government preferred method and is derived by summing the values for a given sample, and then dividing the sum by the number of observations in the sample. The mean can be disproportionately influenced by a relatively small number of high-paying jobs but ensures that all staff are represented in the statistical analysis. The median is the value below which 50% of observations fall and is less affected by a relatively small number of very high earners and any skewed distribution of earnings.

The **mean** pay gap between female and male staff on 31 December 2022 is 3.09%.

The **median** pay gap between female and male staff on 31 December 2022 is 6.31%.

The **mean** pay gap between part-time female and full-time male staff on 31 December 2022 is 0.37%.

The **median** pay gap between part-time female and full-time male staff on 31 December 2022 is 0%.

10. Since publication of the 2021 Mainstreaming Report, the Scottish Government mean gender pay gap has reduced to 3.09% (down from 3.12%). The median gender pay gap has increased which is attributable to the increase in staff numbers during the intervening period. In particular, the increase in the overall proportion of women employed (60% of the increased staff numbers between 2021 and 2023 were female versus 40% male) as well as an increase in the proportion of women employed at lower grades (19% of female staff in 2023 were employed in Band A compared to 18% in 2021).
11. The Scottish Government seeks to ensure that all policies that support the employment of staff are free from bias and that work of equal value attracts equal pay. Within the Scottish Government (Scottish Government Main and Marine Scotland) where men and women are undertaking work of equal value (i.e. within the same pay range) they are paid a similar rate and consequently the pay gap is low. The reason for an overall pay gap of 3.09% is that despite the increased proportions of women at senior grades, overall there are still more women in lower pay ranges which lowers the overall average hourly rate.

Working Pattern

12. In the 2021 publication, the Scottish Government mean pay gap was 1.06% in favour of full-time males in relation to part-time females (median 2.51%). Closing the mean pay gap by 0.69% down to 0.37% (the median reduced from 2.51% to 0%) demonstrates an improvement in equality of flexible working opportunities.

Actions

13. The Scottish Government is committed to tackling inequality in Scottish society and knows that having a diverse workforce within the Scottish Government is key to this. We also know that the value of this diversity can only be realised through acknowledging and removing barriers that prevent people from flourishing, and continuing to build an inclusive culture where everyone is valued because of the

unique perspectives they bring, whilst also feeling a strong sense of belonging to the Scottish Government as an employer.

14. Non-discrimination and equality of opportunity are cornerstones of our approach to pay and reward. We are committed to advancing equality of opportunity in the workplace regardless of protected characteristic or other reason (sex, marital/civil partnership status, age, race, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, religion or belief, gender identity (trans status), socio economic background, working pattern, employment status, caring responsibilities, or trade union membership).
15. The Scottish Government operates a pay and reward system which is transparent, based on objective criteria and free from bias so that equal pay applies at every level of the Scottish Government. In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, we are committed to a policy of equal pay between: men and women; persons who are disabled and persons who are not; and persons who fall into a minority racial group and persons who do not.
16. In order to continue to address and reduce our overall pay gaps and to better understand the causes we will undertake an equal pay audit examining pay gaps by disability, gender, race and age by March 2024. We will act on findings to review and refresh our recruitment and retention policies to address workplace inequalities by end of 2025.

3.1.2 Action Plans

1. To further advance diversity within our workforce, the Scottish Government currently has three diversity and inclusion employer Action Plans. These will help us make greater change at greater pace in areas we need to make most progress. [The Recruitment and Retention Action Plan for Disabled People \(DRRAP\)](#) (2019 - but paused for 12 months during the pandemic), the [Race Recruitment and Retention Action Plan \(RRRAP\)](#) (2021) and the Socio-Economic Diversity Action Plan (2022).
2. These Plans are driving action within Scottish Government across corporate functions, and with teams and individuals. The aim is to increase the representation of under-represented groups across all grades, to foster good relations among our employees, and to support an inclusive workplace environment where people are able to make their best contribution to delivering the programme for government. Most importantly, at the heart of the Plans, are the voices and views gathered through wide engagement with staff.
3. In 2022, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, a renewed focus to deliver “game-changer” actions was agreed for both the race and disability Action Plans. Game changer actions are the actions likely to have the greatest impact in the shortest time. These were prioritised through engagement with relevant staff diversity networks and corporate teams. Our Socio-Economic Diversity Action Plan was developed to focus on game changer actions from the outset.

4. The implementation, progress and accountability of all Plans is overseen by our governance group comprising senior civil servant staff with actions in their business areas, staff diversity network representatives, Union representatives and external stakeholders. The governance group is chaired by the Director General Corporate who is our Executive Team Diversity and Inclusion Ally. This shows commitment at the highest levels. Substantial improvement work has been undertaken to strengthen the function and role of the group to ensure the group have capacity and capability to challenge robustly and ensure commitments are delivered. The Executive Team hold six monthly Diversity and Inclusion sessions, where they review progress across Plans.

Recruitment and Retention Action Plan for Disabled People

5. Our Plan applies the Social Model of Disability which recognises disability as an experience of barriers caused by our buildings, processes, systems, and culture rather than caused by a person's impairment.
6. The Plan focuses on the delivery of game changer actions advancing disability equality around four key priorities: increasing representation, building an inclusive culture, improving policies and practices, and creating accessible workspaces. The Plan was developed in partnership with the Council of Scottish Government Unions (CSGU), with advice and insight from Disabled People's Organisations and through dialogue and engagement with our disabled staff.
7. There are a total of 32 game changers in the Recruitment and Retention Action Plan for Disabled People, 23 have been delivered including developing a diverse talent programme (discussed later), and 9 are open. The game changers are designed to support individual action, support improved corporate processes, and support recruitment and progression.
8. We have supported engagement with disability and mental health staff diversity networks to understand current issues in the workplace. We will continue to grow mechanisms for network members' collective voice to be heard to drive forward disability equality in the workplace and to inform the future design of workspaces.

