



**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**



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Sixth Report submitted by the United Kingdom

**Pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 2 of the Framework
Convention for the Protection of National Minorities – received
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Sixth Report of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the Implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities in the UK

Introduction

The Government of the United Kingdom welcomes this opportunity to provide an update on our commitment to uphold the articles of the Framework Convention.

This report covers how the different articles of the Framework Convention are being applied in different parts of the UK, including developments made to benefit citizens living in the United Kingdom as a whole, as well as the differences in policy objectives across each of the respective nations where policy is devolved.

Due to the recent reformation of the Northern Ireland Executive at the time of writing, a separate annex will be provided in due course which more fully covers the implementation of the Framework Convention in Northern Ireland.

Section 1

Article 1

The protection of national minorities and of the rights and freedoms of persons belonging to those minorities forms an integral part of the international protection of human rights, and as such falls within the scope of international co-operation.

Article 2

The provisions of this framework Convention shall be applied in good faith, in a spirit of understanding and tolerance and in conformity with the principles of good neighbourliness, friendly relations and co-operation between States.

Article 3

Every person belonging to a national minority shall have the right freely to choose to be treated or not to be treated as such and no disadvantage shall result from this choice or from the exercise of the rights which are connected to that choice.

Persons belonging to national minorities may exercise the rights and enjoy the freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention individually as well as in community with others.

UK Government

The UK Government remains committed to a national human rights framework that is up to date, fit for purpose and works for the British people. The UK has a longstanding tradition of ensuring rights and liberties are protected domestically and of fulfilling our international human rights obligations. The UK Government's legislative plans allow the UK to remain party to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

The UK Government's commitment to fulfilling its international human rights obligations includes

implementing judgments of the European Court of Human Rights against the UK. The Government supports the Council of Europe’s work to improve the effectiveness of the tools available to the Committee of Ministers in the supervision of the execution of judgments. The UK has the lowest rate of applications to the Court per capita, and there are very few final judgments that find violations by the UK – only 5 in 2021 and 2 in 2022. Currently, only 11 judgments against the UK are still under the supervision of the Committee of Ministers. This is one of the lowest figures across member States with similar population size.

The UK will continue to maintain its broad and flexible approach to the scope of application of the Framework Convention.

2021 Census – ethnic and national identity

As regards self-definition, in the lead up to Census 2021, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) engaged with communities and encouraged people to self-identify their ethnic group, either through an available tick-box or via a write-in response.

The ethnic group question on the Census had two stages. Firstly, a person identified through one of the following five high-level ethnic groups:

- “Asian, Asian British, Asian Welsh”
- “Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African”
- “Mixed or Multiple”
- “White”
- “Other ethnic group”

Secondly, a person identified through one of the 19 available response options, which included six categories with write-in response options. The complete layout of the question can be seen in the paper form¹.

If a person wished to identify as "Gypsy or Irish Traveller" or "Roma" they could tick the respective box under the White high-level category or provide a write-in response under any of the other high-level categories. As set out in the National identity, ethnic group, and religion question development for Census 2021², research concluded that the new additional tick-box of “Roma” was best positioned within the high-level “White” category. This was informed through qualitative research (interviews and focus groups) with members of the Roma community around the positioning of the new tick-box.

The ONS has published bespoke Census 2021 analysis articles on those who identified as Somali, Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma, Sikh, Jewish and Cornish³. These articles will include analysis on how the health, housing, work and education outcomes for these groups differs from the England and Wales population overall. In addition, the ONS has an ongoing programme of engagement with local

¹ Office for National Statistics (2020) *Census 2021 paper questionnaires*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/questiondevelopment/census2021paperquestionnaires>

² Office for National Statistics, *National identity, ethnic group, language and religion question development for Census 2021*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/censustransformationprogramme/questiondevelopment/nationalidentityethnigrouplanguageandreligionquestiondevelopmentforcensus2021>

³ Office for National Statistics (2022), *Ethnic group, national identity, language data and analysis*. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/aboutcensus/censusproducts/analysis/ethnicgroupnationalitylanguageandreligionanalysisplans>

authorities, which includes Cornwall Council, on topics such as the census outputs and the transformation of population and migration statistics.

For Census 2021, the self-identification questions of national identity, ethnic group, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity all included open write-in response options. It is important to note, that through the ONS' work with multiple data users, collectors and processors, open text fields are not always possible due to the resources needed to process that data. This is particularly true of questions used for administrative data collection.

Moreover, the national identity question encouraged respondents to select all identities which applied providing the opportunity to express multiple national identities. In the development of the ethnic group question for 2011, the ONS considered single select vs. multiple select response options. See section 6.1 of the Final recommended questions for the 2011 Census in England and Wales⁴. Following cognitive and quantitative research with respondents and data users, it was concluded that respondents would not find the multi-response version more acceptable or clear and that multiple-response data would be less useful for data users. As such, the ethnic group question remained a single response option in Census 2011 and 2021.

Following the Inclusive Data Taskforce recommendations⁵, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) plans to review and update the current GSS harmonised standard for ethnicity⁶. As part of this review, the opportunity to select multiple ethnicities, while considering comparability, coherence and user requirements, will be further explored.

Ethnicity is one of the priority topic areas that the GSS Harmonisation team have been focusing on since 2022 and, to date, they have undertaken a range of research and engagement to inform the review of the ethnicity harmonised standard. This has included desk research, engagement with people who use or collect ethnicity survey and administrative data and engagement with the public. The initial findings were published in March 2023⁷ and, in the summer, the second set of findings⁸ from research and engagement activities was released. They have also provided additional guidance on using the current ethnicity harmonised standard while the standard is under review.

The GSS Harmonisation team's plans for ethnicity will be updated once the Consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales⁹ has concluded. This will allow time to review this source of relevant responses from users about their needs. This information will also be

⁴ Office for National Statistics (2009), *Final recommended questions for the 2011 Census in England and Wales*. Available at: https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/final-recommended-questions-2011-ethnic-group_tcm77-183998-4.pdf

⁵ UK Statistics Authority (2022), *Inclusive Data Taskforce recommendations report: Leaving no one behind – How can we be more inclusive in our data?* Available at: <https://uksa.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/publication/inclusive-data-taskforce-recommendations-report-leaving-no-one-behind-how-can-we-be-more-inclusive-in-our-data/pages/1/>

⁶ Government Statistical Service (2011), *Ethnicity harmonised standard*. Available at: <https://analysisfunction.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/ethnicity-harmonised-standard/>

⁷ Government Statistical Service (GSS) Harmonisation Team (2023) *Review of ethnicity harmonised standard: findings from phase 2 of our research*. Available at: <https://analysisfunction.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/review-of-ethnicity-harmonised-standard-initial-findings/>

⁸ Government Statistical Service (GSS) Harmonisation Team (2023) *Review of ethnicity harmonised standard: findings from phase 2 of our research*. Available at: <https://analysisfunction.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/review-of-ethnicity-harmonised-standard-findings-from-phase-2-of-our-research/>

⁹ Office for National Statistics (2023) *Consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales*. Available at: <https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

used to inform future research plans.

In terms of whether the ethnicity question should be mandatory, the Census Act 1920 makes it compulsory for everyone in England and Wales to take part in the census in accordance with the Order and Regulations. The Act makes answering the questions mandatory. The Census (Return Particulars and Removal of Penalties) Act 2019 amended the Census Act to enable new questions on sexual orientation and gender identity to be voluntary in future censuses; the Act had previously been amended to introduce a voluntary question on religion.

The Office for National Statistics are working closely with other UK census offices to publish comparable data from across the UK.

Scotland

A large amount of work was done to review the ethnic group categories for the 2022 Census. In planning for 2022, National Records Scotland (NRS) undertook further question research and development in light of requests made for response options and terminologies to be reviewed and/or additional information to be collected. This included engagement with a wide range of ethnic groups and populations using focus groups, surveys and stakeholder events, both independently and in collaboration with our ONS colleagues. This engagement increased the understanding of what user and respondent needs are, language and concepts that are acceptable, and how data quality from an ethnic group question could be improved. Investigation was also undertaken around how other information collected in the census, specifically religion and country of birth, can be used to improve the evidence base on ethnicity.

The following changes for the ethnic group question in the 2022 census were recommended to the Scottish Parliament:

- a tick box for “Roma” (a separate ‘White: Gypsy/Traveller’ response category was added to the census questionnaire in 2011 and remained in 2022)
- a tick box for “Showpeople” or “Showperson”
- a prompt to write in “Jewish” in the “Other ethnic group” category
- a design change to the “African” category to improve data quality
- a design change to the “Caribbean or Black” category to improve data quality

NRS conducted a Census Outputs consultation between October 2022 and February 2023. The consultation asked users for their views on plans for publishing Scotland’s census outputs. This engagement helps to ensure that census outputs are accessible and provided in a format which meets the needs of census data users. As part of this work, NRS set out the intended public plan for outputs which builds on the initial high-level set of rounded population estimates published in September 2023.

NRS reviewed user feedback received through the consultation to determine if any changes were required to output plans. Where necessary, NRS prioritised responses by considering how they could maximise the value and public benefit gained from census outputs. More detail can be found on the response to the consultation in the Scotland’s Census 2022 – Outputs consultation report.¹⁰

The first results from Scotland’s Census 2022 were published by NRS in September 2023. These results

¹⁰ Scotland’s Census (2022) *Census outputs consultation*. Available at: <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/about/2022-census/census-outputs-consultation/#:~:text=with%20users'%20needs,-Feedback%20received%20through%20the%20consultation,our%20plans%20for%20publishing%20outputs>.

included estimates of the total population of Scotland and the population size in every local authority area, including a breakdown by five-year age groups and sex. The next set of census statistics will be published in May 2024 with the first theme covering ‘Ethnicity, National Identity, Language and Religion’. Topic releases will be univariate statistics but will be by age/sex and will be published at the lowest geographic detail depending on disclosure control. Further information on Scotland’s Census outputs schedule can be found on the census website¹¹.

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is an executive agency within the Department of Finance (NI). The Agency is the principal source of Official Statistics and social research on Northern Ireland and is also responsible for the conduct of the Census in Northern Ireland.

