

Annex B: Advisory Groups, Frameworks and Strategies



March 2023

This Annex provides a list of advisory groups, frameworks and strategies with, at least in part, a focus on strengthening the equality evidence base. Each group, framework and strategy has specific aims and objectives and informs a range of actions across the policy making process, including:

- gathering and sharing lived experiences to ensure evidence-informed policy
- making recommendations to Scottish Government
- setting out the Scottish Government’s approach
- steering implementation of Scottish Government action
- building knowledge and skills
- reporting on process made

First Minister’s Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG)

[First Minister’s National Advisory Council on Women and Girls](#) (NACWG) was established in 2017 to play a leading role in raising awareness of gender inequality in Scotland, drawing attention to the wide range of issues this creates for women and girls in Scotland today. It was set up to act as a champion for positive progress and policies that are making a meaningful difference to the lives of women and girls, encouraging Scotland to become a beacon for gender equality around the world. Phase One NACWG delivered a set of recommendations, while Phase Two (launched in March 2022) focus on their implementation.

Scottish Government Race Equality Framework

The [Race Equality Framework](#) sets out the Scottish Government’s approach to promoting race equality and tackling racism and inequality between 2016 and 2030.

Scotland has a wonderfully diverse society and we are all, each and every one of us, equal citizens and stakeholders of Scotland. Our vision is that Scotland in 2030 is a Scotland where people are healthier, happier and treated with respect, and where opportunities, wealth, and power are spread more equally. The Scottish Government is determined to show leadership in advancing race equality, tackling racism and addressing the barriers that prevent people from minority ethnic communities from realising their potential. The Race Equality Framework for Scotland sets out how the Scottish Government aims to progress this ambition over a 15-year period from 2016 to 2030.

There are a number of groups with a focus on advancing race equality across the Scottish Government arising from the high profile of racial inequality as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement. The groups have been formed by different policy and analytical areas, and each group has different areas of focus and approaches to suit their aims and the needs of the area in which they sit. Not all of the groups have been formed as a direct result of the REF.

Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racist Infrastructure (AIGG)

On 14 September 2021 the Scottish Government published an [Immediate Priorities Plan \(IPP\)](#) which focused on delivering an equal and anti-racist recovery from COVID-19 for minority ethnic people in Scotland. This includes several actions geared towards improving and strengthening ethnicity data collection and use across policy areas.

A short-term [Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racist Infrastructure](#) (IGG) was established in April 2022 and will conclude in May 2023 with the establishment of an Observatory to provide a range of functions, including oversight and governance. The Observatory will bring together quantitative and qualitative data on ethnic and racial inequalities in Scotland. This should not only include epidemiological data but also cultural, historical and other socio political and economic factors. It will also act as a repository holding historical and current evidence from a range of different sources to maintain awareness and inform actions. The establishment of the Observatory will represent a significant step in our collective ambition to bring about meaningful system change for minority ethnic communities that will result in equity.

Racialised Health Inequalities Steering Group

Minority ethnic groups in Scotland and the UK experience some of the worst outcomes on almost all health measures. The Scottish Government acknowledges the impact of racism on health and on the social determinants of health and are committed to pursuing equity of access to and experience of health and social care services. The Race Equality Immediate Priorities Plan commitments are being implemented across the Scottish Government to address racialised health inequalities.

As part of this commitment, the Racialised Inequalities in Health & Social Care in Scotland Steering Group has been established to address structural racism and actively pursue equity of access, experiences and outcomes within health and social care for minority ethnic people, both staff and patients. One of the priorities of the group is ensure effective delivery of [Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity \(ERG\)](#) recommendations and [IPP commitments](#) including improved collection and use of ethnicity data to monitor and address inequities in access, experience and outcomes.

Cross Justice Working Group on Race Data and Evidence

[The Cross Justice Working Group on Race Data and Evidence](#) was set up following concerns raised by the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as the differential impacts of COVID-19 on people from minority ethnic backgrounds. It first met in October 2020. Its membership includes representatives from the Scottish Government, all the main justice organisations, community groups and academia.

The aims of the Cross Justice Working Group on Race Data and Evidence are to:

- I. identify what is currently known about the experience of different ethnic groups within Scotland's justice system
- II. help improve the collection and reporting of evidence on race, and
- III. in particular, increase the value of statistics on hate crime reported to the police, by including information on the ethnic backgrounds of those targeted

Cross Justice Working Group on Race and Workforce

[The Cross Justice Working Group on Race and Workforce](#), was established in October 2020 to provide a strategic and cohesive approach to tackling barriers to employment across the justice system. The group includes representatives from all main justice organisations, community groups and academia and is working to ensure equity of access in recruitment, retention, promotion and leadership processes across the justice sector.

In October 2021, the group published its progress report which included a baseline audit of initiatives in relation to race and workforce, with the intention of understanding the effectiveness of past and current initiatives undertaken within the justice sector, in order to build on this learning. The group agreed that one of the main challenges has been to develop and deliver a coherent programme of work. This has been mainly due to the lack of available evidence.