Race Recruitment and Retention Action Plan

9. Our Plan adopts an anti-racist approach. This recognises there is no such thing as a race neutral policy and that every corporate policy and decision creates either race equality or inequality in our workplace. It focuses on the delivery of game-changer actions to redress the imbalances of power around five key priorities focused on the whole system. The aim is to redistribute power, increase accountability and bring about cultural change. The Plan was developed in partnership with the Council of Scottish Government Unions, and in collaboration with our Race Equality Network and external race focused organisations.
10. There are a total of 24 game changers in the Race Recruitment and Retention Action Plan. 15 have been delivered, including new diversity and inclusion objectives (discussed later) which include an anti-racist objective for Senior Civil Servants, and 9 are open. Again, the game changers are designed to support

individual action, support improved corporate processes, and support recruitment and progression.

11. We have built a dedicated network of race allies across Scottish Government with an Executive Team Ally and Senior Civil Service Champion working collaboratively to continue to grow these roles. This will ensure we collectively drive forward race equality in the workplace.

Socio-Economic Diversity Action Plan

12. We take a progressive employer approach to advancing equality and building an inclusive workplace culture. We published a Socio-Economic Diversity Action Plan in 2022. While socio-economic background is not a protected characteristic in the Equality Act 2010, our data on employee experience, alongside the intersection with protected characteristics, indicate strong reasons for treating it in the same way.
13. We also have a statutory obligation to actively consider how we reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage when making strategic decisions - known as the Fairer Scotland Duty.
14. The intersection between socio-economic background and race, disability or gender brings a specific focus on the inequalities faced by protected groups. Colleagues' insights have been used to shape the Plan. Through engagement with stakeholders the actions in the Plan were co-produced. The actions, which are all identified as game changer actions, focus on supporting individuals from low socio-economic backgrounds gaining access to roles and successfully progressing through Scottish Government.
15. We are measuring the success of actions by looking for an increase in the number of diverse socio-economic backgrounds across our grades and a reduction in reported discrimination, harassment and bullying in this group of employees.

3.1.3 Recruitment, Internship Opportunities and Mentoring

Candidate Experience During Recruitment

1. Scottish Government updated its applicant tracking system to enable effective monitoring of the impact of policies on those with protected characteristics at each stage of the recruitment process. This introduced a new set of diversity and inclusion questions at application stage, and the ability to produce data from these questions and the intersectionality of protected characteristics at each stage of the recruitment process. This data will allow us to recommend specific, evidence-based interventions in the recruitment process for the first time, to increase the diversity of who we hire.
2. A new Inclusive Recruitment e-learning module was launched. This has been made mandatory for all recruiting managers and panel members. This e-learning embeds awareness of diversity and inclusion across all stages of the recruitment process, from preparing to recruit, to on-boarding.

3. As part of our commitments within the Recruitment and Retention Plan for Disabled People, we promised to develop a more connected service to better meet candidate needs during the recruitment process. As part of this process, we made a number of changes to our recruitment process to improve accessibility for disabled candidates:
 - The resourcing policy team engaged with our staff diversity networks such as the Disabled Staff Network and Neurodiversity Network to collect feedback and inform our process and policies.
 - The team developed new guidance for resourcing staff, hiring managers and candidates around requesting and implementing adjustments during the recruitment processes. We improved our candidate communication to offer more information on requesting adjustments during interview and assessment. Additional training sessions were rolled out for hiring managers looking to improve their knowledge on implementing adjustments during interview and assessment.
 - A-C band recruitment have introduced alternative forms of assessment to offer a greater variety of tools to allow candidates to better showcase their unique skills and experience outside of a traditional interview.
 - Promotional materials such as blogs were developed to spotlight disabled staff and signpost to new guidance on adjustments. These materials were used for social media campaigning to attract more disabled candidates to apply for Scottish Government.
 - Overall, progress continues to be made towards the Scottish Government becoming a workforce that is representative of Scotland's population. Using data for Scottish Government core as of June 2022, 13.0% of our workforce who chose to share their personal information, were disabled. Scottish Ministers remain committed to achieving a representative Scottish Government workforce by 2025, which would mean 20.7% of the workforce being disabled to meet the working age population target, or 14.3% to meet the economically active figure.

Disabled People Internship Opportunities

4. Inclusion Scotland is funded by the Scottish Government to create paid internship opportunities for disabled people across the public sector, in line with our "A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People" Delivery Plan.
5. Interns recruited at A3 and A4 level in Scottish Government can now be made permanent upon successfully completing their internship. Previously, in the 2019/20 cohort, 66% of interns gained employment or further opportunities within the Scottish Government after their placement. And 100% moved from being under or unemployed to finding permanent paid employment in careers in fitting with their aspirations.
6. This change should allow even more interns to successfully transition to paid employment with Scottish Government. This contributes to Outcome one of the Recruitment and Retention Plan for Disabled People: become an employer of choice for disabled people with strong representation of disabled people at all levels of our workforce.