Section II

Article 4

The Parties undertake to guarantee to persons belonging to national minorities the right of equality before the law and of equal protection of the law. In this respect, any discrimination based on belonging to a national minority shall be prohibited.

The Parties undertake to adopt, where necessary, adequate measures in order to promote, in all areas of economic, social, political and cultural life, full and effective equality between persons belonging to a national minority and those belonging to the majority. In this respect, they shall take due account of the specific conditions of the persons belonging to national minorities.

The measures adopted in accordance with paragraph 2 shall not be considered to be an act of discrimination.

UK Government

The UK Government’s Inclusive Britain strategy, which is focused on closing outcome gaps between people from different ethnic backgrounds, is based on a robust analysis of the available data. Often the causes for disparities are complex and multi-faceted and not rooted in discrimination or prejudice. The UK is an open and diverse nation that welcomes and includes people of all backgrounds into society, with some of those in the highest offices of state.

The UK Government produced an update report in April 2023¹² which sets out the progress made in delivering the Inclusive Britain action plan since it was published in March 2022. The actions have been embedded in White Papers, policy initiatives, and delivery plans across government. The final update report will be delivered to Parliament in spring 2024, setting out the progress we have made in delivering the remaining actions from Inclusive Britain, tackling negative disparities, promoting unity and building a fairer Britain for all.

¹¹ Scotland’s Census (2024) *Census outputs schedule*. Available online at: <https://www.scotlandscensus.gov.uk/about/2022-census/census-outputs-schedule/>

¹² UK Government (2023), *Inclusive Britain Update Report*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-update-report/inclusive-britain-update-report>

The UK Government has, to date, completed 50 of the actions and continues to make progress in delivering the remainder. Particular highlights include:

- Publishing new guidance for employers on how to measure, report on and address any ethnicity pay gaps within their workforce;
- Funding a national recruitment campaign to find more adoptive parents, including those from an ethnic minority background, to improve adoption rates for ethnic minority children;
- Supporting a number of police forces to trial the effect of an automatic ‘opt-in’ for children to receive independent legal advice in police custody;
- Publishing our ambitious schools white paper setting out our long-term vision for a school system that helps every child to fulfil their potential by ensuring that they receive the right support, in the right place, at the right time;
- Improving the stop and search process through new Public and Personal Safety Training for police officers.

Online

The Online Safety Act received Royal Assent on 26 October 2023. Under the Act, all user-to-user and search services will need to proactively tackle priority illegal content, including racially or religiously aggravated public order and harassment offences. Major (Category 1) user-to-user services must also ensure their terms of service are clear, easy to understand and consistently enforced. Where these platforms say they will remove or restrict legal content - such as abusive content - or suspend users, they must have systems and processes in place to ensure they follow through on their promises.

Category 1 services must also offer adult users’ tools which reduce the likelihood that they see certain categories of legal content, or alert them to the nature of it. These tools will specifically apply to content that is abusive, or incites hate, on the basis of race and religion. They must be offered in the event that such content is not already prohibited by a company’s terms of service, and where users are likely to encounter it.

Ofcom, the regulator, will be required to consult on and produce codes of practice to assist providers in complying with their duties under the Act. Ofcom is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty, and so will need to take into account the ways in which people with protected characteristics may be impacted when performing its duties, such as writing codes of practice.

Scotland

The Scottish Government works closely with the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities to support and facilitate a local Leaders Network to build capacity and raise awareness of Gypsy/Traveller culture among locally elected representatives. The Scottish Government funds a range of activities supporting third sector groups to tackle discrimination and racism for the Gypsy/Traveller communities. The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring the voices of Gypsy/Traveller communities are reflected in policymaking and decision-making forums to ensure their needs and culture are reflected.

In September 2021, the Scottish Government published the Immediate Priorities Plan (IPP) focused on the delivery of the recommendations of an Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity (ERG) which tracked ongoing work across Scottish Government to support minority ethnic communities in recovering from COVID-19. A short-term Anti-Racism Interim Governance Group to Develop National Anti-Racism Infrastructure (AIGG) was established in April 2022 which concluded at the end of September 2023. This group provided oversight and accountability for the delivery of the

Immediate Priorities Plan and the strategic review, and subsequent work to establish the programme of systemic change.

The AIGG also provided recommendations for the modelling and vision of an Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS) to provide a range of functions, including oversight and governance. The establishment of the Observatory will represent a significant step in the Scottish Government's ambition to bring about meaningful system change for minority ethnic communities that will result in equity.

The Scottish Government is committed to reviewing policies and practices in an effort to advance equality, which includes undertaking phased improvement to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in Scotland. It is taking steps to extend the current gender pay gap reporting duty to include ethnicity (and disability) pay gap reporting, with an appropriate reporting threshold to ensure that individuals cannot be identified on the basis of their protected characteristics.

A Human Rights Bill will also be introduced by the Scottish Government during the current parliamentary session (2021-26), giving domestic legal effect in Scotland to a wide range of internationally-recognised human rights. The proposed Bill will include and recognise the right to a healthy environment, and incorporate the following United Nations Treaties into Scots Law, within the limits of devolved competence:

- The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)
- The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The Bill seeks to bring an enhanced focus to the implementation of social and economic rights which are central to addressing inequality. It will do this by creating duties on those delivering devolved public services to give effect to and realise the rights for the people of Scotland. An equality provision is also envisaged to ensure everyone can access the rights under the Bill without discrimination. The incorporation of ICERD means that for the first time in Scots law, duty bearers will have to actively consider the rights within it when delivering services – such as housing, health care and social care – and can be held accountable if they do not.

On 28 June 2023, the Scottish Government published a progress review of commitments contained within the Race Equality Framework and the Immediate Priorities Plan¹³. The publication is a step to ensuring actions are preserved and can be referred back to.

A stronger and more complete equality evidence base will support the collective effort across Scotland's public sector to fulfil the requirements of its Public Sector Equality Duty. In April 2021, the Scottish Government launched its Equality Data Improvement Programme (EDIP) to take action to make equality evidence more wide-ranging and robust, enabling policy makers to develop sound, inclusive policy. Several improvement actions were taken forward within the EDIP since its launch. Many of these actions helped to lay the foundations for the Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025¹⁴, which was published in March 2023. The strategy sets out an approach to improving and strengthening Scotland's equality evidence base over a three-year period to the end of 2025, including 45 actions identified by the Scottish Government and National Records of Scotland.

¹³ Scottish Government (2023) *Anti-racism in Scotland: progress review 2023*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/anti-racism-scotland-progress-review-2023/>

¹⁴ Scottish Government (2023) *Scotland's Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-equality-evidence-strategy-2023-2025/pages/1/>

These actions cover improvements to the data on a range of equality variables, including on all nine of the protected characteristics and across multiple characteristics. An update on these actions will be included in an interim progress report in 2024 and again following the conclusion of the strategy. The interim progress report will also include a summary of activity to strengthen the equality evidence base in addition to the strategy actions, including social research commissions and capacity building activity.

Wales

The Welsh Government are undertaking various measures to improve housing, including:

- External group established to ensure the Ending Homelessness work and new legislation being developed embeds non-discrimination on the grounds of race and ensures race equality.
- Ensuring it is working with diverse people with experience of homelessness so their views and experiences help shape and inform new homelessness legislation.
- Revised regulatory standards for housing associations include the requirement to set and deliver measurable, evidence-based commitments on equality, diversity and inclusion, including non-discrimination on the grounds of race and tackling hate crime, and have diverse Boards that reflect the diversity of their communities.
- A new approach to Local Housing Market Assessments has been introduced, ensuring Local Authorities undertake detailed analysis of housing need of their communities, including Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people, to be used as the basis of place-based planning. The desired outcome is to provide the right housing in the right places to meet people's needs, including people's access and cultural needs. There is a particular focus on those in most housing need.

A more equal Wales and fair work are key elements of the Economic Mission¹⁵, the Welsh Government's headline economic strategy. Fair Work¹⁶ has equality at its core and one of the ways of promoting fair work is through the Welsh Government's support to business in a social value agreement referred to as an Economic Contract.

Business Wales is the Welsh Government's flagship business support service that provides information, guidance and direct support to help individuals and businesses start, grow and prosper. Central to the ethos and culture of Business Wales is the importance of ensuring equality, diversity and inclusion is at the foundation of delivery. The Welsh Government requires Business Wales providers to deliver a service that does not discriminate on the grounds of race and Business Wales has an Anti-Racist Statement and an Anti-Racist Action Plan¹⁷.

The Welsh Government monitors demographic data of those that access the service and that start their business with support from Business Wales. This data is analysed on a quarterly basis in line with the relevant data source (Census/Annual Population Survey/Labour Force Survey) to ensure that the community of Wales is reflected through the service. If there are any areas that are not reflected adequately, Business Wales will conduct outreach activity.

Business Wales has a Participation Discretionary Fund that allows individuals to access translator or other support to ensure full participation in the service. The Welsh Government monitors the Business Wales service against a full set of equality KPIs on a quarterly basis, this ensures effective delivery of

¹⁵ Welsh Government (2021) *Economic resilience and reconstruction mission*. Available at:

<https://www.gov.wales/economic-resilience-and-reconstruction-mission>

¹⁶ Welsh Government (2022) *A guide to fair work*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/guide-fair-work#:~:text=Fair%20work%20is%20the%20presence,the%20well%2Dbeing%20of%20workers>.

¹⁷ Welsh Government (2022) Available at: <https://businesswales.gov.wales/business-wales-anti-racist-action-plan>

equality, diversity and inclusion.

Regional Economic Frameworks have been developed through inclusive engagement, setting out economic development priorities for the regions alongside key partners, wider stakeholders and citizens to best ensure positive outcomes.

The Manufacturing sector is key to the social and economic prosperity of Wales, with around 150,000 jobs and contributing 17.3% of Wales's national output. In May 2023 the Welsh Government published the update to the Manufacturing Action Plan which sets out the areas of focus aligned to six strategic objectives. This includes how 'Fair Work' employment principles are embedded in Wales, promoting inclusivity, security, and protecting cultural heritage. The Welsh Government will establish a baseline and on-going monitoring of underrepresented groups in the manufacturing sector and use networks to identify and promote best practice and the advantages of social partnership, fair work, equality and inclusion. The Welsh Government will also look to embed the Ethical Employment in Supply Chains Code of Practice¹⁸ in the Welsh Procurement Policy statement so that all public sector organisations give it due regard in its procurement activity.

