THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT'S EQUALITY OUTCOMES: 2021 – 2025

CONTENTS

1. MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

The Scottish Government is committed to putting equality and human rights at the heart of everything we do. We want to ensure that every person and every community in our country is able to achieve their full potential. We recognise and seek to protect the intrinsic value of all people and want to see a society founded on fairness, dignity, equality and respect.

COVID-19 has highlighted the deep-rooted inequalities that still exist within our society, and it is vital that we use this opportunity to make fundamental and lasting changes to address these inequalities.

As part of our ongoing commitment to fulfilling the three needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty (advancing equality, tackling discrimination and fostering good relations between people in all of our communities), we have developed, in consultation with a range of equality stakeholders, our new equality outcomes for the period 2021 to 2025. I am grateful to all of those who have contributed to their development.

We have aligned these outcomes with the ambitious agenda the Scottish Government is driving to embed equality and human rights across all aspects of our work. In practice, this means recognising the links between the outcomes and our other strategic priorities. These include those in our Programme for Government 2020–2021 the National Performance Framework, the development of our new equality and human rights mainstreaming strategy as well as other specific programmes of work, in areas such as health and transport, which are seeking to advance equality. We have also sought to harness the expertise and aspirations of some of our invaluable advisory and stakeholder groups, such as the Social Renewal Advisory Board, the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, and the Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity.

These outcomes sit alongside the commitment to integrate equality into our day-to-day business and the raft of policies and strategies across Government which are delivering improvements for communities. They increasingly align with our ambitions to ensure that equality and human rights are mainstreamed and embedded across all aspects of Government business. Working to fulfil these outcomes will contribute to tackling the most significant inequalities in Scotland, to make it a place where we all realise our human rights and live free from discrimination.

Shirley-Anne Somerville
Cabinet Secretary for Social Security and for Older People

2.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012[1], this paper fulfils the Scottish Government's duty to "publish a set of equality outcomes which it considers will enable it to better perform the equality duty" at intervals of not more than 4 years. This set of outcomes is for the 2021-2025 reporting cycle.

In the development of the outcomes contained in this paper, we have considered relevant evidence of significant inequalities that still exist within our society. We have drawn on the evidence and expertise of key advisory groups and we have also engaged with organisations who represent people with relevant protected characteristics on the specific outcomes.

Each outcome includes information about the result the Scottish Government wishes to achieve and provides evidence as to why this is a priority.

The outcomes cover a range of areas, reflecting the breadth and depth of the Scottish Government's work that seeks to advance equality. However, the outcomes do not cover the full range of work the Scottish Government is doing to fulfil the three needs of the Public Sector Equality Duty[2]:

- To eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- To advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
- To foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

In terms of the context in which these outcomes were developed, it is important to note that they seek to tackle some of the most significant inequalities, including those exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Scottish Government is continuing to develop our understanding of the significant impact of COVID-19 on equality and human rights, which will inform our approach to recovery and renewal from the pandemic. Therefore, the specific actions and plans that will support the fulfilment of these outcomes will continue to be identified and developed after they have been published.

It should also be noted that the outcomes were developed in a context affected by the pandemic, with many officials fully focused on responding to Covid-19 from March 2020 onwards. This reduced the amount of consultation which would ordinarily have taken place specifically on these outcomes, although their development was informed by extensive ongoing engagement with equality stakeholders and networks, and by the work of expert groups. With this context in mind, we will keep the outcomes under review as we emerge from the current health crisis.

Furthermore, this paper has been published ahead of the 2021 Scottish Parliamentary election. Therefore, it will be for responsible Ministers in the new administration to implement a monitoring and evaluation process for these

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[1] The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)
[2] S.149, Equality Act 2010

outcomes; to identify if any specific additional actions to support their fulfilment are needed; and to decide if any changes should be made mid-cycle. Setting outcomes ahead of an election poses specific challenges for the Scottish Government; and we will reflect on this experience as we move into the next equality outcome cycle and as we consider the effectiveness of the Public Sector Equality Duty regime in Scotland, including the duty to set outcomes on a particular cycle.

To reflect the Scottish Government's role as both a policy maker and an employer, the outcomes have been separated into these two respective categories.

EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021 – 2015	
Policy outcomes:	
1.	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.
2.	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.
3.	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.
4.	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.
5.	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 NTS2 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.
6.	During the current equality outcome cycle (2021-2025), 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.
Employer outcomes:	

1.	By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to reflect the general Scottish population.
2.	By 2025, workforce culture will be more inclusive with employees from all backgrounds and characteristics and experiences reporting they feel increasingly valued.

3.   INTRODUCTION

Why we publish equality outcomes: the legal context

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. 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. Setting outcomes is an important part of this work.

Under the Scottish Specific Duty (SSD) regulations[3], which supplement the PSED, each public 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.[4] 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 authority must publish a fresh set of equality outcomes within four years of publishing its previous set. In preparing equality outcomes, it must take reasonable steps to involve people who share a relevant protected characteristic, and people or groups who represent the interests of those with protected characteristics. It must also consider relevant evidence relating to people who share protected characteristics. The protected characteristics include sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, and religion or belief.

An authority must publish a report on the progress made to achieve its equality outcomes every two years. Our most recent report on progress towards the Scottish Government's previous equality outcomes (for the 2017–2021 reporting cycle) was published alongside this paper and is available on the Scottish Government' website. This publication looks ahead, to our outcomes for 2021-2025.

Why we publish equality outcomes: the wider context

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.

Whilst mainstreaming equality – building equality into every aspect of our business, every policy, every decision, every budget, every advisory forum or structure – remains an ongoing endeavour, and we have committed to developing a new strategy for mainstreaming equality and human rights[5], setting specific outcomes is an important aspect of the commitment to bringing about a fairer, more equal Scotland. It brings into focus the need to tackle and reduce inequalities for people

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[3] The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)
[4] S.149, Equality Act 2010
[5] Protecting Scotland, Renewing Scotland: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2020-2021

who share protected characteristics; and the need to bring about real change in people's everyday lives.

Setting, publishing and reporting on equality outcomes creates a focus on the most significant inequalities in our society and our commitment to dismantling those. Furthermore, in holding dialogue within the Scottish Government and with equality stakeholders on the proposed outcomes, we are able to continue to drive home the message that promoting equality is everyone's business, and that we are seeking to change Scotland so that everyone can fulfil their potential and no-one experiences discrimination.

The activity around outcome setting also provides an opportunity to draw together what can sometimes be disparate aspects of the PSED regime. For example, we consider what equality impact assessments (which are undertaken as part of assessing and reviewing policies and practices, under regulation 5 of the Scottish Specific Duties) have told us about significant inequalities; and we use the data gathered under various other SSD regulations to shape our decisions. We would encourage other public bodies to view the PSED regime as a series of interconnected duties which complement each other and which all have the same core aim of advancing equality.

Equality Outcomes and the National Performance Framework

Scotland's National Performance Framework[6] (NPF) provides a clear long term purpose and set of national outcomes for Scotland's wellbeing. The NPF has promoting equality at its heart and challenges us to ensure the needs of our most disadvantaged and marginalised communities are at the forefront of our action. Better tracking of progress in reducing inequalities, promoting equality, and encouraging preventative approaches are all essential prerequisites of delivering our national purpose of *creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing and sustainable and inclusive growth*. The Equalities Evidence Finder[7] presents most of the NPF indicators broken down by one or more characteristic and we are continually working to improve our reporting on equalities.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant and wide-ranging impact across the national outcomes. Progress across the NPF has been hindered, and in some cases, deeply set back. As reported in December 2020 in the Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of COVID-19[8], the impacts have been borne unequally and are expected to widen many existing inequalities and produce disproportionate impacts for some groups that already face particular challenges. These include: households on low incomes or in poverty; low-paid workers; children and young people; older people; disabled people; minority ethnic groups and women.

Working towards the equality outcomes set out in this publication will help us to reset progress towards the NPF as outlined in the table below.

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[6] National Performance Framework
[7] Equalities Evidence Finder
[8] Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of COVID-19

	EQUALITY OUTCOMES CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NPF		
Cat.	**Equality outcome**	**Contribution to the NPF**	**NPF Outcomes**
Policy outcomes	Equality evidence	Improved equality data across all national outcomes.	**All 11 national outcomes**
	Inclusive Communication	Inclusive communications approach becomes central within the public sector, which delivers across the NPF.	**All 11 national outcomes**
	Health	Improved health outcomes, with a particularly focus on sex, race, age and disability will contribute towards individuals' wellbeing and opportunities and therefore delivers across the NPF.	**All 11 national outcomes**
	Employment	Reduced disparities in the labour market and reduced workplace inequality, with a focus on gender balance and pay gap, disability employment gap, and race equality.	**Fair Work & Business**
	Transport	Fair and affordable access to transport infrastructure enables everyone to share the benefits of a modern economy, which promotes societal wellbeing.	**All 11 national outcomes**
	Lived experience	Public services treat people with dignity and respect and local decisions and policy are influenced by people from all communities with lived experiences of inequalities and exclusion.	**Communities** **Human rights**
Employer outcomes	Increasing workforce diversity	Improved diversity and inclusion in the Scottish Government.	**Fair Work & Business**
	Fostering an inclusive workforce culture		

The future of equality outcomes

The operation of PSED in Scotland, including the effectiveness of the Scottish Specific Duties, is currently under review. As part of that review, the ongoing value of the duty to publish and report on equality outcomes as it is currently framed in the regulations will be considered, including the issue of the suggested timing, which does not always align with public authorities' plans and priorities.