Developing Diverse Leaders

7. 2022 saw the launch of Developing Diverse Leaders leadership programmes for underrepresented colleagues within Scottish Government who have the desire and potential to progress their careers. The aim of the programme is to develop and encourage more diverse leadership. There are three bespoke programmes targeting underrepresented colleagues at B3, C1 and Deputy Director level, with a total of 73 participants.
8. The programmes include support with personal development, personal impact and self-belief, application, and interview masterclasses, “in conversation with” sessions with senior leaders; exposure to diverse role models, mentoring and sponsorship, peer and self-directed learning. Developing diverse leaders is a key commitment within our leadership development strategy and supports our three Action Plans.

Graduate Development Programme

9. The Graduate Development Programme (GDP) is Scottish Government’s own four-year graduate leadership development programme. Bi-annual recruitment for the GDP actively targets individuals from underrepresented groups (minority ethnic, those identifying as disabled, those identifying as coming from a lower socio-economic background and LGBTI).
10. As part of our recruitment process for the 2019 and 2021 cohorts, we offered targeted outreach events to these populations via the Future Leaders Diversity Conference. The conference aimed to build confidence and understanding of the GDP application process via learning events, networking, buddying, and mentoring.
11. Demographics of those who were offered a place on the cohort were close to, or exceeded, the Scottish working age population average for disability, minority ethnic and LGBTI figures.

Care Leaver Interns

12. The Care Leaver Internship scheme helps care-experienced young people, aged 18 to 30, to develop professional skills through 12-month internships. Scottish Government hosts around 15 Care Leaver interns per year.
13. Participation in the scheme forms part of Scottish Government’s commitment to support care-experienced young people and backs findings of “The Promise” which sets out the vision and blueprint for caring for Scotland’s children and young people.
14. After 12 months participation in the scheme, interns become eligible for permanent employment with Scottish Government, subject to appropriate performance and attendance. 61% of our 2021 Care Leaver interns were made permanent or had their internships extended.

Future Leaders Scheme

15. Future Leaders Scheme (FLS) is an accelerated development programme managed by the Cabinet Office that aims to fast track C-band colleagues with the potential to progress into the Senior Civil Service. As part of FLS there are two development programmes – META and DELTA – for individuals identifying as minority ethnic (META scheme) and Disabled (DELTA scheme). META and DELTA aim to improve collective visibility of these participants and accelerate their development in order to generate a more diverse and robust pipeline for senior roles.
16. We currently have 31 individuals participating in FLS. Participation in the scheme has enabled us to know our diverse talent much better which allowed us to encourage those who would benefit most from FLS to apply. As a result, we have seen a year-on-year increase in the number of diverse colleagues participating.

Public Appointments

17. Scottish Ministers make regulated public appointments to the Boards of Scotland's public bodies. A public body is an organisation created by the Scottish Government or Scottish Parliament which receives all or most of its funding from the Scottish Government. Public bodies deliver the priorities of Ministers or the Scottish Parliament through the delivery or scrutiny of services or by providing impartial expert advice on a specific topic
18. Between the end of 2019 and the end of 2021, the demographic profile of regulated appointments to Scotland's public body boards has shifted:

	End of 2019	End of 2021
Women	50%	50.8%
Disabled people	7.2%	8.6%
People from a black and minority ethnic background	2.8%	3.7%
49 and under	17.9%	18.3%
LGB+	5.1%	5%

19. There have also been notable increases in the percentage of people appointed who are disabled or are from a minority ethnic background between 2019 and 2021.

	2019	2021
Disabled	11.9%	14%
Minority ethnic	5.9%	8%

20. We have worked with Inclusion Scotland, a Disabled People's Organisation, to improve access to public appointments. People's willingness to apply for Board appointments is crucial and we commend and thank people's efforts.

Career Ready

21. Career Ready offers mentoring and four-week work experience for school pupils facing barriers in education and employment. As well as work experience, participating pupils are offered 18 months of mentoring by Scottish Government staff with the aim of helping them consider their careers options and build employability skills.
22. We offered summer internships to 35 pupils in 2022 and received the following feedback: “The welcome and quality of work offered that we witnessed at end of internship presentations or heard about, sends a very clear message about what you stand for and how you are seriously enabling young people’s futures.”

Mutual Mentoring Programme

23. The Scottish Government Mutual Mentoring programme has developed from a commitment by our Executive Team to support mentoring for our Race Equality Network members to be a centrepiece of our Diversity and Inclusion Curriculum.
24. There have been more than 100 participants in the last year alone. Going from strength to strength, the Mutual Mentoring Programme has been extended three times – to be open to all staff irrespective of their network membership; to be relevant to senior leadership at team level not just Senior Civil Servants; and to be accessible to disabled staff as well as minority ethnic colleagues.
25. The programme supports colleagues with lived experience of senior leadership and colleagues with lived experience of a protected characteristic to share their experience for mutual benefit. By hearing personal experiences, we can grow more inclusive leadership and allies to remove barriers which inhibit our diverse talent from make their best and fullest contribution. By matching diverse talent with our senior leaders, we create a unique opportunity to share career advice and development to help increase representation at all levels in Scottish Government.
26. Evaluation of the 2021/22 Mutual Mentoring Programme reinforced the value of this unique programme. 83% of participants agreed or strongly agreed the programme opened new ideas for personal and professional development.