Northern Ireland

The UK Government is firmly committed to upholding the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement in all its parts, including ensuring that the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is able to fulfil its statutory duties.

Article 5

The Parties undertake to promote the conditions necessary for persons belonging to national minorities to maintain and develop their culture, and to preserve the essential elements of their identity, namely their religion, language, traditions and cultural heritage.

Without prejudice to measures taken in pursuance of their general integration policy, the Parties shall refrain from policies or practices aimed at assimilation of persons belonging to national minorities against their will and shall protect these persons from any action aimed at such assimilation.

UK Government

Minority language and culture

The UK Government recognises that indigenous and minority languages form an important part of the heritage and cultural wealth of the United Kingdom, and are a means of cultural expression for communities across the UK.

There is a range of languages spoken across the UK. As such, the UK Government takes a tailored approach to minority languages, considering their protection and promotion within their specific circumstances. Policy responsibility for minority languages is split across departments, with each considering the needs of the communities under their respective policy areas, and relevant legal duties and obligations.

The UK Government takes a pragmatic, proportionate and tailored approach to protect and promote

¹⁸ Welsh Government (2019) *Ethical employment in supply chains: code of practice, guidance and training*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/ethical-employment-supply-chains-code-practice-guidance-and-training>

these languages in the communities where they are used. A flexible approach avoids implementing a rigid and centralised framework on a system which, by nature, evolves over time with the evolution and movement of people, communities and identity.

Most of these minority languages are spoken by communities within Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Whilst minority language policy is a devolved matter, the UK Government works closely with the Devolved Governments to ensure minority languages are appropriately protected, and public services are inclusive in their communication.

The UK Government also works closely with the devolved governments and the Government of Ireland to support, promote and share best practice in the teaching and use of minority languages. The British-Irish Council operates a dedicated policy cooperation forum on indigenous and minority languages which meets at official and ministerial level.

The UK Government works with Cornwall to support Cornish priorities. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities has provided significant capital and revenue funding to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Councils.

This includes the following:

- Providing £500,000 of cultural funding in Cornwall’s devolution deal to support Cornish culture, including the protection and promotion of the Cornish language.
- The Community Renewal Fund is supporting Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with £1.4 million of funding for projects including Tresors Kernow/Cornish Treasure to explore how town centre footfall can be increased through heritage outreach and bringing creative activities to young people and the high street.
- The Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP has benefited from £93 million through the Local Growth and Getting Building Funds, delivering projects including the Hall for Cornwall which helped create a purpose-built and accessible theatre in Truro.
- The Levelling Up Fund is supporting Cornwall through an allocation of £50 million to the Cornwall Mid Metro project to improve the rail links between Newquay, St Austell, Truro and Falmouth. A further up to £6 million of funding is being provided to support the Isles of Scilly Museum and Cultural Centre on St Mary’s.
- A further £99 million has been allocated to Truro, St. Ives, Penzance and Camborne, as part of the Towns Fund and Future High Streets Fund programmes to support town centre regeneration.
- Additionally, the United Kingdom Shared Prosperity Fund allocation of £132 million is supporting Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to invest in the programme’s pillars of people and skills, supporting local business and community and place, enabling Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly to deliver on their priorities.

The UK Government’s Levelling Up White Paper sets out 12 ambitious missions to 2030 (living standards, R&D, transport, digital connectivity, education, skills, health, wellbeing, pride in place, housing, crime, local leadership) for reversing this country’s striking geographical inequalities and radically improving the United Kingdom¹⁹. Addressing these disparities will be a long-term project across central and local government, the private sector and civil society. The UK Government will report on progress against these missions annually and has underpinned this requirement in legislation.

¹⁹ UK Government (2022), *Levelling Up the United Kingdom*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-the-united-kingdom>

Scotland

The Scottish Government has introduced the Scottish Languages Bill to the Scottish Parliament. This legislation for the first time gives Gaelic and Scots official status as languages of Scotland. It also introduces measures which further establish the two languages within Scotland's education system and makes increasing provision for them across the country's public life.

The Scottish Government provides around £500,000 in support of Scots. The Advisory Committee's Fifth Opinion only references two bodies and though the Scots Language Centre and Dictionaries get a combined total of £310,000 there are several important organisations that provide essential support for Scots in education, including Scots Hoose and Yaldie Books. In addition, Scots Radio provides an essential service through podcasts to Scots listeners.

In 2022/23, Bòrd na Gàidhlig received an additional £500,000 of funding to allow them to expand a network of Gaelic Development officers across Scotland. These officers provide a variety of services in support of local Gaelic communities. The funding was also used to strengthen staffing within the Bòrd which has helped in a number of areas including Gaelic Language Planning.

The Scottish Government celebrates and recognises various national and international events which raise awareness of the cultural identities of the Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities, such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month and Roma Holocaust Memorial Day.

The Scottish Government has committed to undertaking independent research into 20th century policies affecting the Gypsy/Traveller communities in Scotland. The Scottish Government successfully appointed an appropriate contractor to take forward the archival project, to establish a timeline of key events, decisions and roles. Initial findings from the research are expected in late summer 2024, and the Scottish Government will consider next steps and a response.

The Scottish Government provides core funding to a range of organisations who support Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities to enable improved outcomes across participation in policymaking, health, education and accommodation.

The Scottish Government is progressing with the Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Fund with projects under way in six local authorities in line with the Interim Site Design Guide²⁰ for Gypsy/Traveller sites, developed in conjunction with local authorities and with input from members of Gypsy/Traveller communities. An evaluation of the Fund and Design Guide has been commissioned to gather learning from the demonstration projects to inform future projects, a final Site Design Guide and policy on Gypsy/Traveller accommodation.

Article 6

The Parties shall encourage a spirit of tolerance and intercultural dialogue and take effective measures to promote mutual respect and understanding and co-operation among all persons living on their territory, irrespective of those persons' ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, in particular in the fields of education, culture and the media.

The Parties undertake to take appropriate measures to protect persons who may be subject to threats or acts of discrimination, hostility or violence as a result of their ethnic, cultural,

²⁰ Scottish Government (2021) *Interim Gypsy/Traveller site design guide*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/interim-gypsy-traveller-site-design-guide/#:~:text=1.-,Introduction,better%20accommodation%20for%20Gypsy%2FTravellers.>

linguistic or religious identity.

UK Government

Community relations and mutual respect

The UK is an open, tolerant and welcoming country. UK Government's vision for 2030 is to level up the country, closing outcome gaps between ethnic groups in education, employment, and criminal justice. The measures in the Inclusive Britain action plan will help to achieve this vision and to tackle the drivers of ethnic and racial disparities.²¹

The action plan was developed following months of cross-government work, careful examination of the facts and evidence, and conversations with experts across the country. The actions include:

- Working with a new panel of academics and businesspeople to promote fairness in the workplace.
- Developing a new, national framework for how the use of police powers in England and Wales, such as stop and search, are scrutinised at a local level in order to enhance trust and strengthen relations between police forces and local communities.
- Conducting new research to understand why some ethnic minority pupils perform better than others at school.
- Publishing new White Papers on governing and regulating AI and tackling and driving up literacy and numeracy standards for the most disadvantaged pupils.
- Introducing the ground-breaking Online Safety Act to clamp down on racist abuse online.

Northern Ireland

The legacy of the Troubles in Northern Ireland remains one of the key issues left unaddressed since the signing of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Current mechanisms are providing outcomes to a very small number of those affected, whilst failing to provide either justice or information for the vast majority of families, victims, and survivors.

The Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy & Reconciliation) Act provides a framework that will help deliver effective legacy mechanisms for victims and families, while complying with the UK's international obligations. The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) it establishes, will conduct reviews into Troubles-related deaths and serious injury, with the primary objective of providing information to families, and victims and survivors. The Commission will have all the necessary powers to conduct criminal investigations as part of any review, ensuring compliance with the UK Government's international obligations under the European Convention on Human Rights. The legislation also ensures that the prospect of criminal justice outcomes remains. Individuals who do not cooperate with the Commission's inquiries can be prosecuted in the normal way if sufficient evidence exists.

The UK Government recognises that the Act contains uncomfortable and finely balanced choices. This reflects the inherent complexities and sensitivities of dealing with legacy issues, but in order to provide greater information, accountability and acknowledgement to victims, survivors, and families, we must do things differently. We must also be realistic about what we can best deliver for families over a quarter of a century after the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement.

²¹ UK Government, Race Disparity Unit (2022). *Inclusive Britain action plan: updates*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/inclusive-britain-action-plan-updates>

As a result of the comprehensive engagement that has taken place with interested parties, a significant package of UK Government amendments was adopted to the legislation to: provide greater assurance regarding compliance with our international obligations; enhance the independence of the new ICIR; provide a greater focus on the interests of victims and families; and strengthen provisions related to the process for granting immunity from prosecution.

Now that the legislation has become law, the ICIR needs time and space to establish itself. The UK Government will be doing all it can to support the ICIR - consistently with its operational independence - in delivering effectively for victims and families.

Combatting hate crime and speech

The UK Government is clear that all forms of hate crime are completely unacceptable. The UK has a robust legislative framework to respond to hate crimes which target race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and transgender identity. Police are expected to fully investigate all hate crimes and work with the Crown Prosecution Service to ensure perpetrators are brought to justice. The UK Government's priority is to get more police onto our streets, cut crime, protect the public and bring more criminals to justice. The UK Government is supporting police by providing them with the resources they need. Part of this necessitates police recruitment and training. We delivered our commitment to recruit an additional 20,000 police officers by March 2023 and there are over 149,000 officers in England and Wales, which is higher than the previous peak in March 2010 before the Police Uplift Programme.

The UK Government asked police forces in England and Wales to use consistent standards for disaggregating racially or religiously aggravated offences by race from 1 April 2021. This data was published for the first time in 2022, as part of the annual statistics on hate crimes recorded by police. This is part of the UK Government's efforts to improve our understanding of hate crimes and builds on the successful disaggregation of religious hate crimes by religion.