A key theme that has arisen during discussions with stakeholders on the PSED regime, is that there is an appetite for more collaboration across the public sector in Scotland, and an interest in the development of more shared outcomes. Indeed, some authorities have begun to work across boundaries to develop shared outcomes for the 2021-2025 cycle.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (which has a statutory role in monitoring compliance with the PSED) has conveyed an expectation that Scottish Government play more of a leadership role in PSED and SSD compliance in future, and has specifically expressed a desire to see the Scottish Government shaping shared outcomes across the public sector. This is an option that the Scottish National Equality Improvement Project (SNEIP) is expected to consider in 2021.

4. POLICY EQUALITY OUTCOMES

4.1 Equality evidence

Outcome:
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.

Context:
The Scottish Government has a vision of a Scotland in which analysts and policy makers across the public sector: • Have developed a good evidence base to understand the structural and intersectional inequality of outcome in their areas; • Have the knowledge and experience to be able to use this evidence to tailor policy to reduce inequality by protected characteristic and socioeconomic disadvantage; • Have the data, knowledge and skills to use the evidence base to monitor and evaluate impacts on an ongoing basis; and • Can more effectively contribute to the collective effort across the public sector to fulfil the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Using equality evidence and data more effectively, including intersectional data, is a key strand of the new strategy for enhancing our approach to mainstreaming equality and human rights, which will be developed over the next year. This is partly based on feedback from equality stakeholders about instances when they think that data and evidence have not been used as effectively as they would have expected. The COVID-19 pandemic has also underlined the importance of evidence-based decision making.

Links to national outcomes:
Progress towards the vision in the National Performance Framework is tracked through 81 National Indicators, with progress reported on the NPF website. It is envisaged that this outcome will contribute to achieving all 11 National Outcomes by improving the range and quality of available intersectional data, ensuring that unequal outcomes experienced by different groups in Scotland are evidenced, highlighted and used to shape action. In addition, this outcome will contribute to increased use of intersectional data to develop, deliver and adjust service provision to tackle inequalities. This has specific links to achieving the ambitions of the following National Outcomes: • Human Rights • Communities • Health • Fair Work and Business • Children and Young People

Evidence:
Many areas of the public sector, including different parts of the Scottish Government, are already doing a lot of work to collect equality data and improve their equality data collection. In addition, there has been an increased focus on the need and usefulness of equality data throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic. A range of evidence has shown that the impacts of the pandemic arising from the direct and indirect effects of contracting the illness, as well as the lockdown measures put in place to control spread of the virus, are significant and unequal. However, there are many costs and challenges to collecting, analysing and reporting intersectional equality data and, despite improvements in recent years, there remain significant gaps in Scotland's equality evidence base. For example, recent work undertaken by Scottish Government analysts in February 2021 showed that, of the 81 indicators in the NPF, breakdowns for disabled people are not available for around half either because data is not available (8 indicators), the indicator relates to structures rather than individuals (20 indicators) or the indicator is still being developed (13 indicators). In addition the Equality Evidence Finder[9] continues to have significant gaps for smaller sub-groups within the protected groups such as people with learning disabilities and different minority ethnic groups, as well as significant gaps in the availability of intersectional data across a range of domains. Without a strong evidence base we cannot identify the scale and nature of inequalities, nor develop, deliver and adjust service provision to tackle inequalities. Work must continue to address these evidence gaps. Various recommendations to the Scottish Government over the course of the pandemic have highlighted evidence gaps and the need to improve equality data, including: - The lack of adequate data to monitor the needs of different minority ethnic groups, particularly in relation to the health consequences of the pandemic;[10] [11]   - The need for improved data collection on the wider impacts of COVID-19 and resultant inequalities, including collecting and reporting the numbers who have died with COVID-19 who are disabled people, people with learning disabilities older people and carers;[12]   - The requirement for consistent use of equalities and human rights data to improve capacity to monitor, alongside independent evaluation of how far investment is driving renewal and for whom;[13]   - The need for the Scottish Government and other public bodies (including regulators, inspectorates and ombudsmen) involved in the collection of data relevant to COVID-19 to fill data gaps relevant to the protected characteristics.

[9] Equality Evidence Finder

[10] Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity: recommendations to Scottish Government - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

[11] Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network (Scotland), written evidence to the Equality and Human Rights Committee. Referenced in the Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

[12] If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

[13] If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

Data should be gender-sensitive and, wherever possible, include information on different categories of ethnicity or disability (including learning disability);[14] and

- The need for adequate resourcing to enable the collection and analysis of robust intersectional data.[15]

Protected characteristics:

Equality data collection is necessary to improve understanding of whether and how services and outcomes differ by protected characteristic and intersectionalities. Therefore, this outcome has relevance across all protected characteristics.

Actions:

Some specific aspects of the activity which will support the delivery of this outcome over the next 12-18 months include:

- Developing and implementing the first phase of an Equality Data Improvement Programme from March 2020 to Dec 2021.
- Publishing and disseminating the findings of research on equality data collection in the public sector and developing best practice case studies by June 2021.
- Building on results from the research on equality data, undertake research with people with lived experience of holding different and intersecting protected characteristics to explore response issues, to investigate data fears and to understand what positive messaging would help relay fears and encourage participation in surveys in Summer/Autumn 2021.
- Considering all of the above, develop best practice, guidance and if necessary legislation to help public sector data collectors to improve their response rate.
- Writing up examples of good practice in analysing equality data, being clear when this good practice could be used and updating the Equality Evidence Finder and providing training materials by Summer 2022.
- Increasing the availability of equality and intersectional evidence through data linkage, including responding to identified evidence gaps among smaller groups.

These actions will support the development of a new Equality Evidence Strategy in 2021 and early 2022. The new strategy will cover the years 2022-25 and inform action undertaken during this period.

Measuring success:

Success will look like:

- All NPF indicators relevant to structural inequality have equality breakdowns or have a plan to develop evidence for the indicator.
- The Equality Evidence Finder has a greater range of data and intersectional data available.
- Survey of analysts shows increased confidence and competence in the production of equality breakdowns of data.

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[14] Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)
[15] National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG) 2019 - report and recommendations: SG response - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

- Guidance and case studies are readily available to help policy and analytical staff use and develop evidence that improve policies and services.
- Budgeting processes have improved to further articulate the impact of revenue raising and spend on protected characteristics.

4.2   Inclusive communication

Outcome:
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.

Context:
The Scottish Government has frequently set out its commitment to inclusive communication, notably in A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People[16], where we say we want communication in Scotland to be accessible to and inclusive of all, and through the funding of the Inclusive Communication Hub. An explicit reference to the need to communicate in an inclusive way has also been included in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018[17], the Consumer (Scotland) Act 2020[18], the Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020[19] and the Coronavirus (Scotland) (No.2) Act 2020.[20] We committed in Programme for Government 2020-21 to step up work across Scottish Government and support the wider public sector to promote accessible, inclusive communications for all – ensuring everyone in Scotland can access information and express their views and needs on an equal basis. The Scottish Government is also mindful of the link between this outcome and digital inclusion. We will review the Scottish Specific Duties, contained in the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012 (the 2012 Regulations). This will look at ways to improve the effectiveness of the regulations, including improving data collection and will help to promote improvements to leadership and accountability that can lead to cultural change. The review of the Scottish Specific Duties could provide a valuable opportunity to consider how the duties could be used to help public bodies to report on what they are doing to communicate inclusively and how they plan to improve.