3.1.4 Staff Policies, Staff Diversity Networks and Learning

Making Formal Complaints About Ministers

1. The procedure for making a formal complaint about a Minister, or a former Minister’s, behaviour was launched in February 2022. The Propriety and Ethics Team worked in collaboration with People Directorate, trades unions and staff diversity networks to develop the process and associated guidance.
2. A pool of independent investigators and decision makers have been recruited to carry out investigations into complaints. This is to ensure independent and external scrutiny of any complaint made.

3. An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out before the procedure was launched. The most recent people survey results were used to hone in on groups of staff who had reported higher instances of bullying and harassment towards them, including LGBTI, minority ethnic staff and disabled staff. We developed an action plan to put measures in place to create the conditions for these staff and the wider staff group to come forward and speak up when something is not right.
4. We have continued a programme of engagement with staff diversity networks, external agencies such as Rape Crisis Scotland, remote and rural offices, and Ministerial Private Offices, to ensure that groups of staff who may feel isolated or unable to report inappropriate behaviour, know how to do so and that they will be supported in tackling concerns by the Propriety and Ethics Team and HR.

Review and Development of the Staff Grievance Policy

5. Trade union colleagues were involved from the start of the process in reviewing the Grievance framework as part of the Working Group formed to develop the policy and procedure. This enabled constructive collaboration and feedback at an early stage which not only improved the policy content but also helped the rollout of the policy. The trade unions participated in delivering information sessions to staff diversity networks which helped signal the approach to joint working.
6. The draft policy and procedure were subsequently published on the Scottish Government intranet site and a period of one month's reflection and engagement ensued. This enabled staff diversity networks and individual staff members to offer views and feedback on the policy. The period of reflection on the revised grievance policy/procedure proved extremely helpful and HR took on board collective views. This resulted in amending the policy and procedure to reflect around 10 key elements which arose.

Staff Diversity Network Support Framework

7. Scottish Government has a long history of supporting the development and growth of staff diversity networks. Staff diversity networks within Scottish Government reflect the nine protected characteristics as defined in the Equalities Act and our Fairer Scotland Duty. They are uniquely placed to build communities, providing peer support and making connections that build the sense of belonging which is a core aspect of inclusion.
8. The Staff Diversity Network Support Framework was introduced in June 2022. It builds on support from Executive Team allies and Senior Civil Servant Champions. It recognises the valuable role staff diversity networks play in nurturing talent, raising issues relating to employee experience within the workplace. They also deliver activities to support a more representative workforce, helping us make our best and most inclusive policy and services.

Trans and Non-Binary Equality and Inclusion Policy

9. Our Trans and Non-Binary Equality and Inclusion Policy reflects our commitment to supporting trans colleagues and advancing LGBTI equality and inclusion in the

workplace. Our data indicates that that there is still significant progress to be made within the workplace to improve outcomes for our transgender and non-binary Scottish Government colleagues.

10. In recognition of this, in 2022 we refreshed and reviewed our employer policy and procedure for Trans and Non-Binary colleagues. A cross government co-production group was formed involving LGBTI Network committee members, the Council of Scottish Government Unions, members of the LGBTI Policy team and People Development's Diversity and Inclusion team.
11. The policy and procedure were published internally in September 2022 with senior commentary and support, accompanied by a supporting programme of news articles, personal blogs, and allyship events. Feedback has been positive on both the policy and the engagement events, with the intranet article attracting a high number of views and comments.
12. Further work is planned in 2023 to support the implementation and embedding of the policy and procedures within the organisation. Progress will be monitored and the impact on lived experience will form a central part of how we measure this progress.

Diversity and Inclusion Objectives

13. Every Scottish Government employee has a mandatory diversity and inclusion objective. This enables them to take action throughout the year to meet their responsibilities to embed equality into their day-to-day work. And take action to build a more inclusive workplace culture. The impact and achievements of staff are reviewed and recognised as a core part of the performance management process throughout the year.
14. To support colleagues to identify and set meaningful diversity and inclusion objectives, the Diversity and Inclusion team introduced a number of improvements during 2022. This includes a new framework, user friendly guidance and staff learning sessions.

3.1.5 Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), Workplace Adjustments and Data

Equality Impact Assessment Capability Building

1. Supporting resources were created specifically for HR focused teams who are carrying out EQIAs. This included a podcast, a data and evidence bank, EQIA form completion advice and FAQs. A training programme was also launched for two groups of People Directorate teams which finished in June 2022.
2. The People Directorate has seen significant increases in the completion and reporting of EQIAs with the use of a tracker, which is prioritised for discussion at People Directorate senior management meetings. The Diversity and Inclusion team continues to provide ongoing capability building support for People Directorate and wider corporate colleagues.

A review of the Workplace Adjustments Service

3. The Disability Recruitment and Retention Action Plan committed Scottish Government to review its workplace adjustments service. In 2020 a project team was set up to lead on workplace adjustments for new colleagues being recruited into the Scottish Government, to ensure the right adjustments were in place at the earliest opportunity. In light of the success and lessons learned from this project a dedicated Workplace Adjustments Service team was established in April 2022.
4. Adopting the Social Model of Disability, the vision is to create accessible workplaces where everyone can thrive at work. The dedicated team provides a service to both new and existing staff within the organisation. The aim of the service is early intervention with critical adjustments in place on the first day of work for all our new starts and to provide a single point of contact. This clarifies adjustments which can be actioned locally by line managers and business areas to ensure knowledge and expertise around how to implement these is more widely disseminated across the organisation for all staff.