The UK Government has worked with the police to fund True Vision, an online hate crime reporting portal, designed so that victims of hate crime do not have to visit a police station to report. The UK Government also funds the National Online Hate Crime Hub²², a central capability designed to support individual local police forces in England and Wales in dealing with online hate crime. The Hub provides expert advice to police forces to support them in investigating these offences.

Hate crime is a "priority offence" in the Online Safety Act which received Royal Assent in October last year. Under new legal duties of care, technology companies will need to prevent, identify and remove illegal content and activity online. This means less illegal content - including content that incites hate on the grounds of race, religion or sexual orientation - will appear online and, when it does, it will be removed more quickly.

From 2016/17 to 2022/23, the Home Office approved protective security measures at 523 places of worship across England and Wales: 225 mosques, 201 churches, 47 gurdwaras, 38 Hindu temples, and 12 places of worship of other faiths. From 2015/16 to 2023/24, over £125.1 million was provided through the Jewish Community Protective Security (JCPS) Grant for protective security measures (such as guarding, CCTV and alarm systems) at Jewish schools, colleges, nurseries, and some other Jewish community sites, as well as several synagogues. This includes contributions of £15 million made by the

²² UK Government (2017), *Press Release: Home Secretary Announces New National Online Hate Crime Hub*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-new-national-online-hate-crime-hub>

Department for Education between 2015 and 2020.

In 2023/24, the Home Office is providing up to £50.9 million to protect faith communities. This includes £18 million through the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant, £29.4 million through the new Protective Security for Mosques scheme and a scheme for Muslim faith schools, and £3.5 million for the places of worship of other (non-Muslim and non-Jewish) faiths. At the Community Security Trust's (CST) Annual Dinner on Wednesday 28 February 2024, the Prime Minister announced that CST will receive further funding of £54 million for 2025-2028, as part of the Jewish Community Protective Security Grant. This is in addition to the commitment made as part of the Autumn Statement for £18 million in 2024/25.

This year, the government has made up to £29.4 million of protective security funding available for Muslim communities, including an uplift of £4.9 million following the events in Israel on 7 October. We have committed to that amount for the next four years and will provide up to £117.6 million to protect mosques and Muslim faith schools across the country until 2028. The funding will provide protective security measures, such as CCTV, alarm systems and secure perimeter fencing, at mosques, Muslim faith community centres, and Muslim faith schools. The UK Government also continue to support initiatives which promote interfaith dialogue as a means of breaking down barriers between communities, removing the conditions which can allow intolerance and unequal treatment to flourish.

The College of Policing provides operational guidance for police officers and staff at all levels of the police service in England and Wales to deliver a consistent, proportionate and robust policing response to hate crime and non-crime hate incidents. This operational guidance was last updated in 2023. The UK Government has also published a code of practice for policing on the recording of non-crime hate incidents, which entered into effect in June 2023.

The police and three civil society organizations involved in monitoring hate incidents in England and Wales (Community Security Trust, Tell MAMA and Galop)²³ have entered Information Sharing Agreements, thereby enabling the exchange of data about incidents recorded by each organisation and providing a more holistic picture of hate crime.

The UK Government continues its efforts to reduce and respond to antisemitism; and is grateful for the advice of the UK Government's Independent Adviser on Antisemitism, Lord Mann, including his reports on *anti-Jewish hatred* and *understanding Jewish experience in Higher Education*. It is also funding On Your Side, a third-party reporting and support service for all East and Southeast Asian communities in the UK, to find support and make a report if they experience or witness racism or any other form of hate.

The UK Government, with policing partners, remains committed to driving forward good progress and improving trust in policing. The police workforce in England and Wales is more diverse than ever before, and there have been major improvements in the way the police deal with racist crimes. Attracting more officers from a wide range of ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds was a core ambition of the UK Government's drive to recruit an additional 20,000 officers in England and Wales. As at 31 March 2023 there were 12,086 police officers in post that identified as an ethnic minority (excluding white minorities) in England and Wales, representing 8.3% of those who stated their ethnicity. This is the highest number and proportion of ethnic minority officers in post since comparable records began.

The UK Government is committed to supporting the police in England and Wales to use their powers

²³ <https://cst.org.uk/>, <https://tellmamauk.org/> and <https://galop.org.uk/>

without fear or favour to keep streets safe. The use of any power is at the discretion of the officer, but when officers use their powers to achieve a lawful objective, such as making an arrest, acting in self-defence or protecting others, their use of those powers must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances.

No one should be subject to powers such as stop and search, use of force or different treatment for protest related powers or strip searching, based on their race or ethnicity. Extensive safeguards such as statutory codes of practice and body worn video should be followed to ensure that this does not happen.

Disparity rates for stop and search have fallen. In 2022/23, black people were 4.1 times more likely to be stopped and searched than white people, across all legislation (using 2021 census data) in England and Wales. This is down from 9.7 times higher in 2018/19 (using 2011 census data). Minority ethnic people were 2.0 times more likely to be searched than white people in 2022/23 in England and Wales, down from 2.3 times more likely the previous year²⁴.

The UK Government has stated its intention, within the Inclusive Britain report, to enhance these safeguards in England and Wales through the development of a national framework for scrutiny of police powers by local communities in England and Wales, and consideration of any unnecessary barriers to increased use of body worn video. A public consultation on the framework concluded on 19 October 2023, with feedback received from community groups, policing organisations and the wider public. The UK Government will refine the framework in response to the consultation. A final version of the framework will be published in due course.

It is essential that data is used effectively to provide greater clarity and context on stop and search in England and Wales to reassure the public about the use of these powers. That is why the UK Government committed to improve the way this data is reported and to enable more accurate comparisons to be made between different police force areas.

Regarding online hatred, once the Online Safety Act's regulatory regime is in place, in-scope user-to-user services must implement proportionate systems and processes designed to prevent individuals from encountering priority illegal content via their service and to minimise the length of time for which any such content is present. Priority offences include public order offences. They will also need to swiftly take down any other illegal content where they become aware of it. In-scope search services have comparable duties.

Services which are likely to be accessed by children will also be required to protect child users from content and activity that is harmful to children, such as bullying.

The Act will also ensure that category 1 services are held to account for the consistent enforcement of their terms of service. If such platforms don't fulfil their own standards to keep people safe and address abuse quickly and effectively, they could face an investigation and enforcement action.

Adult users of major services will also have access to optional tools which will give them greater control over the content they see and who they interact with, including related to content that is abusive, or incites hate, on the basis of race and religion. When applied, the user empowerment content tools will either reduce the likelihood that users encounter such content, or will alert users to

²⁴ UK Government (2023) *National statistics: Police powers and procedures: Stop and search and arrests, England and Wales, year ending 31 March 2023*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/stop-and-search-and-arrests-year-ending-march-2023/police-powers-and-procedures-stop-and-search-and-arrests-england-and-wales-year-ending-31-march-2023>

the nature of it. Category 1 companies will also be required, at the first possible opportunity, to ask their registered adult users how they would like these tools to be applied.

In addition, the Online Safety Act is taking forward new criminal offences, including for threatening communications. The new threatening communications offence will capture extremely harmful communications online and offline, such as death threats, threats of rape and financial harm. The offence will be triable either-way and will carry a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment, a fine (or both).

Scotland

The Scottish Government's Hate Crime Strategy, published March 2023, sets out the key priorities for tackling hatred and prejudice in Scotland, including implementation of the Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021. The strategy makes several commitments including ensuring improved support for victims of hate crime, improving data and evidence on hate crime and developing effective approaches to preventing hate crime. A delivery plan, setting out the immediate activity the Scottish Government and partners will undertake over the next two years in support of the strategy's commitments, was published in November 2023.

The Scottish Government is driving forward a programme of work to improve availability of data on hate crime. On 24 January 2023, it published an Updated Study into the Characteristics of Police Recorded Hate Crime in Scotland, which provides a detailed insight into the characteristics of recorded hate crime in Scotland.²⁵ This report presents updated information on the number of hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland during 2020-21 and 2021-22. It also includes new details on the characteristics of hate crime, based on a random sample of cases recorded by the police in 2020-21. The Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act makes provision requiring information about police recorded hate crime and convictions data to be published annually, and with greater detail where known.

The Scottish Government is working closely with justice partners to ensure effective implementation of the Hate Crime Act, working towards a commencement date of 1 April 2024.

The Scottish Government recognises that whilst stop and search is a valuable tool in combating crime and keeping people safe, the balance between protecting the public and recognising the rights of individuals must be ensured. The Stop and Search Code of Practice²⁶ in Scotland was developed following the work of an Independent Advisory Group, chaired by John Scott QC. It was approved by the Scottish Parliament and came into force on 11 May 2017, setting out rules for when and how police in Scotland can use stop and search. The Code has been designed to ensure searches are carried out with fairness, integrity and respect and contains specific guidance on searches of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Code of Practice is clear that an individual cannot be stopped and searched because of their age, sex, race (including nationality and ethnic background) or religion. The Independent Advisory Group on Stop and Search reported on 13 June 2019, that the reforms have resulted in a more reliable and accurate recording system, allowing for greater confidence in the data and more robust independent scrutiny.

²⁵ Scottish Government (2023), *Police Recorded Hate Crime - Characteristics: Updated Study*.

Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/updated-study-characteristics-police-recorded-hate-crime-scotland/>

²⁶ Scottish Government (2017), *Stop and Search of the Person in Scotland: Code of Practice for Constables*.

Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/code-practice-exercise-constables-power-stop-search-person-scotland/>

The Independent Advisory Group on Stop and Search conducted two reviews of the Code of Practice following its publication – a six-month review, published in February 2018²⁷, and a twelve-month review, published in June 2019²⁸. These reports found that few issues were raised around ethnicity and the vast majority of searches and seizures in Scotland involve people who self-define as belonging to a white ethnic group.