Evidence:
A range of evidence shows that there is a need for more inclusive and accessible communication. This issue has received increased attention during the COVID-19 pandemic, with those who are visually impaired, British Sign Language users, for people who primarily speak languages other than English or who have limited fluency in English, and people with learning disabilities identified as groups who are likely to be particularly impacted by the lack of inclusive communication. The Social Renewal Advisory Board recommended that the Scottish Government should build inclusive communication into all national and local government funding requirements. The report states: "We have seen the importance of clear and accessible communication during the pandemic, making sure everyone - including those who are visually impaired,

[16] A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People
[17] Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018
[18] Consumer (Scotland) Act 2020
[19] Coronavirus (Scotland) Act 2020
[20] Coronavirus (Scotland) (No.2) Act 2020

British Sign Language users, and those whose first language is not English - can get the information or support they need when they need it. Public bodies should improve their approach to make sure communications are as inclusive as possible. To address this, we call on national and local government to build 'inclusive communication' into all frameworks, including funding requirements. The public sector and recipients of funding should have to demonstrate how they will ensure inclusive communication and accessible processes in their work."[21]

The Equality and Human Rights Committee Report on the Impact of Covid-19 on Equalities and Human Rights provided multiple sources of written evidence of the need to embed an inclusive communications approach across public sector. Evidence from the Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (SCLD) outlined that "people with learning disabilities may struggle to understand information on the news and must rely on information from friends and family. As such, SCLD said this information can at times be inaccurate leading to confusion, increased levels of anxiety, and some people not following advice regarding shielding."[22]

More evidence from the Report reveals a need for a consolidated principles for inclusive communication as Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership (AHSCP) explain "the changeable nature of Scottish Government's advice, which while they recognised as necessary, said causes confusion impacting on their work. They explained that their minority ethnic communities, and those whose first language is not English, face additional barriers in both language and cultural understanding of health and social care services."[23]

The Report claims the respondents "communicated very strongly that they feels the needs of disabled people, ethnic minority groups and other affected groups, have not been considered in the information and guidance provide by the Scottish Government and public services, which has had direct consequences on people's lives." Again this suggests a co-ordinated programme across Scottish Government and other public bodies would be beneficial.[24]

Furthermore, the Committee asks the Scottish Government if it will work towards "a national commitment to inclusive communication while the country is recovering from the pandemic to ensure a reduction in social isolation for many people in Scotland."[25]

Protected characteristics:

This is relevant across all people in Scotland as every community and group will include people who understand information, express themselves and interact with

[21] If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

[22] Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities, evidence to the Equality and Human Rights Committee. Referenced in the Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

[23] Aberdeenshire Health & Social Care Partnership, evidence to the Equality and Human Rights Committee. Referenced in the Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

[24] Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

[25] Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

others in different ways, and across all protected characteristics. However, the outcome will have a significant impact for some disabled people, particularly those with some learning disabilities and cognitive impairments as well as for people who primarily speak languages other than English or who have limited fluency in English.

Actions:
We will lead a co-ordinated programme to ensure the use of inclusive communication principles across all public bodies in Scotland so that no-one is disadvantaged by the way they communicate. We will establish a monitoring framework to understand where this is being done effectively, areas for improvement and the impact this has. Some specific aspects of the activity which will support the delivery of this outcome include: • Using the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty 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; • Working in partnership with other public bodies and stakeholders including third sector organisations and people with lived experience, to co-produce a set of common principles and setting national expectations with a long term plan of action; • Building on the approach progressing in Social Security Scotland for external and internal two way communications to establish a system for monitoring the use of inclusive communication across the public sector; • Considering how best to respond to the specific recommendations from the Social Renewal Advisory Board; and • Considering all of the above develop national standards, best practice and guidance, and shared resources for public bodies on inclusive communication.

Links to national outcomes:
We hope that these actions lead to people and communities being able to better understand information, express themselves and interact with others in different ways, as well as being enabled to receive a better standard from the service they are accessing. This will ensure that every community and group is empowered and has the right to access necessary information and express their views and needs in ways which work for them. In doing so, it is envisaged that these actions will deliver across all of our National Outcomes, however, there will be a significant contribution to the following outcomes on: • Communities • Human Rights

Measuring success:
Success will look like: • Robust principles and standards are developed to support effective communication with people with protected characteristics across the public sector;

- People with lived experience of inequality and discrimination and relevant expertise are involved in setting principles for inclusive communication and the system for measuring its effectiveness; and
- There are strengthened legislative duties on the public sector to support better use of inclusive communication; and
- Inclusive communication will be used more frequently by the Scottish Government to ensure we lead by example in our internal and external communication, and share best practice.

Another key success indicator will be that a system is in place to monitor and assess the effectiveness of inclusive communications. The creation of a system to monitor and assess the effectiveness of inclusive communications, will be a major action and output of the work, it will also be the most significant way by which we can measure if public sector bodies are communicating inclusively.

As a part of the work itself, we will review how best the public sector can use any measurement tool to publicly report on their progress (to support the promotion of positive examples) to enable the whole of the public sector to learn from each other and improve their communication to better meet the needs of those accessing services.

Measurement tools:

- As noted above, part of this outcome is to develop a stronger approach to measuring the effectiveness of inclusive communication across the public sector. This system will be one of the key tools we use to measure progress towards this outcome; and
- We will work closely with stakeholders as we progress actions under this outcome, listening and responding to their feedback.

4.3   Health

Outcome:
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.

Context:
COVID-19 has both exposed and exacerbated health inequalities in Scotland. The disproportionate harm caused by COVID-19 to older people, minority ethnic groups, people living in greatest deprivation, and those with obesity, diabetes and respiratory and cardiovascular disease has highlighted new vulnerabilities and underscored existing health inequalities. The evidence in the Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget statement is highly relevant is this respect[26].   The 2020-21 Programme for Government sets out our renewed focus to tackle health inequalities and support those most in need. Our Re-mobilise, Recover, Re-design Framework requires NHS Boards ensure that addressing inequalities is at the core of their plans.   We need to take a cross-government and whole system approach to further develop and align our policies to support high-risk groups, including groups whose risks have become more evident in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our six public health priorities are long-term areas of focus for the whole system, developed in partnership with COSLA, which provide an important lens as we take this programme of work forward. These are: A Scotland where: • We live in vibrant, healthy and safe places and communities;   • We flourish in our early years;   • We have good mental wellbeing;   • We reduce the use of and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drugs;   • We have a sustainable, inclusive economy with equality of outcomes for all; and   • We eat well, have a healthy weight and are physically active.   The priorities recognise that our approaches to improving health and wellbeing must be based on the principles of fairness, equity and equality, taking account of the avoidable differences among particular groups of people and providing access to the resources required to tackle them. As we look to renew and recover as a society, we will ensure the necessary resource is directed at addressing health inequalities and its underlying causes. This action will be evidence led, applying public health expertise, data and intelligence and drawing on our communities' lived experience.

Links to national outcomes:
Reducing inequality lies at the heart of the National Performance Framework, therefore improving health outcomes with a particular focus on sex, race, age and

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[26] Equality and Fairer Scotland Budget Statement 2021-22 (www.gov.scot)

disability will help to drive this forward. Furthermore, improving health outcomes is key to increasing wellbeing and giving opportunities to all people living in Scotland, thus this equality outcome contributes to all of our national outcomes.

Evidence:

Evidence on health inequalities

Health inequalities affect a range of different groups across the protected characteristics such as women, men, disabled people, people from ethnic minorities and older people. They also affect those who live in the most deprived areas and those from vulnerable groups such as asylum seekers, refugees and homeless people. It is important to consider that there is considerable overlap between these groups and those who fit into several of these groups can experience inequalities which combine and increase their disadvantage.

Prior to the pandemic, a wide range of health inequalities already existed across the Scottish population, including:

- Those from the most deprived areas have a much shorter life expectancy than those from the least deprived areas. The gap in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas was 13.3 years for males and 10.0 years for females.[27]
- Scotland has the lowest life expectancy in western Europe. Life expectancy increased in Scotland between 2000-2002 and 2012-2014 but has stalled since then.
- The gap in 'healthy life expectancy' at birth between the most and least deprived areas was 25.1 years for males and 21.5 years for females.[28]
- While life expectancy is higher for women, healthy life expectancy is similar for men and women – meaning that women are expected to live longer in poor health.
- Premature mortality (dying before reaching the age of 75) also shows a significant gap between the most and least deprived. The premature death rate per 100,000 people was 817.6 in the most deprived areas, compared with 198.2 per 100,000 in the least deprived areas.[29]
- Males accounted for nearly two-thirds (65%) of alcohol-specific deaths in 2019,[30] 69% of the drug-related deaths[31] and 74% of probable suicides.[32]
- Older people are less likely than younger people to report being in good or very good health (57% for those aged 75+ in 2018, compared to 85% of those aged 16-24), while a substantially lower proportion of disabled adults (40%) reported good or very good health compared with non-disabled adults (90%).[33]

[27] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/life-expectancy-in-scotland/17-19/life-expectancy-17-19-report.pdf

[28] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/healthy-life-expectancy/17-19/healthy-life-expectancy-17-19-report.pdf

[29] https://www.gov.scot/publications/long-term-monitoring-health-inequalities-january-2021-report/pages/4/

[30] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/alcohol-deaths/2019/alcohol-specific-deaths-19-main-points.pdf

[31] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/drug-related-deaths/2019/drug-related-deaths-19-pub.pdf

[32] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//statistics/probable-suicides/2019/suicides-19-main-points.pdf

[33] https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/

- Prevalence of some health conditions is known to be higher in certain ethnic groups, for example Type 2 diabetes is 6 times more likely in people of South Asian descent and type 2 diabetes 3 times more likely in African and Afro-Caribbean people. Non-white ethnic groups in Scotland have lower rates of common cancers but Indian and Pakistani populations have higher rates of cardiovascular disease. The reasons for these health inequalities are complex with interplay between socio-economic disadvantage in minority ethnic communities, high prevalence of chronic disease and the impact of long-standing race inequalities being key explanations. The Expert Reference Group on Ethnicity and COVID-19 has drawn attention to the need to acknowledge longstanding international evidence in particular from the US whereby racism and racialisation is known to have a profound effect on health and illness.[34]
- Mental health and wellbeing is clearly linked with age. In 2018, a far higher proportion of younger than older people scored a GHQ-12 score of 4 or more indicating probable mental ill health (24% of those aged 16-24 compared to 13% of those aged 75+). [35]
- Across most aspects of mental health outcomes for women and girls are poorer than for men and boys. A Public Health Scotland report shows that for four out of the five groups of mental health medicines there are substantially more medicines dispensed to females than males. This higher rate of medicines across these groups dispensed to females has been consistent since 2010.
- In the UK, black women are five times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than white women. Asian women are twice as likely to die from pregnancy complications as white women.[36]