The Employee Passport

5. The Employee Passport was launched in 2022 and is Scottish Government's flagship inclusion initiative. It takes a new approach to supporting every member of staff to perform at their best by recognising everyone will at some point in their career face circumstances that will impact on them at work. It facilitates a conversation between the passport user and their line manager where it provides a framework to discuss and agree informal adjustments such as work pattern or breaks. It also provides a direct link for support to the new Workplace Adjustments Service team where a more formal workplace adjustment, like equipment or software, is needed.
6. It was developed as a co-production, with significant engagement with staff diversity networks and a trial with 200 volunteers. 93% of users in the trial said they would recommend it to colleagues.
7. The Employee Passport follows a simple process which is split into two parts. The passport user fills in Part One of the passport, sends it to their line manager who will then arrange a meeting to discuss it. After the meeting, if they feel they could benefit from advice or support from the Workplace Adjustments Service team, they fill in Part 2 and send it to them.
8. This allows staff to explain the impact of their circumstances on them at work and avoids them having to "retell their story" when they change line manager. Passport users also have full control of the passport, they can update it whenever they want.
9. The passport promotes a more inclusive culture where staff can bring their whole selves to work. The Employee Passport is being promoted to Scottish Government Agencies. Eleven agencies have adopted it so far and another

seven are planning to adopt it in 2023. This means the passport will be recognised wherever staff go to work.

New Diversity Monitoring Questions

10. As was reported in the 2021 report, the Scottish Government is in the process of replacing the HR system that collects management information about the workforce. This is currently scheduled to be completed during 2023. The new system will have updated diversity monitoring questions, aligning them with the latest available analytical guidance and diversity questions used in population surveys in Scotland, such as the census. This will lead to better quality diversity information on the Scottish Government workforce.

4. Part 3: Equality Outcomes

Publishing equality outcomes and reporting on the progress made towards those outcomes is a key aspect of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) regime, which exists to advance equality across the public sector. The PSED was created, as part of the Equality Act 2010, to move public authorities away from a reactive approach, responding to equality issues as they arise, to a more proactive stance where opportunities to actively tackle structural inequality and the marginalisation and oppression of certain groups who share protected characteristics are identified and dedicated steps taken.

Under the Scottish Specific Duty (SSD) regulations, which supplement the PSED, each listed authority, including the Scottish Government, is required to publish a set of equality outcomes that it considers will enable it to better perform the general equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. The general equality duty is the duty to promote equality; eliminate discrimination; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not.

Each listed authority must publish a fresh set of equality outcomes within four years of publishing its previous set. A listed authority must also publish a report on the progress made to achieve its equality outcomes every two years. The Scottish Government created a new set of equality outcomes in 2021, this document details our progress to achieving those outcomes.

4.1 Changing Policy: The Future of Equality Outcomes

1. As part of the review of the PSED, the ongoing value of the duty to publish and report on equality outcomes as it is currently framed in the regulations will be considered. From December 2021 to April 2022 we ran a [public consultation](#) on the PSED review. The consultation outlined our proposal for the Scottish Government to take on more of a leadership role in setting national equality outcomes, which listed authorities could then adopt to meet their own equality outcome setting duty.
2. Independent analysis found that consultation respondents were generally supportive of this proposal, stating that this process would provide opportunities for comparing and benchmarking, as well as working collaboratively.
3. In 2023, we will be engaging further with stakeholders to ensure that revised regulations – and the implementation environment around them – can help to deliver our goal of better outcomes for those who continue to experience inequality. We intend for regulatory changes to come into effect in 2025, in line with the current reporting period.

4.2 Policy Equality Outcomes

1. We publish equality outcomes not solely to comply with our legal obligations under the PSED but also because they are a valuable means of focusing efforts on eliminating the most significant inequalities in Scotland. In 2021, the Scottish Government set six equality outcomes based around public policy.

4.2.1 Equality Outcome: Equality Evidence

By 2025, more robust and comprehensive data will be gathered on the characteristics of people in Scotland, identifying and filling evidence gaps. Equality data will be used much more frequently to develop and adjust service delivery, contributing to the mainstreaming of equality and human rights.

What we have achieved

1. A number of improvement actions have been taken forward within our Equality Data Improvement Programme since its launch in April 2021. Many of these actions have helped lay the foundations for the [Equality Evidence Strategy 2023 to 2025](#).
2. We updated guidance notes on the recommended questions to ask when collecting information on: age, disability, ethnic group, gender, religion or belief and sexual orientation were [published](#) in March 2022.
3. Case studies were commissioned to showcase good practice in equality data collection in the public sector, based on findings from: [Public sector – understanding equality data collection](#) commission. These [case studies were published in December 2021](#).
4. In collaboration with local stakeholders, analysts from each Analytical Services Division developed an improvement plan based on gaps identified through the Equality Data Audit. A consultation on the [proposed actions in the draft improvement plan](#) was launched in summer 2022. The responses we received through this consultation will help to shape this plan, which formed the basis of Scotland's new Equality Evidence Strategy 2023 to 2025.

Next steps by April 2025

5. The actions within the Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025 will be taken forward by analysts across the Scottish Government and National Records Scotland. These improvement actions are wide-ranging and cover all parts of the data cycle, from engaging with users about their needs around data collection right through to strengthening analysis and reporting. Some common themes have emerged from the actions, which are summarised below.
6. We are committing to working with evidence providers to improve the completeness of the equality evidence they have access to for analysis. We have recognised the benefit of working with data suppliers to improve the breadth, quality and granularity of data held on systems. There is also commitment to

improve consistency of the variables collected and bring them in line with the Census 2022.