Under section 69 of the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016²⁹, Police Scotland must publish, as soon as practicable after the end of each reporting year, information about the number of searches carried out, including details about age, gender, ethnic and national origin of persons searched. Since 2015, in the interests of accountability and transparency, Police Scotland has published stop and search data on its website.³⁰ In Scotland, of the people stopped and searched in the year ending 31 March 2023, 93.2% were white people, 1.7% were African, Caribbean or Black, 2.3% were Asian, and 0.8% were people with mixed ethnicity.³¹

A Scottish Government review of evidence relating to ethnicity in the justice system, published in April 2023³², found that between 2017/18 and 2021/22, the proportion of stop and searches being carried out on minority ethnic individuals has remained fairly stable with the vast majority of stop and searches conducted were on people identifying as White Scottish/White Other British.

While the Code of Practice on stop and search and its use is a matter for Police Scotland, the Scottish Government continues to engage with Police Scotland on the use of stop and search. The Scottish Government, along with the Scottish Police Authority and other stakeholders, is a member of the Police Scotland Stop and Search Mainstreaming Assurance Group, which aims to ensure the effective monitoring of stop and search practice.

Article 7

The Parties shall ensure respect for the right of every person belonging to a national minority to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

and

Article 8

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to manifest his or her religion or belief and to establish religious institutions,

²⁷ Scottish Government (2018) *Code of practice for stop and search in Scotland: six-month review*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/six-month-review-code-practice-stop-search-scotland/>

²⁸ Scottish Government (2019) *Stop and Search code of practice: twelve month review by independent advisory group*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/twelve-month-review-code-practice-stop-search-scotland-independent-advisory-group-stop-search/>

²⁹ Scottish Government (2016) *Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act 2016*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2016/1/contents/enacted>

³⁰ Police Scotland (2023) *Stop and Search: Data Publication*. Available at: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/stop-and-search/data-publication/>

³¹ Police Scotland (2023) *Stop and Search: Data Publication*. Available at: <https://www.scotland.police.uk/about-us/how-we-do-it/stop-and-search/data-publication/>

³² Scottish Government (2023) *Ethnicity in the justice system: evidence review*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/ethnicity-justice-system/>

organisations and associations.

UK Government

Freedom of speech, freedom of worship, democracy, the rule of law, and equal rights are things that we strive for and value in the UK. Any individual or group is free to express views and beliefs within the confines of the law, and in doing so, be mindful of one another's fundamental rights.

The courts recognise the right to manifest religious belief as one of fundamental importance, but it is limited by the legal obligation to protect the rights and freedoms of others – this includes respect for religious beliefs different to our own, even those we might consider blasphemous.

The UK Government is committed to creating a strong and integrated society in which hatred and prejudice are not tolerated and in which all people are free to express their religious identity and live without fear of harassment and crime because of it. The UK Government recognises the huge contribution of people of faith to public life, locally and nationally, and are committed to celebrating and promoting this.

The UK is committed to ensuring that the right to freedom of religion or belief, including for those belonging to religious or belief minorities, is upheld across the world and has consistently displayed strong leadership internationally on this important and fundamental human rights issue. To this end, in July 2022 the UK hosted an International Ministerial Conference on Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB) in London. The conference was an important milestone which galvanised international efforts to do more to protect and promote the right to FoRB across the world. At the conference, the Minister of State responsible for human rights, Lord Tariq Ahmad of Wimbledon, announced new UK Government funding to support FoRB defenders, including those persecuted because of their activism, as well as funding and expertise for countries prepared to make legislative changes to protect FoRB. UK missions around the world also draw on the UK Government's John Bunyan Fund³³ each year to support FoRB projects run by local partners. Last year the FCDO continued to fund major programmes through the Institute of Development Studies and the University of Oxford to support legislative reform to increase religious or belief protections around the world.

In June 2023, the UK and UAE presented a new United Nations Security Council resolution on "tolerance, peace and security". The resolution was adopted unanimously and was a notable achievement in addressing for the first time, the persecution of religious minorities and other minority groups in conflict settings. It encourages United Nations bodies to monitor proactively incitement and extremism in conflict settings and establishes a "white paper" mechanism by which the Secretary General can bring situations of concern relating to incitement and minorities to the Council's attention. Work also continued to embed FoRB as a mainstream consideration across the broad spectrum of our foreign policy and development work. Milestones included the inclusion of a FoRB commitment in the International Development White Paper published in November 2023. The UK also supported the United Nations Human Rights Council Resolution on the Rights of Persons belonging to Minorities, which we cosponsored in 2022. This resolution reinforces that promoting minority rights is essential to fostering political and social stability and averting conflict. The resolution seeks to promote the inclusion and effective participation of minorities.

The UK Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB, Fiona Bruce MP, plays an active role in leading the UK's work on FoRB, alongside Lord Ahmad and is currently Vice Chair of the International Religious

³³ UK Government (2019) *John Bunyan Fund for Freedom of Religion and Belief: call for bids*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/john-bunyan-fund-for-freedom-of-religion-and-belief-call-for-bids>

Freedom or Belief Alliance (IRFBA), having served as its Chair for the previous two years, bolstering joint international action on FoRB. The Alliance has now grown to 45 members, friends and observers. The Prime Minister's Special Envoy for FoRB will remain as Chair of the Alliance until the end of 2023.

The IRFBA focuses on practical action to support religious and belief minorities suffering persecution or discrimination because of their religion or belief. It conducts regular joint advocacy on the cases of individual prisoners of conscience, three of whom have now been released, and has issued statements highlighting the issues facing religious minorities such as the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Baha'i community, Christians and the Jehovah's Witnesses. Members of the IRFBA have also carried out country visits to Algeria and Lebanon to demonstrate support for the religious minorities there.

Scotland

Freedom of religion is protected by the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) under article 9. In Scotland, the Scotland Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998 require that Scottish legislation, the acts of Scottish Ministers, and the actions of public authorities all comply with the rights contained in the ECHR. It is unlawful for ministers and other public authorities to act incompatibly with these ECHR rights.

Article 9

The Parties undertake to recognise that the right to freedom of expression of every person belonging to a national minority includes freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart information and ideas in the minority language, without interference by public authorities and regardless of frontiers. The Parties shall ensure, within the framework of their legal systems, that persons belonging to a national minority are not discriminated against in their access to the media.

Paragraph 1 shall not prevent Parties from requiring the licensing, without discrimination and based on objective criteria, of sound radio and television broadcasting, or cinema enterprises.

The Parties shall not hinder the creation and the use of printed media by persons belonging to national minorities. In the legal framework of sound radio and television broadcasting, they shall ensure, as far as possible, and taking into account the provisions of paragraph 1, that persons belonging to national minorities are granted the possibility of creating and using their own media.

In the framework of their legal systems, the Parties shall adopt adequate measures in order to facilitate access to the media for persons belonging to national minorities and in order to promote tolerance and permit cultural pluralism.

and

Article 10

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use freely and without interference his or her minority language, in private and in public, orally and in writing.

In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial

numbers, if those persons so request and where such a request corresponds to a real need, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible, the conditions which would make it possible to use the minority language in relations between those persons and the administrative authorities.

The Parties undertake to guarantee the right of every person belonging to a national minority to be informed promptly, in a language which he or she understands, of the reasons for his or her arrest, and of the nature and cause of any accusation against him or her, and to defend himself or herself in this language, if necessary with the free assistance of an interpreter.

UK Government

The UK Government is committed to a free and independent press, and does not intervene in what the press can or cannot publish. This is vital to a healthy democracy where the powerful can be held to account, and a free press plays an invaluable role in our cultural and democratic life.

Regarding broadcast media, the BBC Charter sets out the BBC's objective to reflect the UK's diversity and support its regional or minority languages. This sets out the expectation that the BBC must reflect, represent and serve the diverse communities of all the United Kingdom's nations and regions, and it must support the regional and minority languages of the United Kingdom, through its output and services and through partnerships with other organisations. In addition to this, the UK Government has set out a further set of responsibilities in the Framework Agreement, which require the BBC to support the provision of output in the Welsh language in Wales, the Gaelic language in Scotland and the Irish language and Ulster-Scots in Northern Ireland, on television, radio and online. The BBC's Charter and Framework Agreement will include provision for the support and promotion of regional and minority language media for the years to come.

The UK Government has also placed a commitment on other public service broadcasters in the existing legislative framework. The Communications Act 2003 sets out that public service broadcasters (other than the BBC) must make an adequate contribution to the public service remit, which includes producing (collectively) "a sufficient quantity of programmes that reflect the lives and concerns of different communities and cultural interests and traditions within the United Kingdom, and locally in different parts of the United Kingdom". Channel 3 licensees must in particular provide "a suitable range of programmes (including regional news programmes) which are of particular interest to persons living within the area for which the service is provided". This includes programming about the traditions and history of ethnic minority groups in the UK.

Under the Communications Act 2003, Ofcom also has a statutory duty to promote equality of opportunity in relation to employment in the broadcasting sector, and has powers to ask broadcasters to provide information about their equal opportunities policies and the make-up of their workforce which they report on annually. They published their latest annual report in December 2023 which found that there is now greater representation of people from minority ethnic groups across the broadcasting sector overall. As well as diversity and inclusion initiatives set up by individual broadcasters, there is also 'Project Diamond' - an industry-wide body created by the Creative Diversity Network - which also collects, monitors and reports on diversity data (both on and off-screen) collected from across the main UK broadcasters (including the BBC, ITV, Channel 4, and Channel 5) on the programmes they have commissioned.

Given the rapidly changing media environment, the UK Government is taking further steps to ensure the value of regional and minority language content is accurately reflected in legislation. The UK Government will, for the first time, make the importance of programmes broadcast in the UK's

indigenous regional and minority languages clear in legislation by including it in the new public service remit for television. It will be made clearer that public service broadcasters must contribute to this remit and will be accountable for the extent of their contributions. This commitment forms part of the changes described in the Broadcasting White Paper, “Up Next”.³⁴ The UK Government introduced the draft Media Bill on 8 November 2023, which will deliver on these commitments. The Media Bill introduces a new prominence framework which will require major TV platforms to give appropriate prominence to designated PSB services - including regional prominence for services provided by STV and S4C in parts of Scotland and in Wales respectively.