COVID-19 impacts

COVID-19 has impacted disproportionately across different groups both in terms of direct health impacts and non-direct health impacts:

- After adjusting for age, people living in the most deprived areas were 2.32 times as likely to die with COVID-19 as those in the least deprived areas. The size of this gap has ranged between 2.1 and 2.3 over the period of the pandemic.[37]
- The risk of serious disease and death from COVID-19 increases with age and is also increased in those with a number of underlying health conditions.[38]
- In Scotland, compared to White Scottish, rates of hospitalisation or death were estimated to be around 3 times higher in Pakistani and Mixed ethnicity groups,

[34] https://www.gov.scot/publications/expert-reference-group-on-covid-19-and-ethnicity-recommendations-to-scottish-government/
[35] https://www.gov.scot/collections/scottish-health-survey/
[36] https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5801/jtselect/jtrights/559/55906.htm#_idTextAnchor018
[37] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths/deaths-involving-coronavirus-covid-19-in-scotland
[38] https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistics-by-theme/vital-events/general-publications/weekly-and-monthly-data-on-births-and-deaths/deaths-involving-coronavirus-covid-19-in-scotland

and around 2 times higher in Indian and Other Asian groups.[39] [data up to 15 February 2021, published 3rd March 2021]

- Of those who died with COVID-19 between March and August, 92% had at least one pre-existing condition. Many of these people will have considered themselves disabled.[40]
- In the UK, psychological distress as a result of COVID-19 is particularly high for women and ethnic minority groups. Additionally the negative association between COVID-19 and wellbeing is worse for women than for men, and for ethnic minority groups on some measures.[41]
- Whilst robust data on the differential impact of the long-term effects of COVID-19 (Long COVID) across the Scottish population is not yet available, it is possible that prevalence may be higher among those groups over-represented in key worker roles in health and social care; or impacted by pre-existing socioeconomic factors (such as housing conditions), which could affect people's ability to maintain infection control and prevention measures.
- There is evidence to indicate that women aged 50-60 are at greatest risk of developing "long COVID".[42]
- COVID-19 restrictions have led to changes in alcohol consumption. Although Public Health Scotland research shows that the pandemic and restrictions are associated with a 6% reduction in the total volume of pure alcohol sold per adult in Scotland, some studies show that those who were previously drinking at hazardous and harmful levels are drinking more than before. Surveys also highlight feelings of anxiety, loneliness and boredom as commonly reported reasons for this.
- Evidence consistently suggests that people who are living with overweight or obesity are at an increased risk of serious COVID-19 complications and death, compared with those of a healthy weight.[43] In Scotland, 36% of adults who live in the most deprived areas are obese, compared with 23% in the least deprived areas.[44]

Stakeholder evidence

The Expert Reference Group on Ethnicity and COVID-19 has highlighted the lack of adequate data to monitor the needs of different minority ethnic groups, particularly in relation to the health consequences of the pandemic. They note that a lack of ongoing monitoring of ethnic inequalities in health within Scotland has been longstanding and have made recommendations to lead to improved data collections and better use of data.[45]

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[39] https://beta.isdscotland.org/find-publications-and-data/population-health/covid-19/covid-19-statistical-report/3-march-2021/

[40] https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/articles/coronaviruscovid19relateddeathsbydisabilitystatusenglandandwales/2marchto14july2020

[41] The Scottish Mental Health Research Advisory Group has published three Mental Health and COVID-19 evidence briefings to accompany their minutes: https://www.gov.scot/groups/coronaviruscovid-19-mental-health-research-advisory-group/

[42] https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.10.19.20214494v1

[43] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907966/PHE_insight_Excess_weight_and_COVID-19__FINAL.pdf

[44] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-health-survey-2019-supplementary-tables/

[45] https://www.gov.scot/publications/expert-reference-group-on-covid-19-and-ethnicity-recommendations-to-scottish-government/

The Social Renewal Advisory Board calls for more involvement of people with lived experience in designing policy and services which is relevant to this outcome. They believe a shift in the balance of power is needed, enabling individuals and communities to have more control over shaping local and national policy– all in a way that maximises place-based approaches and advances equality.[46]

The Mental Health Stakeholder group, which includes a wide range of mental health stakeholders and experts, was engaged throughout the drafting of the Mental Health COVID-19 Transition and Recovery Plan. The group's views informed the focus, direction and priorities of the Plan, including its specific focus on particular population groups whose mental health has been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. This includes children and young people, people with long term physical health conditions and disabilities, older people and women and girls. The plan has a total of 107 actions to address all the issues identified including, setting up an Equality and Human Rights Forum to inform the plan's implementation, and ensuring equitable access to mental health support and services for older people.

Women's Health Plan - Lived experience sub-group – a Lived Experience sub-group has been established to inform the ongoing development of the Women's Health Plan. This work is facilitated by the Health and Social Care Alliance (the ALLIANCE). A survey, asking women and girls about their experiences of accessing health care services and information received over 400 responses. Engagement sessions have also been held online. To ensure we heard from a diverse range of women, some of these events were held in partnership with organisations including Sharpen-Her: the African Women's Network, and the MECOPP Gypsy/Traveller Women's Voices Project. Women with lived experience of the conditions named in the Women's Health Plan (for example endometriosis and heart disease) also attended. The Women's Health Plan is expected to be published later in 2021.

Protected characteristics:

This is relevant across all protected characteristics. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted particularly stark health inequalities across sex, race, age and disability so we will particularly focus on these.

Actions:

- We will proactively adopt and support a whole system approach to tackling health inequalities across the wider public, third and community sectors.
- We will take forward the recommendations from the Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 & Ethnicity on data and systemic issues.
- We will take forward the actions in the Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan which addresses the issues faced by specific population groups which have been exacerbated by the pandemic. The Equality and Human Rights Forum will inform the plan's implementation.
- We will continue to work with COSLA and other partners in the National Suicide Prevention Leadership Group (NSPLG) to both implement the *Every Life*

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[46] https://www.gov.scot/publications/not-now-social-renewal-advisory-board-report-january-2021/

Matters Suicide Prevention Action Plan and to develop a future long-term suicide prevention strategy.

- We will also give full consideration to the recommendations made by the Independent Review of Adult Social Care so that we can strengthen a social care system that is founded in fairness, delivers equality and safeguards human rights.
- Our Alcohol Framework 2018 sets out 20 priority actions to prevent and reduce alcohol-related harms in Scotland. One of the two specific threads running through the Framework is that we must ensure that our actions work towards reducing health inequalities.
- Our Alcohol and Drugs Strategy also from 2018 sets out commitments to reduce drug-related deaths. The rise in deaths over the last few years has been identified as one of the main contributors to the stalling increase in life expectancy – as the average age of someone dying is 42. In January 2021 the First Minister announced a new national drugs mission and established a new ministerial portfolio on Drugs Policy. the mission is to reduce drug-related deaths.
- In implementing our Diet and Healthy Weight Delivery Plan (2018), our ambition is to significantly reduce diet-related health inequalities and to support people to eat well and be a healthy weight. This includes action that will benefit everyone in Scotland, alongside targeted, tailored support for those who need it most.
- As set out in the 2020-21 PfG, A Women's Health Plan is currently under development. The aim is to reduce women's health inequalities by raising awareness around women's health and improving access to healthcare for women throughout life.

Measuring success:

Our ambition is to improve the health of those who consistently experience poorer outcomes and therefore reduce health inequalities across Scotland. We have outlined above the actions we will take over the next four years to bring us closer to achieving this goal. Within each action, we will consider what success would look like and put in place robust evaluation and monitoring to measure the progress made towards achieving this and impact across the protected characteristics.

To measure longer term impacts on health outcomes and health inequalities, we will establish a monitoring framework to track progress over time in improving health outcomes across the protected characteristics. We will use established outputs to track progress, for example:

- Scottish Government long-term monitoring of health inequalities
- National Performance Framework
- National Records Scotland data on life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.
- National Records Scotland data on mortality
- Scottish Health Survey

4.4 Employment

Outcome:
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.

Context:
The 2021 Programme for Government commits to working with trade unions and employers to pioneer new ways of embedding fair work practices in all workplaces.[47] Since the PfG, the Scottish Government has built on this publishing Fair Work First: guidance to support implementation.[48] This guidance outlines our Fair Work First approach and exemplifies the Fair Work First criteria in practice. By embedding the principles of fair work across Scotland, we will improve livelihoods, reduce social inequality, and tackle discrimination. This will help some of those experiencing the greatest inequality in the labour market – such as lone parent families, disabled and minority ethnic people, and women. It will also deliver on our commitments to reduce the gender pay gap and to at least halve the disability employment gap (the latter by 2038). We will draw on labour market data, including emerging evidence regarding the impact of the pandemic, to shape this outcome.