7. We will improve data utility. Several methods were put forward that were designed to improve the quality of the data and increase sample sizes for better analysis.
8. We will produce more detailed analysis of data already collected. For example, expanding the range of characteristics in publications and including additional tables showing breakdowns by equality characteristics not previously collected.
9. We will carry out new analysis of powerful data sources, such as the Census, where new data is expected to come on stream. Where the dataset has larger sample sizes, there is also scope for new intersectional equality analysis and some analytical areas intend to carry this out.

4.2.2 Equality Outcome: Inclusive Communication

By 2025, inclusive communication will be embedded in the approaches of public bodies, with an increased proportion of people in Scotland reporting that their communications needs are being met when accessing public services.

What we have achieved

1. To progress this equality outcome we committed to using the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as an opportunity to explore the value of using legislation (either primary or secondary) to strengthen duties on the public sector in relation to inclusive communication.
2. From December 2021 to April 2022 we ran a [public consultation](#) on the PSED review. The consultation outlined our proposal to create a new Scottish Specific Duty that seeks to ensure inclusive communication is embedded proportionately across the work of listed authorities when they are communicating with the public.
3. Independent [analysis](#) shows that both public bodies and equality advocacy groups were largely in favour of creating such a duty. Officials will now further develop this proposal to ensure a new duty and the implementation environment can be as effective as possible.
4. The Scottish Government has also taken steps to embed the use of inclusive communications internally. For example, in the National Care Service programme, we have been working hard to make sure our publications are available to as many people as possible. We have produced internal guidance to help teams understand the need for alternative formats and how to create them. This includes advice on what formats to use and when, how to build them in to project timelines and what suppliers to use. The guidance covers a range of alternative formats, including BSL, easy read, audio and other translations.

Next steps by April 2025

5. We intend to use the PSED review as the main driver to meeting this outcome by 2025. Officials will engage closely with public bodies, equality advocacy groups and people with lived experience, or those who represent them, to further develop proposals based on consultation feedback.
6. We will work to ensure a requirement to consider inclusive communication is supported by guidance, best practice examples and other shared resources so that listed authorities are equipped to meet this requirement effectively.
7. We will also consider a system for monitoring and accountability. This may be through amended Scottish Specific Duty reporting requirements.

4.2.3 Equality Outcome: Health

By 2025, we will have taken significant steps to improve the health of those groups with a protected characteristic in Scotland who experience consistently poorer outcomes. We will particularly focus on sex, race, age and disability and the disproportionate impact of COVID on certain groups.

What we have achieved

1. The Scottish Government has made progress to achieve those actions outlined in our 2021 Equality Outcome commitment to tackle health inequalities. For example, the [Women's Health Plan](#) was published in August 2021. We appointed a Women's Health Champion, Professor Anna Glasier, in January 2023 and have published a report on progress, setting out progress against the actions since the Plan's publication. In January this year we published our [report on progress](#) to achieving this plan.
2. We have established the Racialised Health Inequalities in Health & Social Care in Scotland Steering Group (RHISG) to oversee progress against health related commitments made by the Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 & Ethnicity, as well as those included in the Scottish Government's Race Equality Immediate Priorities Plan and its Race Equality Framework.
3. We have established a Community of Practice on Racialised Inequalities in Health & Social Care. The primary focus of the Community is to support colleagues within DG Health and Social Care, Public Health Scotland and Health Boards to consider and address racialised healthcare inequality and racism across all policy and delivery areas in health and social care. There are plans to expand the membership of the community during 2023.

Next steps by April 2025

4. We will continue to work with COSLA to implement, Scotland's new suicide prevention strategy [Creating Hope Together](#), which was published in September 2022, and emphasises the need for a 'whole of government approach' to address the social determinants which have the greatest link to suicide risk. The strategy's associated Action Plan seeks to deliver actions in an integrated way – working across actions and outcomes – in order to make a difference in our communities. The Action Plan makes explicit links to diverse policy areas, such as student

mental health, homelessness, children and young people and money and debt advice.

5. We have considered the recommendations made by the Independent Review of Adult Social Care and are working to realise these recommendations and human rights through the creation of a National Care Service (NCS). The NCS will be developed using a human rights based approach and will be delivered in a person-centred way that respects, protects, and fulfils the human rights of people accessing social care support and their carers.
6. Delivery of the actions within the Women's Health Plan will continue over the period 2021 to 2024.

4.2.4 Equality Outcome: Employment

By 2025, disparities in labour market outcomes for women, disabled people and ethnic minorities will have improved. Employer practice will have improved and workforces are more diverse and inclusive through effective approaches embedded to tackle workplace inequality.