The Media Bill will also implement legislative reforms following the independent review of S4C in 2018, to reform S4C’s remit, governance structures, commercial powers and audit arrangements. It also provides for changes to the statutory content arrangement set out between the BBC and S4C to add greater flexibility. These changes will help to deliver the UK Government’s manifesto commitments to supporting Welsh institutions like S4C and to support the Welsh Government’s ambition for one million people in Wales to be able to speak Welsh by 2050. This will be welcomed by Welsh stakeholders and Parliamentarians.

The ongoing provision of Gaelic broadcasting and the future of MG ALBA will be key considerations as we progress the BBC Funding Review, announced in December 2023, and the forthcoming Charter Review which will conclude in 2027.

This is a crucial part of the UK Government’s support of regional and minority language broadcasting and its important role in the UK’s broadcasting ecology, providing not only an opportunity for speakers to access content in a language familiar to them, but a means of cultural expression for communities across the United Kingdom.

Northern Ireland

The UK Government is committed to fulfilling the provisions in New Decade, New Approach relating to identity and language. The UK Government has also undertaken to update the UK Parliament every six months on the implementation of the Identity and Language (Northern Ireland) Act 2022, and most recently did so on 6 June 2023. The next update is due shortly.

The New Decade New Approach strategy requires the Executive to develop strategies for both Irish language and Ulster Scots language, heritage and culture. The development of the strategies is currently ongoing with the aim of having two draft strategies with action plans ready for Ministers to consider publishing for public consultation on their return.

A key recommendation of the New Decade New Approach Agreement was the establishment of a central translation hub to provide language translation services for the nine Executive Departments, Arm’s Length Bodies, Local Government and Public Bodies. The Irish and Ulster-Scots central translation hub for the public sector launched on 19 April 2021 and provides a high-quality translation service with a fast turnaround time to over 150 public sector clients in Northern Ireland.

Scotland

The Scottish Government has supported Gaelic broadcasting and media initiatives largely through its funding of MG ALBA. MG ALBA, in partnership with the BBC, delivers the channel, BBC ALBA. The

³⁴ UK Government (2022), *Up Next - The Government’s Vision for the Broadcasting Sector*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/up-next-the-governments-vision-for-the-broadcasting-sector>

Scottish Government recognises that this channel and many of the projects and initiatives associated with it make an important contribution to the use and learning of the Gaelic language in Scotland. MG ALBA also adds value to many areas of Gaelic activity including skills, training, education, arts, adult learning and more.

The Scottish Government introduced the Scottish Languages Bill to the Scottish Parliament in November 2023. While broadcasting is reserved to the UK Government, the Bill will shape the general policy landscape for both Gaelic and Scots in the future.

Scottish Ministers approved Bòrd na Gàidhlig's latest National Gaelic Language Plan in December 2023.³⁵ The Plan incorporates several current actions in support of Gaelic language communities.

Article 11

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to use his or her surname (patronym) and first names in the minority language and the right to official recognition of them, according to modalities provided for in their legal system.

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to display in his or her minority language signs, inscriptions and other information of a private nature visible to the public.

In areas traditionally inhabited by substantial numbers of persons belonging to a national minority, the Parties shall endeavour, in the framework of their legal system, including, where appropriate, agreements with other States, and taking into account their specific conditions, to display traditional local names, street names and other topographical indications intended for the public also in the minority language when there is a sufficient demand for such indications.

UK Government

The requirements for signs used in England to be in English only are specified in the Traffic Signs and General Directions 2016 (TSRGD). The aim is to provide consistency for road safety and efficient traffic management. Traffic signs placed in Wales and Scotland allow for both Welsh and Gaelic respectively, and the responsibility for specifying such bilingual signs is a devolved matter.

Northern Ireland

Local councils in Northern Ireland have the discretion to approve numbers, name streets and provide street signage including street names expressed in languages other than English. Each local council will decide their own methods of consultation with communities.

Article 12

The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority.

³⁵ Bòrd na Gàidhlig (2023) *National Gaelic Language Plan 2023-2028*. Available at: <https://www.gaidhlig.scot/en/gaelic-language-plans/the-national-gaelic-language-plan/>

In this context the Parties shall inter alia provide adequate opportunities for teacher training and access to textbooks, and facilitate contacts among students and teachers of different communities.

The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.

Education is devolved to the governments in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, while the UK Government oversees Education in England.

UK Government

All state-funded schools in England have a duty to promote the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of their pupils and to prepare them for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. Furthermore, schools are required to promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs.

The curriculum

It is important that all pupils are taught a broad and balanced curriculum, that supports their wider development, including:

- Citizenship education which provides a framework for pupils to learn about the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding.
- Relationships education which is compulsory for all schools and has a clear focus on healthy relationships and teaches pupils the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them, make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.

The National Curriculum sets out the subjects and programmes of study which schools are obliged to cover for children of compulsory school age in maintained schools in England. Within a broad statutory framework – set out in subject-specific programmes of study – schools have considerable flexibility to organise the content and delivery of the curriculum to meet the needs of the majority of their pupils. In addition to meeting their statutory duties, schools are also free to include other subjects or topics they deem relevant for their pupils, as part of the school’s wider curriculum.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, pupils in England should be taught about different societies, and how different groups have contributed to the development of Britain. Teachers can teach about ethnic minority people and history across the spectrum of themes and eras set out in the curriculum. This can be done by reflecting the contribution of ethnic minorities across the ages in the UK and more widely. This can include historical examples of black Romans, Tudors, Stuarts, Georgians and Victorians. It can also include the role of the countries of the former British Empire in both world wars, and the part ethnic minorities have played in shaping the UK in the 20th Century. There is scope to include these histories and experiences in other subject areas too, such as English, Citizenship and PSHE.

This can also include voices of people belonging to Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities. Within the history curriculum, there are opportunities to teach about GRT history across the spectrum of themes and eras set out in the programmes of study. Schools can access several resources to help

them do this. For example, the Historical Association have produced curriculum resources for schools to enable children to learn about Gypsy Romany culture as part of British society. GRT communities themselves have also produced resources that schools can access.

The UK Government is fully committed to Holocaust education. The curriculum gives teachers and schools the freedom to decide how to teach the subject and what resources to use to support an understanding of the Holocaust and the experiences of the all the victims of Nazi persecution, including the Roma and Sinti victims. The UK Government further supports school pupils' and teachers' understanding of the Holocaust by providing funding for the following: the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz project³⁶, £2.126 million for the programme in 2022-2023; University College London's Centre for Holocaust Education³⁷, £500,000 in 2022-2023 match funded by the Pears foundation.

As part of Holocaust education, significant resources are available to help teachers explain the persecution by the Nazis of different groups of people, and above all, the attempts to eliminate all Jewish people. Both Lessons from Auschwitz and the knowledge and training provided by the Centre for Holocaust Education include information and resources to support an understanding of the Holocaust and the Nazi's persecution of Jewish people and other groups, importantly including the genocide of the Roma.

The UK Government also convenes a GRT stakeholder group, chaired by a member of the House of Lords, and which meets three times a year. The group is comprised of representatives of the GRT community as well as other groups with a nomadic way of life who are not from a specific ethnicity such as Showmen and Boatmen. The group acts as the main conduit between policy teams and the GRT community. Speakers attend either to inform the community about different initiatives or to seek their help with understanding how different policies can be tailored to GRT young people.

Although there is a lot of good teaching in schools in this area, the UK Government is working to do more to support the teaching of a high-quality, knowledge-rich and diverse history curriculum, with the development a Model History Curriculum, a non-statutory guidance document to support the National Curriculum. The UK Government will be consulting history curriculum experts, historians and school leaders about this to help refine the Model History Curriculum.

There is significant scope for the teaching of ethnic minority people and history within the subject content at GCSE, and three exam boards – OCR, AQA and Pearson – provide options to study migration in Britain, and how the UK's history has been shaped by the black and minority ethnic communities in the past. It is for awarding organisations themselves to develop specifications for GCSE and A level history that meet those requirements and for Ofqual, the independent qualifications regulator, to ensure those requirements are correctly met. As such, the UK Government does not make assessments of the modules or module content offered by awarding organisations.

Diversity in Teaching and Teacher Training

UK Government data shows that the teaching profession is becoming more diverse in England, over time³⁸. UK Government development programmes, like the Early Career Framework and National Professional Qualifications, will ensure that all teachers, regardless of background, develop the skills,

³⁶ Holocaust Educational Trust website. Available at: <https://www.het.org.uk/lessons-from-auschwitz-programme>

³⁷ Centre for Holocaust Education website. Available at: <https://holocausteducation.org.uk/>

³⁸ Based on data in the School Workforce Census, collected in November 2022. Not all characteristics that are protected under the Equality Act 2010 are collected through the School Workforce Census.

expertise and confidence they need to thrive in the classroom, and feel more confident and in control of their careers. They will establish strong professional development cultures both within individual schools and across the country, elevating the quality of teaching and ultimately improving pupil outcomes.

Apply for Teacher Training³⁹, the new application service for initial teacher training (ITT) in England, will also allow for greater data collection, providing better insights into candidate behaviour and the behaviour of providers of teacher training so that barriers can be identified and addressed. The UK Government will continue to work closely with ITT providers to explore, design and test new interventions to ensure teaching is an inclusive career that is open to candidates from all backgrounds.

It remains for individual accredited providers to design and deliver initial teacher training courses that are appropriate to the needs of trainees and for the subject, phase and age range that the trainees will be teaching. In addition to the content detailed in the ITT Core Content Framework, it remains a statutory requirement of providers to ensure that their curricula fulfil these statutory duties, including ensuring trainees are fully aware of their duties in respect of safeguarding and equalities legislation.

Behaviour and attendance

Promotion of fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs, forms part of the Ofsted inspections framework. All education settings must also comply with relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Behaviour in schools is a priority for the UK Government. There are no 'right' number of permanent exclusions. Head teachers use suspensions and permanent exclusions when required as part of creating calm, safe and supportive environments that bring out the best in every pupil. Schools should only use permanent exclusion as a last resort, and the UK Government supports teachers in taking proportionate and measured steps to ensure good behaviour in schools.

Some groups of children have a greater likelihood of suspension and permanent exclusion than others in the UK. The updated Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance⁴⁰ has set out that schools, local authorities, and local partners should work together to understand what lies behind local trends. Local leaders should use this understanding to plan and put in place additional and targeted action based on their own context. If they identify any gaps, they should act to ensure those who work with children have the support they need to address them.