Links to national outcomes:
A key aspect of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework is that: "We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone." Reduced disparities in the labour market and reduced workplace inequality, with a focus on gender balance and pay gap, disability employment gap, and race equality will contribute towards our national outcome on: • Fair Work and Business

Evidence:
Women **Impact of COVID-19 on women in Scotland's labour market:** • The Scottish Government recognises that women in work in Scotland have faced particular challenges as a result of the pandemic and necessary restrictions; • Women take on a disproportionately high share of caring responsibilities and so will have been particularly impacted by school closures and also having to look after family members;

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[47] Protecting Scotland, Renewing Scotland: The Government's Programme for Scotland 2020-2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot), p10
[48] Fair Work First: guidance to support implementation - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

- Even pre COVID, women did a disproportionate amount of unpaid housework and caring in the household. For example, a much higher proportion of economically inactive women (27.7%) cite "looking after family/home" as the reason, compared with men (6.6%);[49]
- Evidence suggests that with school and nursery closures, housework and childcare has fallen more on women than men, which may make it harder for them to maintain or take on employment;[50]
- There is evidence mothers have been around twice as likely to take unpaid time off work to look after children as fathers;[51]
- As of the end of June 2020, 16% of women in Great Britain who said that COVID-19 was affecting their work said this was because they were having to work around home school responsibilities (compared to 4% of men), while 18% of women whose work was affected said that they would have to work around childcare responsibilities (compared to 4% of men);[52]
- Compared with fathers, mothers are spending less time on paid work but more time on household responsibilities and the differences in work patterns between mothers and fathers have grown since before the crisis;
- Women are also the vast majority of lone parents, who may be less likely to have someone to share childcare with, making paid work harder;
- Some of the sectors consistently impacted by COVID-19 restrictions with subsequent effects on employment and income have high rates of female employment, for example more than half of those in employment in the Accommodation and Food Services and Retail sectors are women;[53]
- Research by the Institute for Fiscal Studies (May 2020) found mothers were more likely than fathers to have quit or lost their job, or to have been furloughed, since the start of the lockdown;[54]
- Furlough rates for men and women have been similar throughout the crisis but analysis by HMRC found that men placed on the Job Retention Scheme have been more likely to be retained by their employer than women;[55]
- As a result, this crisis risks inhibiting the desired participation of women in paid employment and their career progression. The International Monetary Fund has warned that COVID-19 threatens to roll back worldwide gains in women's economic opportunities and widen persistent gender gaps;[56]
- Periods of part-time employment or unemployment have long-term effects on pay and progression, and overall the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic as well as Brexit may put pressure on both the gender employment gap and the gender pay gap in coming years; and
- Evidence from Close the Gap demonstrates women often face intersectional gender and racial barriers that hinder employment prospects and career

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[49] Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2019
[50] See for example: https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/app/uploads/2019/10/Risky-business.pdf; https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/BN290-Mothers-and-fathers-balancing-work-and-life-underlockdown.pdf
[51] Mothers on the lowest incomes are nine times more at risk of losing their job due to school closures in the UK - Womens Budget Group (wbg.org.uk)
[52] Coronavirus and the social impacts on Great Britain
[53] Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, Jan-Dec 2019
[54] How Are Mothers and Fathers Balancing Work and Family under Lockdown?
[55] Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme statistics: secondary analysis of ended furloughs - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[56] The COVID-19 Gender Gap – IMF Blog

progression and we know the minority ethnic employment gap is particularly large for women.[57]

Disabled People

- The Scottish Government routinely publishes employment data for disabled people in Scotland, including breakdowns by age, gender, sector, ethnicity, working patterns and type of disability.
- Labour market outcomes and barriers can vary significantly by type of impairment. For example, people with learning difficulties had an employment rate of 22.3% in Scotland for the period Jan 2017-Dec 2019, significantly lower than the employment rate for those with a long-term condition/disability as a whole (ONS, APS 3 year pooled data, Jan 2017-Dec 2019).
- In 2019, the employment rate for those classed as disabled under the Equality Act 2010 was 49.0 per cent which was significantly lower than the employment rate for non-disabled people (81.6 per cent). This difference in employment rates between disabled and non-disabled people represents the disability employment gap and in 2019, was 32.6 percentage points.
- The disability employment gap was lower for women (27.5 percentage points) than men (38.2 percentage points) for ages 16 to 64 and across all other age bands.[58]
- The disability employment gap was lower for young people and increased with age, with the gap being highest for those aged 50 to 64 years, for both women and men.[59]
- Disabled people are employed across all sectors of Scotland's economy and across all occupation types. However, disabled people are generally underrepresented in the better paid occupations in our labour market and overrepresented in lower paid occupations.
- Scotland's disability pay gap worsened between 2018 and 2019. In 2019, average pay for disabled employees in Scotland was 16.5% lower than non-disabled employees. This means for every £1 that a non-disabled employee earned in 2019, a disabled employee earned £0.83 on average.
- The Scottish Commission for people with a Learning Disability (SCLD) annual population statistics uses data collected by local authorities and provides information about users of adult learning/intellectual disability services in Scotland. The most recent data shows that of all adults with a learning/intellectual disability known to local authorities, 4.1% were known to be in employment.[60]

Minority Ethnic Groups

- Compared with the white population, labour market outcomes for minority ethnic groups in Scotland are persistently poorer and have been disproportionately impacted during previous economic recessions. The latest

[57] Close the Gap | Statistics
[58] Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places, and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2019 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot), p15
[59] Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places, and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2019 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot), p15
[60] Learning-Disability-Statistics-Scotland-2019.pdf (scld.org.uk)

minority ethnic employment gap is 13.1 percentage points (p.p.) (61.5% vs 74.6%).[61]

- The employment rate gap between white women and minority ethnic women (20.8 p.p.) in Scotland is significantly higher than the gap between white men and minority ethnic men (4.8 p.p.). The gap for women is driven by a much lower employment rate for minority ethnic women than white women (51.7% vs 72.5%).

- And for people from minority ethnic groups who are disabled, multiple disadvantage and labour market barriers are reflected in a lower employment rate (39.8%) than people from minority ethnic groups who are not disabled (62.7%). A non-disabled white person is more than twice as likely to be in employment (82.8% employment rate) than a disabled person from a minority ethnic group (39.8% employment rate).

- There are also race based disparities for more highly qualified employees. The employment rate (25-64) in Scotland for minority ethnic graduates decreased from 71.0% in Jan 2018 to Dec 2018 to 67.9% in Jan 2019 to Dec 2019 (decrease of 3.1 percentage points) while the employment rate for graduates of white ethnicity increased from 85.8% to 86.4% over the same period (increase of 0.6 percentage points).

- Gypsy/Travellers were also most likely to be employed in hospitality at the time of the last Census in 2011 (31% of all those who were employed, compared to 21% for the employed population as a whole). Asian men and women were particularly likely to be working in wholesale and retail and accommodation and food services in 2011.[62]

- That minority ethnic groups are facing particular disadvantage from COVID-19 has been evidenced in several analytical reports, including for example, analysis by the TUC[63] who found that at the UK level, the employment level of "BME" workers fell by 5.3% between Q3 2019 and Q3 2020, while for white workers it fell by only 0.2%.

Younger and Older Workers

- Labour market outcomes for younger workers tend to be particularly impacted during recession times. Among the clear labour market impacts of the COVID crisis to date is that young people have faced greater reductions in employment and rises in unemployment than other age groups. They have also been more likely to be placed on the Job Retention Scheme which although classed as employed, is a proxy for risk of job losses.

- Stakeholder analysis indicates some specific employment issues facing older workers and how COVID-19 has impacted those. For example, the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) found that COVID-19 was having an effect on retirement decisions for older workers, with 1 in 8 changing their retirement plans.[64] Some chose to retire earlier than planned and others have remained in work later than planned, depending on how COVID-19 had affected them financially.

- The Centre for Ageing Better have also highlighted that when older workers do fall out of work, they face particular challenge in returning to work. Their

[61] Office for National Statistics, Annual Population Survey, Oct 2019 – Sept 2020
[62] 2011 Census - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)
[63] Recession report - BME workers (1).pdf (tuc.org.uk)
[64] Coronavirus alters the retirement plans of one in eight older workers, with one in three reporting a worse financial situation - Institute For Fiscal Studies - IFS

research finds over 50s are twice as likely to fall into long-term unemployment once losing their jobs compared to younger workers.[65]

Actions:
Continue our commitment to improving workplace equality through key programmes such as the Women Returners Programme and the Workplace Equality Fund. The Workplace Equality Fund helps employers to review and improve workplace structures, practices and policies to support an inclusive environment and diverse workforce. The Women Returners Programme helps women return to the labour market, in a position requisite with their skills, following a career break. Prioritise and implement key actions to support the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan. Review and develop long term strategic approach to home and flexible working Take forward key actions on race equality in employment supporting the recommendations from the Equalities and Human Rights Committee report on race equality, employment and skills. These actions include development of positive action guidance and a race equality in the workplace training framework. Both commitments focus on affecting change in systems and processes to dismantle barriers that prevent minority ethnic people from moving into, staying in or progressing in employment. Roll out Fair Work First guidance and promote with stakeholders. Continue to implement *A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan* in order to help meet the commitment to at least halve the disability employment gap in Scotland by 2038. The Action Plan will be refreshed in 2021/22 but currently focusses on 3 key themes: • Supporting employers to recruit and retain disabled people; • Supporting disabled people to enter employment; • Young People and Transitions.
Protected Characteristics:
Age; Race; Sex; Disability.
Measuring success:
Success will look like: • That official employment rates (evidenced by the ONS Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey) in Scotland show a narrowing gap between the employment rates of women and men, disabled and non-disabled people, and minority ethnic groups and white people; • That official pay gap measures (evidenced by the ONS Labour Force Survey and Annual Population Survey) in Scotland show a narrowing gap between the

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[65] Latest labour market data paints a worrying picture for older workers | Centre for Ageing Better (ageing-better.org.uk)

average pay of women and men, disabled and non-disabled people, and minority ethnic groups and white people; and

- Seeing a decrease in discrimination and harassment faced by people with protected characteristics in the workplace.