What we have achieved

1. We have taken significant action to improve outcomes for disabled people in the labour market. We have invested £1 million into our Public Social Partnership which is working to improve the recruitment and retention rates for disabled people by developing and testing different types of support for employers.
2. We have undertaken a review of Individual Placement and Support (IPS) and of Supported Employment to make recommendations on future delivery of these two forms of specialist employability support in Scotland. These services have proved particularly effective in supporting people with mental health issues or learning disabilities to enter and sustain employment.
3. The Workplace Equality Fund (WEF) is focused on providing financial support for employers to address longstanding barriers in the labour market that particular priority groups experience, the WEF investment is just over £750,000 in 13 projects this year. Of the 13 projects, four focus specifically on disability, four on race while other projects focus on and address issues and challenges related gender, menopause, autism and neurodiversity, refugees, and age.
4. We published our refreshed [Fair Work Action Plan](#) in December 2022 which forms part of a new single, intersectional and aligned Fair Work Action Plan: Becoming a Fair Work Nation by 2025. The plan includes actions being taken forward to continue to reduce the disability employment gap, the gender pay gap, and includes our new Anti-racist employment strategy.
5. The projects provided through the Workplace Equality Fund aim to create more diverse and inclusive workplaces where workers have security of pay and contract, can develop and utilise their skills and have an effective voice in the workplace; tackle labour market inequalities faced by women and reduce the gender pay gap in Scotland; address racial inequality in the workplace; and at

least halve the disability employment gap by 2038 (from 2016 baseline of 37.4 percentage points).

Next steps by April 2025

6. As outlined in our refreshed Fair Work Action Plan, we will take forward a range of actions that will deliver cross cutting and intersectional improvements alongside specific activity focussed particular groups where appropriate.
7. By end of 2023 we will update the Fair Work First criteria to better reflect priority action required to address labour market inequalities faced by disabled people, women, and people from racialised minorities, ensuring people can enter, remain and progress in work.
8. Scottish Government Employability Delivery will continue to work with Fair Start Scotland providers, within the timescales of the current contract, to implement a continuous improvement approach to enhance delivery and outcomes for disabled people. This will include drawing upon learning from Pathfinders test and learn projects delivered by Disabled People's Organisations in 2022/23.

4.2.5 Equality Outcome: Transport

By 2025, we will have made progress towards reducing inequalities and advancing equality of opportunity and outcome - most notably across the protected characteristics of age, disability and sex - through the implementation of the National Transport Strategy; and transport services will become fairer to access, easier to use and more affordable.

The second National Transport Strategy recognises that by ensuring access to suitable transport facilities it will lead to the fulfilment of other human rights, in line with the National Performance Framework and Scotland's international human rights obligations.

What we have achieved

1. We established the National Transport Strategy (NTS) Forum as the main engagement platform for the strategy. The Forum brings together transport stakeholders (individuals and communities; national government; local and regional partners; the transport sector; and businesses) to work collectively to support the delivery of NTS priorities and this outcome.
2. We successfully ran a Transport Scotland [People's Panel](#) on a pilot basis, from October 2021 to January 2022, to inform the NTS Delivery Plan, which included representation from a wide cross-section of people.
3. At the start of 2022, we delivered our commitment to deliver free bus travel to under 22s, and we continue to fund free bus travel for eligible disabled people as well as those aged over 60, reducing the costs of public transport for these groups. By end of March 2023, there were over 609,000 cardholders in the Young Persons' Free Bus Travel Scheme, equating to 65.5% of the estimated 930,000 eligible population. Those already accessing the scheme continue to

make good use of free bus travel, with over 56 million journeys made since the launch of the scheme.

4. We have introduced an annual report on Disability and Transport. This reports on disabled people's use and experience of public transport. We are also undertaking a review of Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework and annual delivery plan.
5. We have undertaken research on women and girls' safety on public transport. The report and recommendations were published on 7 March 2023 and we will continue to work with stakeholders to identify actions from the recommendations.

Next steps by April 2025

6. We are taking forward a National Conversation on the future of passenger rail services in Scotland, with the intention of hearing from those of all backgrounds.
7. We are undertaking our Fair Fares Review to ensure a sustainable and integrated approach to public transport fares as we recover from the pandemic. The Fair Fares Review will look at the range of discounts and concessionary schemes which are available on all modes including bus, rail and ferry. The Fair Fares Review will also take into account the cost and availability of services and will consider options taking cognisance of the relative changes to the overall cost of travel.
8. We will continue to facilitate the NTS Forum with quarterly NTS Delivery Board meetings (co-chaired by Minister for Transport and COSLA) and the Business Group with external partners.

4.2.6 Equality Outcome: Lived Experience

During the current equality outcome cycle (2021 to 2025), people with lived experience of inequality and exclusion will be more involved in informing and co-designing policy and practice that affects them, and their voices will be better reflected in public policy across Scotland.

What we have achieved

1. The importance of establishing a coherent approach to lived experience and participatory work across Scottish Government is recognised. A number of strands of work are in progress which aim to deliver a strategic approach.
2. The Institutionalising Participatory and Deliberative Democracy (IPDD) working group was set up to provide recommendations on how to embed participatory approaches across the work of government, including but not limited to Citizens' Assemblies. We published [our response](#) to their report in March.
3. In February this year we launched our [Participation Framework](#), which provides a guide to good practice in participation work across Scottish Government. It provides information about participatory methods, and when to use them, the development of an effective participation strategy, and signposts to further

resources. We will be updating this framework on a rolling basis, with a focus on equalities and the practicalities of doing participation that is genuinely inclusive.