The group has agreed to address the lack of evidence by aligning its work with that of the Data and Evidence Group, and by becoming an Expert Reference Group that commissions and reviews evidence to help shape how to address the challenges across the justice sector.

The group is set up to meet three times a year, and met in early 2023 to discuss research proposals in relation to recruitment and workforce experiences

Anti-Racist Employment Strategy

The Scottish Government's new [Anti-Racist Employment Strategy](#) was published in December 2022. The aim of this strategy is to support employers through practical guidance, advice and case studies, to take an anti-racist and intersectional approach to improving practices across the employment journey, from recruitment to retention to progression. As part of this strategy, the Scottish Government are looking at how the data and evidence base available to policy makers and employers can be increased to help identify and respond better to specific issues. This will help employers to ensure workforces are representative and identify gaps in representation in their organisations.

A key statistical measure used is the ethnicity pay gap which represents the difference between the average hourly earnings of white workers and minority ethnic workers as a proportion of white workers' average hourly pay. Organisations that measure the pay gap use their analysis to understand workforce inequalities; demonstrate their commitment to equitable employment outcomes and understand the extent of occupational segregation in their workforce. However, it must also be noted, the pay gap does not show who is most affected by the gap and a small or negative gap can be misleading if representation is low and falls within higher paid

positions in an organisation. There are also gaps and limitations with existing data. Scotland's minority ethnic population is a relatively small group. This means that sample sizes are small, leading to a high degree of variability in national-level estimates over time.

In the development of the Anti-Racist Employment Strategy, data collected by employers and government shows the issues racialised minorities are facing in the labour market in Scotland. For example, ethnicity profiles of organisations show low numbers of or no racialised minority staff, racialised minorities are not applying for certain posts or getting interviewed/appointed, there is a low percentage of racialised minorities in senior positions, racialised minority people's career progression is slower than that of white people, and that there is a disparity in pay according to ethnicity. The Anti-Racist Employment Strategy shows how data is and can be used. Using data gathered from one-to-one conversations, focus groups, staff surveys, and exit interviews helps to gain insight and identify barriers to career progression, review recruitment actions, monitor career progression, understand the level of representation in certain roles, and ensures fair and inclusive access to training and development opportunities. Data are also being used to monitor the level of bullying and harassment complaints from employees.

Non-Binary Working Group

The [Scottish Government Non-Binary Working Group](#), a 2019-20 and 2020-21 Programme for Government (PfG) commitment, was convened to consider and inform the Scottish Government's approach to non-binary equality. The group was independently chaired and was composed of key stakeholder organisations, academics and a number of non-binary people. It worked to contribute to the Scottish Government's emerging approach, and to recommend actions to improve, protect and promote equality for non-binary people. The group published its report in July 2022 and included recommendations which fell into three categories: healthcare; data and law; access to services. The Scottish Government has accepted the group's recommendation to support research and improve data and evidence on non-binary people. Further detail will be published in spring 2023 as part of the Non-Binary Equality Action Plan, as set out in the 2021-22 Programme for Government and Bute House Agreement.

Centre of Expertise in Equality and Human Rights

The National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET), published on 1 March 2022, sets a vision for Scotland to be a wellbeing economy that serves people and the planet first and foremost, for current and future generations. The strategy's ambition is that Scotland's economy will significantly outperform the last decade, both in terms of economic performance and tackling structural economic inequalities.

In line with a commitment in NSET, a Centre of Expertise in Equality and Human Rights has been established within the Scottish Government, to advance our understanding and embed equality and human rights within the economic policy-making process. This builds on a commitment in the Scottish Government's

[Economic Recovery Implementation Plan](#), in response to the report of the Advisory Group on Economic Recovery (AGER) published in June 2020, 'Towards a Robust, Resilient Wellbeing Economy for Scotland', that: "Throughout all of our actions and across the themes, we will strengthen our focus on tackling inequalities and wellbeing to create a socially just economy."

The Centre of Expertise will work with partners, including stakeholders and academic experts, to build capacity, skills and knowledge in equality and human rights among economic policy officials. The Centre of Expertise was involved in the development of Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) for NSET as a whole and for each of its six programmes, which were published alongside the strategy's delivery plans on 31 October 2022.¹ The EQIAs identified certain limitations in the available data and evidence, for example in relation to:

- limited evidence across all of the strategy's programmes for the protected characteristics of sexual orientation, religion or belief and gender reassignment
- insufficient intersectional data across all protected characteristics and all areas, such as entrepreneurial activity, skills, and experience of the labour market
- lack of reliable data on a regional basis
- a need to better understand the range of experiences of the labour market of people with mental health conditions

The involvement of external experts in the work of the Centre of Expertise is intended to help inform policy development and also contribute to strengthening our evidence base.

¹ [Scottish Government Economy strategy](#)