Measurement tools:

- Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, data is published by public authorities on gender,
- Published official headline labour market data on a) employment b) unemployment c) inactivity rates through the ONS.
- Other ONS, HMRC and DWP employment data covering earnings, types of employment and out of work trends (e.g. benefit claimant data).
- Fair Work Convention's Measurement Framework;
- Fair Work First monitoring tool;
- Fair Work Employer Support Tool;
- Fair Work Employee Self-assessment tool;
- annual Scottish Government procurement report.
- Gender Equality Index
- Annual progress report for A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People: Employment Action Plan – measures progress in relation to the following indicators:
  - o Change in the disability employment gap since baseline in 2016;
  - o Change in employment rate of disabled young people (16-24 years);
  - o Change in disability pay gap.
  - o In addition, we set out two interim milestones to help track progress towards the overarching ambition to at least halve the disability employment gap by 2038: A) To increase the employment rate of disabled people to 50% by 2023; and B) to 60% by 2030. To reach these milestones, and ultimately halve the gap, the employment rate of disabled people will need to increase by at least 1 percentage point every year on average. We therefore report annually on changes in the employment rate of disabled people.
  - o Where data allows (ONS only collect this information intermittently), we will also report on changes in how disabled people move in and out of employment.
- Progress report for the new Race Equality Action Plan

4.5   Transport

Outcome:
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.

Context:
This outcome seeks to build on and complement the work to deliver transport improvements as set out in the second National Transport Strategy (NTS2)[66], which sets out the Scottish Government's vision for a sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping to deliver a healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors. The Strategy also sets out four key priorities, one of which is Reduces Inequalities. Under this priority there are three associated outcomes: • Provide fair access to services we need; • Be easy for all to use; and • Be affordable for all. The Strategy supports a rights-based approach to transport and aims to ensure that access to suitable transport services facilitates fulfilment of other human rights. In line with NTS2 , this outcome aims to ensure that our transport system will reduce inequalities by providing a transport system which is more affordable and easier to use for all people but with a focus on those groups who currently experience the most significant inequalities in relation to transport. Transport Scotland, a key partner in delivering this outcome, recognises that championing equality is an integral part of its business, and supports the proactive work across Scottish Government to embed reducing inequalities in its policy development. NTS2 recognises the role transport has to play in delivering the fully inclusive society we want and commits that our transport system: • *Will provide fair access to the services we need:* we have a duty to reduce inequalities and advance equality of good opportunity and outcomes, including the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. We will ensure that our disadvantaged communities and individuals have fair access to the transport services they need. The transport

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[66] National Transport Strategy 2

system will enable everyone to access a wider range of services and to realise their human rights;

- *Will be easy to use for all*: people have different needs and capabilities. Our transport system will recognise these and work to ensure that everyone can use the system with as few barriers as possible; and
- *Will be affordable for all*: people have different incomes and our transport system will not exclude people from mobility by making it unaffordable. We will target actions to deliver the Strategy towards those needing most help, including those living in poverty.

Links to national outcomes:

Fair and affordable access to transport infrastructure enables everyone to share the benefits of a modern economy, which promotes societal wellbeing and therefore this equality outcome will contribute towards all 11 of our national outcomes.

Evidence:

NTS2 recognises a number of groups across society who are at risk of transport inequality challenges:

Poverty and Child Poverty

Over one million people in Scotland live in areas that are at risk of transport poverty.[67]

Stakeholder feedback on transport tells us that the most important factor cited by those on low incomes as the greatest barrier impacting access to transport is cost/affordability. Public transport is important to those on low incomes as it enables them to access the services and facilities they require. Poverty can be exacerbated by having other protected characteristics e.g. a disability.

Gender

The gendered division of labour has resulted in women shouldering a disproportionate level of care and domestic tasks, compared to their male counterparts, in addition to full or part-time work.[68] Due to this, women are more likely to make multi-stop and multi-purpose trips, known as 'trip-chaining', combining travel to work with trips for other purposes such as taking children to school, looking after elderly family members or shopping for household products.[69]

Compounding this issue, public transport systems are historically designed to meet the needs of commuters with traditional 'nine to five' working patterns, hence based on a travel pattern that is primarily male.[70] Public transport timetables and routes are, in the main, not designed to fit travel behaviour that is shaped by unpaid care work and part-time employment.[71]

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[67] Transport poverty in Scotland - Sustrans.org.uk. Sustrans defines this as people deemed to be at risk of transport poverty when they don't have access to essential services or work due to limited affordable transport options.
[68] Women shoulder the responsibility of 'unpaid work' - Office for National Statistics
[69] National Travel Survey factsheet: trip chaining (publishing.service.gov.uk)
[70] 2018 WBG Briefing: Public Transport and Gender - Womens Budget Group
[71] Greed, C., (2019) Are We Still Not There Yet? Moving Further Along the Gender Highway: From One to Many Tracks

Poverty and Gender

A greater proportion of women work part-time hours (44% compared to 15% of men), with over 75% of Scotland's part-time workforce being female.[72] Women are also more likely to be in unpaid work, with 64% of people being paid below the Living Wage being female.[73] In particular, lone parents, the vast majority of whom a female, are more likely to be living in poverty than other single working-age adults in Scotland.[74] Therefore, it is vital to consider transport poverty and the impact transport can have on budgets with gender in mind.

Age (Young People)

Evidence shows that there has been a decline in the number of domestic trips being undertaken by younger people (aged 17 to 29).[75] The reasons for this are not necessarily related to transport, but they certainly impact on it and include:

- Many young people are communicating more by social media rather than in person and therefore have less need to travel; and
- More young people are undertaking further and higher education, having to spend more on housing and delaying entering employment, therefore having less resources to spend on travel.

The engagement undertaken with Young Scot[76] to inform the Strategy revealed that key issues for young people include the availability and cost of public transport, particularly to further and higher education, and personal safety when using services.

Age (Older People)

The NPF outcome *we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe* recognises that older generations now require additional support in response to their changing transport needs.

NTS2 sets out that while historically people have tended to travel less as they got older, older people are now healthier, fitter and wealthier and more mobile compared with previous generations. They are likely to want to travel more and our transport system needs to support this to ensure older people, wherever they live, are not socially isolated.

Disabled People

Disabled people have the same rights as every other citizen.[77] To have equal access to employment and health and social care facilities and to participate in learning, social, leisure and cultural activities in order to live life as full as they wish to.

However, barriers to travel can prevent disabled people from realising their human rights. Key challenges the transport system must address include:

[72] House of Commons Library (2019) Transport and Inequality
[73] The Living Wage: facts and figures (parliament.scot)
[74] Poverty and income inequality in Scotland: 2015-2018 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
[75] Is the urbanisation of young adults reducing their driving? - ScienceDirect
[76] National Transport Strategy Review - Young Scot Corporate
[77] UNTC

- Being able to access accurate, accessible and relevant travel information both before and during the journey;
- Being able to access public transport interchanges through good inclusive design principles;
- Being able to access public transport vehicles, by ensuring Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) are implemented and audio and visual aids are available;
- Being able to interchange between all modes effortlessly; and
- Concerns regarding safety and comfort on the public transport network.

The provision of transport to health and social care can be a challenge for disabled and older people. A 2019 survey by Disability Equality Scotland indicated that 98% of disabled people have experienced a problem either booking or getting transport to medical and healthcare appointments.[78] The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a rise in remote treatment options for patients, with a reduction in the need for people having to attend appointments in person. While it is expected that face to face appointments will resume after the COVID-19 pandemic, remote treatment should be encouraged where it is appropriate and where it improves access and convenience for patients.

Affordability is also an issue for disabled people. While there is a National Concessionary Travel Scheme for those eligible, disabled people are more likely to experience affordability barriers to transport relative to people who are not disabled. Also, a lower proportion of disabled people are in employment compared to those who are not disabled, and are more likely to be affected by poverty than those who are not disabled.[79] In addition, the impacts of COVID have been particularly damaging to disabled people's employment prospects. In March 2021, the Scottish Parliament's Equality and Human Rights Committee's *Report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equalities and human rights[80]* highlighted the issue of improving public transport for disabled people.