This is in line with the commitment made in the Inclusive Britain strategy to “consult on and publish new and improved guidance on behaviour in schools and on suspensions and permanent exclusions in 2022”⁴¹. Both sets of guidance will help local leaders identify and address any disparities that might exist within suspension and permanent exclusion rates.

³⁹ UK Government. *Apply for Teacher Training*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-teacher-training>

⁴⁰ UK Government (2023), *Statutory Guidance: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England including pupil movement*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1181584/Suspension_and_permanent_exclusion_guidance_september_23.pdf

⁴¹ UK Government (2022), *Inclusive Britain: Government Response to the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/inclusive-britain-action-plan-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities/inclusive-britain-government-response-to-the-commission-on-race-and-ethnic-disparities>

Children and young people who are suspended or permanently excluded from school are often the most vulnerable and are at higher risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of serious violence incidents. To ensure that local authorities receive real-time data on all suspensions regardless of length, the UK Government through the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 requiring all schools to share suspension data with local authorities 'without delay'⁴². This also fulfilled recommendations from the Crime and Justice Task Force and feeds into the SAFE (Support, Attend, Fulfil and Exceed) taskforces to assist local authorities and safeguarding agencies to successfully support the most vulnerable children.

As set out in the Working Together to Improve Attendance guidance which outlines advice and responsibilities⁴³, all schools should have an attendance policy which accounts for the specific needs of certain pupils and pupil cohorts. The policy should be applied fairly and consistently but in doing so schools should always consider the individual needs of pupils and their families who have specific barriers to attendance. In development and implementation of their policy, schools should consider their obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

All schools are legally required to have a behaviour policy with measures to prevent all forms of bullying and have the freedom to develop their own anti-bullying strategies appropriate to their environment and are held to account by Ofsted.

The UK Government provides advice for schools, which outlines schools' responsibilities⁴⁴. The advice makes clear that schools should make appropriate provision for a bullied child's social, emotional and mental health needs. Over £3 million of funding is being provided between 2021 and 2024 by the UK Government to five anti-bullying organisations to support schools to tackle bullying. The UK Government has deliberately focused this grant programme on preventing and tackling bullying of pupils with protected characteristics. The training and resources provided cover hate-based bullying, including resources specifically relating to the bullying of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children.

The UK Government has also published, Respectful School Communities⁴⁵, a self-review and signposting tool to support schools to develop a whole-school approach which promotes respect and discipline. This can combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind, including hate-based bullying.

There is no legal requirement on schools to record and report incidents of bullying and there never has been. Requiring schools to record bullying incidents would not actually help them to tackle bullying any more effectively but would rather place another data collection requirement on schools. Schools should develop their own approaches for monitoring bullying and exercise their own judgement as to what will work best for their pupils. For some schools, that will mean recording incidents so that they can monitor incident numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. Other schools may prefer to take a different approach, such as surveying their pupils anonymously to identify bullying trends and gauge how safe pupils feel at school.

⁴² UK Government (2022), *UK Statutory Instruments. The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2022*. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2022/788/contents/made>

⁴³ UK Government (2022), *Guidance: Working together to improve school attendance*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance>

⁴⁴ UK Government (2013), *Guidance: Preventing bullying*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

⁴⁵ Educate Against Hate. *School Leaders' Resources, Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool*. Available at: <https://educateagainsthate.com/resources/respectful-school-communities-self-review-signposting-tool-2/>

Access to education

The UK Government recognises that certain groups of pupils, such as Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are more likely to require a school place in-year. In England, all parents can apply for a school place at any school, at any time outside the normal admissions round. However, it can be more difficult to secure a school place when applying for a place in-year as schools may already be full at this point. Therefore, local authorities are required to have a Fair Access Protocol (FAP), which the mainstream state-funded schools in their areas must participate in, to ensure that unplaced children, especially the most vulnerable, who are having difficulty securing a school place in-year are offered a place at a suitable school as quickly as possible. GRT children are all eligible for consideration under the FAP, if they have struggled to secure a school place through the usual in-year admissions process. All admission authorities must comply with their duties under the Equality Act 2010 when undertaking admissions functions.

Attainment

As part of the Inclusive Britain action plan, the UK Government has published two evidence notes on ethnicity disparities in school attainment⁴⁶ and post-16 education outcomes⁴⁷. This is an important area of analysis for the UK Government, and it will continue to build an evidence base to better understand these disparities.

The UK Government does not target specific educational interventions based on ethnicity. Many of the Government's education reforms are designed to ensure that all pupils in England can attain well at school. The Schools White Paper⁴⁸ was clear about how the UK Government will improve attainment in England: ensuring an excellent teacher for every child; high standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance; targeted support for every child who needs it; and a stronger and fairer schools system.

One of the most significant factors affecting pupil attainment, cutting across all ethnicities, is economic disadvantage. Through the pupil premium, the UK Government continues to provide additional funding to help schools in England improve the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Scotland

The Scottish Government is committed to creating an education system in Scotland that is non-discriminatory on the ground of race and meets the needs of all learners, education staff and families. The Anti-Racism in Education Programme was established in early 2021 with the purpose of embedding anti-racism within education in Scotland, it does this through the work of four interdependent workstreams:

- Creating a non-discriminatory, culturally responsive curriculum that reflects the diverse communities that it serves;
- Increasing the ethnic diversity of Scotland's education workforce to ensure that it better

⁴⁶ UK Government (2022) Research and analysis: Outcomes by ethnicity in schools in England.

Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/outcomes-by-ethnicity-in-schools-in-england>

⁴⁷ UK Government (2022), *Research and analysis: Post-16 education outcomes by ethnicity in England*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-education-outcomes-by-ethnicity-in-england>

⁴⁸ UK Government (2022), *Policy paper: Opportunity for All: Strong Schools with Great Teachers for Your Child*.

Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/opportunity-for-all-strong-schools-with-great-teachers-for-your-child>

- represents all of Scottish society;
- Ensuring that educators are racially literate and race cognisant in all that they do;
- Ensuring that schools and educators are equipped with the tools to properly report, reduce, eliminate and deal with racism in all of its forms.

The curriculum

Education Scotland provides support to educators to embed inclusion and diversity across the curriculum, and guidance on Promoting Race Equality and Anti-Racism in Education⁴⁹ underpins that with associated resources amplifying the importance of a curriculum that:

- meaningfully recognises and fairly represents the rich and diverse communities in Scotland and beyond.
- supports understanding and enquiry into Scotland’s role in historical world events, including trans-Atlantic enslavement and colonial histories, and their continuing impact today.
- includes learning about and investigating past and present events in a way that amplifies under-represented perspectives and stories.
- challenges discrimination and prejudice through an understanding and awareness of the behaviours, practices and processes that create injustice in the world.

The Breaking the Mould Principles for an Anti-Racist Curriculum⁵⁰ were designed and published to support learners, educators and leaders understand what an anti-racist curriculum can mean in practice.

Education leadership and diversifying the education workforce

In November 2018 Professor Rowena Arshad published her “Teaching in a Diverse Scotland” report. She recommended that by 2030 the number of minority ethnic teachers in Scotland’s schools should be at least 4%, in line with the Scottish population at the time of the 2011 census. The Scottish Government recognise the clear benefits for all learners of having a diverse education workforce and through the Diversity in the Teaching Profession and Education Workforce Subgroup of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme, is taking forward several actions aimed at supporting the education system to meet Professor Arshad’s target.

The work of this working group aims to create educators and leaders that are confident, committed and empowered to promote equality, foster good relations and identify, prevent and deal with racism. As a result of understanding race in an education context, and by deploying skilled and passionate leadership they can empower and support an inclusive culture across school communities.

A successful professional development opportunity, entitled the Building Racial Literacy Programme⁵¹ has been co-designed as part of this group’s work programme and is run by Education Scotland. To date, three cohorts of educators and education system leaders have completed this professional learning and evaluations from the most recent third cohort indicate that educators and education system leaders completing the programme felt inspired and motivated, believing the programme helped them improve their practice. Longer-term impact evaluation forms completed by cohort 1 and

⁴⁹ Education Scotland (2021) *Promoting race equality and anti-racist education*. Available at: <https://education.gov.scot/resources/promoting-race-equality-and-anti-racist-education/>

⁵⁰ Education Scotland (2023) *Breaking the mould: Principles for an anti-racist curriculum*. Available at: <https://education.gov.scot/resources/breaking-the-mould-principles-for-an-anti-racist-curriculum>

⁵¹ Education Scotland (2022) *Building Racial Literacy*. Available at: <https://professionallearning.education.gov.scot/learn/programmes/building-racial-literacy/>

2 participants reveal that the Building Racial Literacy programme empowers participants to influence changes to the culture of their establishments, with emerging evidence of the programme's positive wider impact on participants' colleagues and learners.

Tackling Racism and Racist Incidents

The work of the Racism and Racist Incidents subgroup of the Anti-Racism in Education Programme (AREP) is focussed on supporting schools and school staff to improve the understanding of racism and to ensure that these issues are properly identified and addressed. The primary role of the working group is to develop, in collaboration with the other AREP working groups where relevant, resources for schools to prevent and respond to racism and racist incidents, including strengthening approaches to recording and monitoring.

Gypsy/Traveller Learners and Educators

The Scottish Government has commissioned research into the educational experiences of Gypsy/Traveller children and their families. This is expected to be completed in Spring 2024 and will help inform improvement in the way this community is supported into and through their education. The Scottish Government funds the Scottish Traveller Education Programme (STEP)⁵², which provides a programme of staff training, seminars and network events. Recently these have included 'CLD, youth awards and adult literacy', 'culturally-relevant, play-based learning and teaching' and 'evaluating anti-racism in education' with contributions from the Gypsy/Traveller community. STEP also published a guide to effective practice for staff supported by a national and three regional training events.