4. The following are two specific illustrative examples of how lived experience has informed government policy development: the National Care Service, and the Human Rights Bill. The National Care Service (NCS) will be co-designed with people who access and provide support, including unpaid carers, so that it meets their needs. One part of the NCS that is being co-designed is the NCS Charter of Rights and Responsibilities ('the Charter'). The co-design of the Charter is ongoing and is being designed and delivered in such a way as to ensure that people whose voices are seldom heard, including people with intersecting protected characteristics and people who currently face the greatest barriers to having their rights recognised and realised in practice, are prioritised.
5. To inform the development of the Human Rights Bill, in 2022 the Scottish Government established three Lived Experience Boards comprised of people from a range of backgrounds who face historic and ongoing barriers accessing their human rights, including people with learning disabilities and children and young people. Hearing the experiences of people who have struggled to access their human rights has been vital to ensuring our proposals for the Bill translate high-level concepts into practical, effective policies that make rights real. We are now developing proposals to renew the Lived Experience Boards for 2023.
6. The contribution of the Lived Experience Boards marks a significant milestone on an important journey the Scottish Government is taking to ensure that we are listening better, and listening earlier, to the views of people with lived experience in our work to develop policies and legislation. It is our ambition that the Human Rights Bill helps embed public participatory processes at all levels so that people have more opportunities to be inform development of policies and have a meaningful voice in decisions that affect them.

Next steps by April 2025

7. The 2021-25 Open Government Action Plan includes a set of activities on Participation, initially focusing on improving equality aspects of the Scottish Government's Participation Framework, and using this to deliver Participation training across SG that focuses on inclusive practice. Activities proposed for this year of the Open Government Action Plan include collaborative work to develop of a process for procuring participatory work and which would support its co-ordination. We are also considering options for monitoring and evaluating Participatory work taking place in SG, in line with a refreshed approach to evaluation training for social researchers, and will use this to drive improvement.
8. The Scottish Government will continue to develop an Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy, which is underpinned by a comprehensive approach to improving data collation and analysis and will ensure that the voices of those impacted shape our approach and policies.
9. We will develop proposals to better engage with the lived experience of communities and the expertise of organisations that serve them based on learning from previous and current Scottish Government lived experience

models, as well as models utilised successfully in the UK and internationally. We will work closely with key stakeholders in this area.

10. In order to support the Mainstreaming Strategy, we will develop a toolkit to help organisations understand the tasks necessary to achieve mainstreaming. This toolkit will contain advice and guidance, as well as best practice examples. Similar to the Strategy itself, the toolkit will be developed through stakeholder engagement.
11. To respond to the growing need for children and young people's participation in decision-making and policy design we are developing a Children and Young People's Participation Framework. It will enable policy areas across Scottish Government to identify, recruit and engage with organisations that have the skills and expertise required to design and deliver bespoke, high quality participation activities to ensure the voice of those with lived experiences are heard. The Framework will be operational by late summer 2023.

4.3 Employer Equality Outcomes

4.3.1 Equality Outcome: Workforce Diversity

The Scottish Government's workforce increases in diversity to reflect the general Scottish population by 2025.

What we have achieved

1. The Scottish Government workforce has become increasingly diverse. Since November 2020, the proportion of the Scottish Government workforce from each of the following groups has increased:
 - Female – from 55.0% to 57.3%
 - Aged between 16 and 29 – from 16.5% to 18.2%
 - Lesbian, gay, bisexual or any other non-heterosexual sexual orientation (LGB+) – from 6.4% to 8.8%
 - Disabled – from 13.6% to 14.7%
 - Ethnic minority – from 3.0% to 4.1%
 - From a non-Christian religious background – from 2.9% to 3.7%.
2. We have already reached some of our targets of being representative of Scotland's working age population, with a higher proportion of female (57.3%) and LGB+ (8.8%) staff than in the working age population (50.8% and 3.5% respectively). For female staff, this is also a higher proportion than in Scotland's economically active population (48.8%). The proportion of Scotland's economically active population that are LGB+ is not available.
3. Although the proportions of staff that are disabled (14.7%) or ethnic minority (4.1%) have increased by 1 and 1.1 percentage points respectively since November 2020, we are falling short of our target to be representative of Scotland's working age population (20.7% and 5.8% respectively). We are closer to matching the proportions in Scotland's economically active population (16.9% and 4.5% respectively), but we have more work to do to increase the representation in our workforce.

4.3.2 Equality Outcome: Workforce Culture

By 2025, workforce culture will be more inclusive with employees from all backgrounds and characteristics and experiences reporting they feel increasingly valued.

What we have achieved

1. We use data from the Civil Service People Survey to understand the workforce culture. This is an annual employee engagement survey carried out across the UK Civil Service. We currently use the following key themes as our measure for 'inclusion':
 - Engagement index
 - Inclusion and fair treatment score
 - Discrimination score
 - Bullying & harassment score

2. The inclusion and fair treatment score for core Scottish Government staff reached a historic high (86.4%) in 2021. However, this experience varies across groups, with some groups having significantly poorer experiences than others.
3. The above is also true of the overall engagement score for the core Scottish Government workforce.
4. The proportion of core Scottish Government staff experiencing discrimination or bullying & harassment reached historic lows (6.0% and 7.1% respectively) in 2021. The data shows that experiences of discrimination and bullying and harassment varies across groups, with some groups more likely to experience this than others.
5. Disabled, Black or Black British, transgender and LGB+ staff amongst those who are more likely to experience discrimination or bullying and harassment whilst working in the Scottish Government.

Next steps by April 2025

6. We recognise that there is still more to do. Further detail about the work we have done to increase the diversity of our workforce and foster an inclusive workplace is set out in the rest of the mainstreaming report above.
7. We will undertake an equal pay audit examining pay gaps by disability, gender, race and age by March 2024. We will act on findings to review and refresh our recruitment and retention policies to address workplace inequalities by end of 2025.