Many disabled people feel trapped due to the lack of accessible transport, particularly on islands and in remote and rural areas. Evidence shows that social isolation and loneliness are experienced across Scotland. Transport has a role to play in reducing levels of social isolation by connecting individuals and enabling access to opportunities and social facilities.

Providing disabled people with a platform to engage with transport operators, stakeholder groups, local authorities and Government can be influential in helping to make positive changes to make the transport network more accessible to disabled people.

Protected characteristics:

On 5 February 2020, Transport Scotland published the NTS2 Equality Impact Assessment[81]. This Assessment recognised that transport affects access to services, amenities, economic opportunities and social activities for all people

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[78] subgroup-transport-to-health-report.pdf
[79] Poverty in Scotland 2018 | JRF
[80] Report on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on equalities and human rights (azureedge.net)
[81] national-transpot-strategy-2-equality-impact-assessment-record.pdf (transport.gov.scot)

across all parts of Scotland and that NTS2 therefore affects any person in Scotland who travels for any purpose and by any mode, and, interacts with or faces barriers to accessing the transport system.

The Assessment also found that the Strategy provides a positive framework to, within the context of the transport system, eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between people with or within individual protected characteristics. However, this assessment has been carried out at a strategic level and it is recognised that the policies/projects/actions which constitute the delivery of NTS2 will require ongoing Impact Assessments.

Supporting the Scottish Government Route Map, the Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity launched the Transport Transition Plan (TTP). The TTP sets out the strategic approach in relation to transport and the COVID-19 crisis, alongside the First Ministers Strategic Framework, and outlines the actions Transport Scotland has taken to date and the planning being undertaken to prepare the transport system as we transition through the COVID-19 crisis. To inform the TTP a number of Impact Assessments are currently under way - including: Equality Impact Assessment; Fairer Scotland Duty; and Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment. As with the NTS2 assessment, these have been carried out at a strategic level and it is recognised that ongoing Impact Assessments on policies/projects/actions will continue to be undertaken and monitored/updated as they (the policies/projects/actions) are implemented will need to be undertaken.

In September 2020 the Transport Transition Plan - EQIA Interim Update[82] was published setting out initial findings from the consultation and engagement undertaken to support the Impact Assessment - which will remain live and dynamic until the Transport Transition Plan is closed off. This update provides an overview of next steps which will focus on using the evidence and issues identified through the assessments to inform our decision making process. Our work on Impact Assessments will continue to assist in considering how transport impacts on each of the protected characteristics, yet as we progress with this work, it is important that we consider the intersectionality of protected characteristics.

The available evidence base relating to transport equality indicated that women were disproportionately impacted during the pandemic – largely due to reductions in transport services and capacity – issues which already existed alongside access to transport for outside 9-5 hours commuting. People with a disability were also impacted during the pandemic by capacity restrictions and physical distancing measures. We knew that both these groups of society already experienced disadvantages with regards to transport (particularly around affordability, availability and safety) prior to the pandemic. However, post March 2020, these disadvantages and impacts were heightened and have continued.

For young people, the impacts of the pandemic have been particularly acute. Transport is an enabler – allowing for access to education, employment, training

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[82] Transport Transition - EQIA Interim Update: September 2020

and social activities. Rises in youth unemployment, particularly in rural areas, requires young peoples to travel further in order to seek and maintain employment.

Discrimination and disadvantage experienced by persons related to each protected characteristic on the transport system frequently intersect with each other. In addition, the wide range of family circumstances and socio-economic disadvantage that influence people's experience of poverty, inequality and/or discrimination also play a significant part. Given this, our outcome relates to all protected characteristics as well as socio-economic factors.

Actions:

The actions which will support this outcome include:

- An NTS2 Forum will be established, providing the main platform for engagement on the strategy. The Forum will bring 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 the NTS2 priorities and this outcome;
- We will ensure active, public and sustainable travel access to employment, education and training locations, continuing to engage with those who have lived experience of transport inequalities, including delivering of our commitment to engage with young people on the future of transport;
- We are working towards the under 19 free bus scheme starting as soon as practicable in the next financial year (2021-22);
- We have also committed to make as much progress as possible during 2021-22 to deliver free bus travel to under 22's and have allocated an additional £17 million in the Budget Bill for this purpose;
- We will support the implementation, review and development of Scotland's Accessible Travel Framework and annual delivery plans. We will also continue to support Local Authorities deliver and improve the Blue Badge Scheme;
- We will remove barriers to public transport connectivity and accessibility within Scotland;
- We will minimise the connectivity and cost disadvantages faced by island communities and those in remote and rural areas, including safeguarding of lifeline services;
- We will take forward an ambitious improvement project to enhance the impact and accessibility of the Scottish Transport Statistics, and Transport Scotland's Social and Economic Research publications; and
- The Scottish Government will improve sustainable access to healthcare facilities for staff, patients and visitors.

By delivering the NTS2's vision and priorities, we will contribute to achieving the Scottish Government's child poverty reduction targets to reduce child poverty levels by 2030, with interim targets to be achieved by 2023. Delivering the priorities will also help achieve our greenhouse gas emissions targets, including to reduce emissions to net zero by 2045, with interim targets of a 75% reduction by 2030 and a 90% reduction by 2040 in a just way. In doing so, we will also contribute to achieving the Scottish Government's National Outcomes contained within our National Performance Framework.

Measuring success:

We will report on performance in tackling the challenges and achieving the NTS2's outcomes commencing March 2022.

We will produce an annual monitoring report to track progress towards achieving the outcomes in the NTS2, across a range of indicators. Success will therefore look like, evidence of:

- Enhanced access to and use of transport;
- Improved affordability of transport;
- Increased satisfaction with public transport; and
- Safety of transport.

Where data is available and robust, all indicators within the NTS2 monitoring and evaluation framework will be segmented by protected characteristics, in addition to geographic and socioeconomic disaggregation.

Over time, this will highlight whether outcomes have improved, stayed the same, or worsened for these groups as well as at the national level.

4.6 Lived experience

Outcome:
During the current equality outcome cycle (2021-2025), 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.

Context:
As part of the development of the new equality and human rights mainstreaming strategy, the Scottish Government will develop proposals to better harness the lived experience of communities and the expertise of organisations who serve them. We will give further consideration to how we can support greater engagement between equality and human rights organisations and policy-makers across the Scottish Government to ensure that decision makers are confident in knowing when and how to engage with equality and human rights experts to support greater embedding of equality and human rights within policy and practice. A Participation Framework is currently being developed as part of our membership of the Open Government Partnership, as a tool to support and promote good practice in participation and engagement across Government. The Framework is designed to make clear the benefits of involving the public and relevant stakeholders early in any process, and equip staff with the skills to identify the most effective ways to carry out their engagement. A strategy is currently being developed to support the roll out of the Framework across the organisation, working in partnership with existing standards such as the Policy Profession and the Scottish Approach to Service Design. Links to initiatives such as the Poverty Truth Commission are also relevant.

Links to national outcomes:
This equality outcome seeks to ensure that: • The policy making process is more accessible and people from all communities in Scotland are more empowered to participate in the co-designing of policy and practice that affects them; and • Public services treat people with dignity and respect and local decisions and policy are influenced by people with lived experiences of inequalities and exclusion. Therefore, this equality outcome will contribute towards two of our national outcomes on: • Communities; and • Human Rights

Evidence:
Improving the embedding of lived experience in policy making has been advocated by many of the Scottish Government's key equality stakeholders and has been reflected in the aspirations and recommendations of various advisory boards and stakeholder groups in recent times.

The aspiration to improve this has been articulated clearly in the Social Renewal Advisory Board's report[83] which contains a "call to action" to "further shift the balance of power so individuals and communities have more control over decisions that affect their lives." The report goes on to say that "the expectation from now must always be that policies and programmes will embed lived experience in their conception, design and delivery" and that "decision-making processes must be designed so they enable a culture of engagement, activism, support and challenge to improve the quality of our actions".

Another key advisory group, the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, also recommended in its 2019 report that "the Scottish Government, Local Government and Public Bodies should build on existing work already underway (Scottish Approach to Service Design) to create a genuine effort in co-production of policy-making with evidence of lived experience at its heart".[84] In the Scottish Government's response[85] to this report, this recommendation was accepted. Our response stated "within the Government's Programme for Scotland 2020-21 we have committed to take steps to ensure that the voices of people with lived experience shape our approach and policies in relation to equality and human rights. We propose to develop an approach that is based on learning from previous and current Scottish Government models, as well as models utilised successfully in the UK and internationally. We will work closely with key stakeholders in this area and it will form a key component of our strategy to mainstream equality and human rights."

Furthermore, key stakeholders, including Inclusion Scotland and the Equality Network have said that the meaningful involvement of people with lived experience is vital in the policy making process and have advocated for improved people-led policy and, both in an overarching sense and in relation to specific programmes of work. The Scottish Government intends to work with key stakeholders and utilise their expertise in this area in order to make progress against this outcome.

Finally, the importance of using lived experience in the policy making process was articulated in the Scottish Parliament's Equality and Human Rights Committee's report into the impact of coronavirus on equality and human rights: "It is absolutely crucial that as service providers, law and policy makers we understand completely the impact of our decisions on the people we serve. We must become more rigorous with our data gathering, ensure lived experience is captured in a meaningful way, and prioritise use of impact assessments to take fully informed decisions that not only mitigate harm, but advance human rights and equalities and improve the lives of our citizens."[86]

Protected characteristics:

This is relevant across all protected characteristics as the outcomes aims to improve participation in the policy making process in an intersectional way across all of the protected characteristics, particularly with less represented groups.

[83] If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)
[84] First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls: 2019 Report and Recommendations
[85] National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG) 2019 - report and recommendations: SG response
[86] Equalities and Human Rights Committee, Report on the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Equalities and Human Rights (March 2021)

Actions:
In order to progress against this outcome, the Scottish Government will: • Develop models to embed lived experience in the policy making process, this will form part of the new equality and human rights mainstreaming strategy; • Review and co-ordinate existing structures and methods for participation in policymaking; and • Work across different policy areas to support joined-up policy-making. • Ensure that inclusion sits at the heart of the organisation's Participation Framework. We are also mindful that this equality outcome is relevant across our other equality outcomes, notable including: • Equality evidence - we will build on results from the research on equality data, undertake research with people with lived experience of holding different and intersecting protected characteristics to explore response issues, to investigate data fears and to understand what positive messaging would help relay fears and encourage participation in surveys in Summer/Autumn 2021; • Inclusive communication – we are committed to taking forward our proposals to better harness the lived experience of communities in an inclusive manner; and • In addition, engagement with people with lived experience of inequality will be undertaken through actions linked to the Health and Transport.
Measuring success:
Success will look like: • Evidence from people with lived experience and from stakeholders representing people with lived experience will show that they have felt more engaged and able to better participate in the policy making process; • Evidence of policies being improved as they develop, based on the lived experience of people with of inequality and exclusion; and • Greater diversity on our stakeholder groups and consultees. Progress towards this outcome will be measured by: • Working closely with stakeholders as we progress actions under this outcome, listening and responding to their feedback; • Assessing and reviewing the practices of policy making and stakeholder engagement processes; • Assessing and reviewing the diversity of our stakeholders groups and consultees; and • Developing case studies and promoting best practice in relation to policy-making with lived experience embedded.

5. EMPLOYER OUTCOMES

Background: why diversity and inclusion matter

Our ambition is to be a world-leading, diverse 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 and free of discrimination, harassment or bullying.

We want, and need, the best and brightest to help us innovate, see new pathways and opportunities in order to deliver the programme set out by Scottish Ministers. We know that a diverse workforce 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 organisation.

The **2017 SG employer outcomes** were:

- **Outcome 1: Increasing the diversity of our workforce**

  This outcome aimed to ensure that the Scottish Government workforce increased in diversity to reflect the general Scottish population by 2025.

- **Outcome 2: Fostering an inclusive workforce culture**

  This outcome aimed to ensure that the Scottish Government fostered an inclusive workforce culture and valued the contribution of employees from all backgrounds.

We have implemented a range of programmes to deliver on both outcomes, including specific activity and interventions to target particular groups where evidence suggests we need to do more and at pace. Further detail of this work is set out in the accompanying Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2019-21.

We recognise that in relation to both outcomes we still have progress to make.

Consultation and engagement with colleagues on the outcomes suggested and there was overwhelming support to keep the outcomes we already have (see section on Engagement) and to expanded 'inclusion' beyond 'background'.

New SG employer outcomes 2021-2025

In light of evidence and feedback from employee consultation, instead of substantially changing the outcomes we have concentrated on being clear about which groups face the greatest inequalities and improving the measures that we'll report on to demonstrate progress against these outcomes.

- **Outcome 1:** By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to reflect the general Scottish population.

- **Outcome 2:** By 2025, workforce culture will be more inclusive with employees from all backgrounds and characteristics and experiences reporting they feel increasingly valued.

Engagement: how we consulted on the 2021-2025 outcomes and responses

The Diversity and Inclusion Survey (Summer 2020) in which 1,130 employees participated, asked our employees whether they felt that our 2017-2025 employer outcomes were important to achieve and if we should retain them. Overwhelmingly – over 90% – our employees agreed, and in further questions gave their views on how we have progressed on different elements contributing to diversity and inclusion.

On diversity, the questionnaire results told us:
- Around one third of employees who joined the Scottish Government in the last 4 years felt that strong messaging about diversity and inclusion featured in their recruitment or induction experiences.
- Approximately 33% felt their business area was more diverse.
- A large majority (85%) was comfortable disclosing their diversity data on our HR data management system and trusted the information would not be used to disadvantage them (81%).

On inclusion, the questionnaire results told us:
- 25% have seen a positive difference in their business area's culture.
- 50% felt their unique perspective is valued within SG.
- 65% feel like they belong in the organisation.

We followed up by asking our Council of Scottish Government Unions (CSGU), staff diversity networks and all colleagues to comment on the employer outcomes and what additional measures we should use in reporting progress.

There remained support to retain the original wording of our outcome to foster an inclusive workplace culture, but to be clearer about what we mean by 'inclusive' and to expand it beyond 'background' to capture other characteristics and identities.

Suggestions included:
- Measure changes to working practices that will inevitably follow the pandemic.
- Improve data reporting where possible – having more specific information across protected characteristics, more intersectional and looking at differences between grades by protected characteristic.
- Incorporating socio economic status monitoring into our recruitment processes.

Suggestions also covered how we continue to engage with colleagues between 2021 and 2025:
- Ensuring alignment with other corporate and Diversity & Inclusion programmes across the organisation, such as reviewing our values and increasing/improving the experiences of some of our colleagues
- Clarifying how the work of the People Directorate would improve the knowledge, understanding and practices of colleagues across the organisation

Other suggestions were to make changes to policies or services, which we can consider for the Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

How we will measure performance against the 2021-2025 outcomes

Outcome 1: By 2025, our workforce will have increased in diversity to reflect the general Scottish population.

We are gradually becoming a more diverse workforce and have identified those protected characteristics where we need to improve our representation. The key equality groups which are underrepresented and where we will focus our attention over the next 4 years are:
- young people
- disabled people
- minority ethnic people
- women at senior grades.

We will continue to use the following sources of data to measure the progress we are making:

- Workforce diversity composition data (overall, by Director General, by grade and where possible, by job family)
- Recruitment, retention and progression rates especially to meet identified inequalities.
- Results from the Scottish Government Diversity and Inclusion Survey 2020 and focus groups – to test and inform new measures.
- People Survey findings by diversity group, specifically in relation to views on performance, access to learning and development, and promotion.
- Diversity information gathered from our new Learning Experience Platform.
- Progress against our agreed recruitment targets (the flow of women, minority ethnic and disabled people into the Senior Civil Service, the proportion of disabled people successful through external recruitment).
- Pay gap analysis by protected characteristic

Outcome 2: By 2025, workforce culture will be more inclusive with employees from all backgrounds and characteristics and experiences reporting they feel increasingly valued.

We currently use the results of our People Survey across the following key themes as our measures for 'inclusion':

- Engagement Index
- The Inclusion and Fair Treatment score
- Bullying, harassment and discrimination levels.

We analyse these results by all protected characteristics and also intersectionally, across gender, disability and race. The results are broken down by equality group in the accompanying Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Report 2019-21 section 6.2.

Using People Survey 2019 data we can broadly see that there are varying degrees of experience across different equality groups:

- Older people (aged 50+ years) and particular employees who identified in a way other than 'man' or 'woman' have lower Engagement scores than the overall average.
- The mean Inclusion and Fair Treatment score among disabled respondents has improved but is still 8% points lower than that for non-disabled respondents.
- Higher rates of discrimination were reported by minority ethnic employees (particularly African and Black or Black British), non-religious employees, employees from non-Christian faith groups and employees who rated their mental health as poor.
- Women, disabled employees and LGBO employees reported higher levels of bullying, harassment and discrimination. In addition, those who identify as bisexual or 'other' consistently report higher rates of discrimination than gay or lesbian respondents.
- Intersectional analysis reveals that the experiences can be more acute particularly for disabled women and minority ethnic women.

We will use the following sources of data, analysed by diversity characteristic, to measure the progress we are making:

- People Survey results on engagement, bullying, harassment and discrimination and inclusion and fair treatment, and intersectional analysis.
- Absence rates.
- Information about people's experience of working in the Scottish Government provided in research.
- Data gathered from the Workplace Adjustments Project and Occupational Health and Safety on workplace adjustments and employee outcomes Appraisal outcomes.

We will enrich our understanding with these other sources and recognise we need to develop new measures against our definition of inclusion. The organisational response to COVID-19 has and will continue to impact on ways of working and we have built equality and diversity considerations into our response. These will also result in new measures of inclusion.

Engagement

Our involvement with stakeholders is key to the success of our work and our approach in setting these outcomes relied on collaborative working. In developing this report we have engaged with our employees, the Council of Scottish Government Unions, staff diversity networks as well as Ministers and external stakeholders to agree our outcomes.

It is important to ensure that we regularly check these commitments for relevance. We will continue to engage with stakeholders to share progress, ask for views and learn from their experiences.