STEP, with input from young people from the Gypsy/Traveller community, developed a transitions toolkit to support access to education and post-school destinations. Guidance was produced encouraging parents and schools to work together to support visits to secondary schools so children and young people can make informed choices. Staff training was also offered to help build relationships with pupils to reduce anxiety. A Digital Rapid Assessment Guide (D-Rag)⁵³ was produced ensuring teachers can access pupil attainment levels quickly, avoiding gaps in learning following travelling. The materials in the Guide are culturally relevant to Gypsy/Traveller families.

The Scottish Government's Improving Lives for Gypsy/Travellers⁵⁴ lays out specific actions being taken to support and enable positive education outcomes for Gypsy/Travellers such as providing culturally appropriate, needs led, support as well as support interventions which support young people within the community to obtain a positive destination beyond school. The Scottish Government's refreshed Action Plan includes an action point to develop partnerships with young people and their families to improve understanding of the barriers to taking part in learning and develop strategies that will address them.⁵⁵

Wales

⁵² Available at: <https://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/>

⁵³ STEP. *The D-RAG (Digital Rapid Assessment Guide)*. Available at: <https://www.step.education.ed.ac.uk/teachers/digital-rapid-assessment-guide-d-rag-for-nomadic-learners/>

⁵⁴ Scottish Government (2019) *Improving the lives of Gypsy/Travellers: 2019-2021*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/improving-lives-scotlands-gypsy-travellers-2019-2021/>

⁵⁵ Scottish Government (2023) *Gypsy/Travellers action plan: 2023*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/improving-the-lives-of-gypsy-travellers-action-plan/>

The Anti-racist Wales Action Plan⁵⁶, published in June 2022, sets out several goals and actions which aim to embed non-discrimination on the grounds of race within Wales' education system and create sustainable and long-term change for up to 2030 and beyond. The Plan includes sections which apply to schools, further education and higher education, and also includes specific actions in relation to Welsh medium education.

The Action Plan brings together work across education, including:

- robust professional learning for teachers and senior leaders (via the Diversity and Anti-Racism Professional Learning (DARPL) project);
- improving the levels of recruitment, retention and progression into leadership of teachers from ethnic minority communities; and
- ensuring that teaching reflects the histories and experiences of diverse communities in Wales.

The Action Plan was developed via open and dynamic dialogues within and between the Welsh Government, local government, academics, activists, the trade union movement, community group leaders, religious leaders and individuals from the breadth of the racial and ethnic minority groups in Wales.

An annual report covering the work and progress made in the first year since the launch, was published in late 2023.⁵⁷ In 2024, the Anti-racist Wales Action plan is being refreshed, working in co-production with stakeholders from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, and experts with experience. The next iteration is expected to be published in summer 2024, for the period 2024-26.

Diversity is a cross-cutting theme within the new Curriculum for Wales, introduced in September 2022. It is mandatory to teach Black, Asian and ethnic minority histories, contributions and experiences, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, as part of the story of Wales, in the curriculum.

In October 2021, the Welsh Government published the Initial Teacher Education Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Recruitment plan⁵⁸ to increase recruitment of people from ethnic minority backgrounds into Initial Teacher Education (ITE). In February 2023, the Welsh Government also introduced the Ethnic Minority ITE Incentive⁵⁹ – a financial incentive to attract entrants from ethnic minority communities onto ITE courses, to increase the number of ethnic minority teachers so that learners in Wales have a more diverse teaching workforce.

DARPL (Diversity and Anti-Racist Professional Learning)⁶⁰ is one of the new professional learning areas supported by Welsh Government as part of the National Professional Learning Entitlement⁶¹. The training is crucial to delivering the Curriculum for Wales and achieving high standards and aspirations.

DARPL is a learning and resource hub for those working in education and childcare to develop an

⁵⁶ Welsh Government (2022), *Anti-racist Wales Action Plan*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan>

⁵⁷ Welsh Government (2023), *Anti-racist Wales Action Plan: annual report 2022 to 2023*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/anti-racist-wales-action-plan-annual-report-2022-2023>

⁵⁸ Welsh Government (2021), *Initial Teacher Education Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Recruitment plan*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/initial-teacher-education-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-recruitment-plan-html>

⁵⁹ Welsh Government (2023), *Ethnic Minority Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Incentive: guidance for students*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/ethnic-minority-initial-teacher-education-ite-incentive-guidance-students>

⁶⁰ DARPL website. Available at: <https://darpl.org/>

⁶¹ Welsh Government. *National Professional Learning Entitlement*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/professional-development/national-professional-learning-entitlement/>

understanding and development of non-discrimination on the grounds of race. The Welsh Government's vision is to ensure that those working within education, childcare and play and further education develop the tools and carry out non-discriminatory practice that supports the aim of being a Wales which is fully non-discriminatory on the grounds of race by 2030.

The Welsh Government is committed to equality of opportunity and equity of provision, ensuring that all learners are properly supported to achieve their full potential.

The Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan includes specific actions and goals to tackle racist bullying and harassment in education settings, including:

- updating the statutory anti-bullying guidance to better reflect the impact of racist bullying and harassment
- expecting every education setting to effectively record – and act on – incidents of racist abuse
- publishing updated guidance and effective practice examples for education settings to support children and young people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities

The Welsh Government's statutory anti-bullying guidance, 'Rights, respect, equality'⁶² outlines the expectation that all maintained schools in Wales have a specific anti-bullying policy, and that schools record and monitor all instances of bullying. When recording incidents of racist bullying there should be distinct and separate categories for noting the basis of the racist bullying, for example on the basis of religious heritage, ethnicity such as Gypsy, Roma or Traveller, or on the basis of refugee status. The guidance is currently in the process of being updated to include increased guidance for education practitioners to tackle racist bullying and harassment.

The Welsh Government expects data and information collected by schools to be used to identify improvements and assess their progress in addressing bullying and racist incidents as part of self-evaluation. Work to explore the basis for collecting national data is ongoing, specifically in relation to prejudice-related bullying. The Welsh Government will use the guidance update to advise schools and local authorities about how data already available can be effectively used at a local level to prevent bullying and to assess the effectiveness of responses to bullying.

It completed its update of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller guidance for schools and education settings, which was published in December 2023.⁶³ This was created following engagement with learners from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. It will include guidance for teachers to support and celebrate learners from these communities.

The Welsh Government continues to provide dedicated funding to support improved outcomes for children and young people from ethnic minority communities, via the Minority Ethnic and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller grant. For 2024-2025, the Welsh Government is again providing £11 million to local authorities. This funding recognises and supports implementation of the important work that local authority services provide, including support for learners with English as an Additional Language, Welsh as an Additional Language, asylum seekers and refugee children.

Northern Ireland

Consistent with its commitments in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the UK Government has a

⁶² Welsh Government (2019), *Rights, respect, equality: guidance for schools*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/rights-respect-equality-guidance-schools>

⁶³ Welsh Government (2023), *Education guidance to support Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children and young people*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/education-guidance-support-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-children-and-young-people>

role to play in supporting reconciliation, integration and a peaceful society in Northern Ireland. The UK Government firmly believes that greater integration within education is a key aspect of the reconciliation process in Northern Ireland. It continues to work to support a more reconciled, integrated and peaceful society in Northern Ireland.

The UK Government notes that the mixing of pupils from different backgrounds remains low across Northern Ireland. The UK Government wants to see progress in this space and for every parent to be able to have a proper choice of schools, including an integrated school for their children if they so wish.

The UK Government supports integrated and shared education, through the Fresh Start programme of capital building projects, and the July 2022 announcement of £1.9 million to support integrated education.⁶⁴ These programmes support the report's recommendations of increasing school places in integrated schools and incentivising parents, pupils and schools to give consideration to the benefits of integrated status.

In June 2023 the UK Government updated the curriculum for Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) in Northern Ireland, to implement the recommendations in the 2018 report of the Committee of the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The CEDAW recommendation regarding education on sexual and reproductive health and rights is to "Make age-appropriate, comprehensive and scientifically accurate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights a compulsory component of curriculum for adolescents, covering prevention of early pregnancy and access to abortion, and monitoring its implementation." This was due to a statutory duty placed on the Secretary of State by Section 9 of the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation Etc) Act 2019.

This curriculum was updated through the Relationship and Sexuality Education (Northern Ireland) (Amendment) Regulations 2023, which also place the Northern Ireland Department of Education under a duty to make regulations about the circumstances in which (at the request of a parent) a pupil may be excused from receiving that education, or specified elements of that education. The Department has subsequently made regulations and issued guidance for schools. Consistent with its commitments in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the UK Government has a role to play in supporting reconciliation, integration and a peaceful society.

The Northern Ireland Department of Education has a statutory duty to encourage, facilitate and support integrated education under the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022. The Regulations also place the Department of Education under a duty to produce guidance on the updated curriculum by 1 January 2024.

Article 13

Within the framework of their education systems, the Parties shall recognise that persons belonging to a national minority have the right to set up and to manage their own private educational and training establishments.

The exercise of this right shall not entail any financial obligation for the Parties.

⁶⁴ UK Government (2022), *Press release: Secretary of State for Northern Ireland boosts integrated education in NI with £1.9m funding package*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/secretary-of-state-for-northern-ireland-boosts-integrated-education-in-ni-with-19m-funding-package>

UK Government

The independent school sector is diverse and includes large schools with global reputations, special schools providing much needed support to vulnerable pupils, and small schools serving communities with specific faith, cultural or philosophical characteristics.

Independent schools are private businesses which charge tuition fees instead of receiving funding from the UK Government and are not subject to the same regulatory regime as state-funded schools. They are free to set their own admissions and exclusions criteria and examination policy, to set the fees they charge and to decide whether to have a Governing Body. They are also not required to follow the National Curriculum.

Independent schools do have a statutory requirement to meet the independent school standards as set out in The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. The independent school standards cover, amongst other things, the quality of education provided, the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, the welfare, health and safety of pupils, the suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors, and the quality of leadership in and management of schools. Independent schools are inspected at least every three years to ensure these standards are met and they are required to meet the cost of their inspection.

Before they begin to operate, all independent schools in England must be registered with the UK Government's Department for Education which acts on behalf of the Secretary of State as the regulator of independent schools. Subject to suitability checks, anybody can set up and manage an independent school, this includes persons belonging to a national minority. The UK Government does not require, collate or retain data pertaining to an individual's national minority in relation to applications for independent school registration.

In respect of post 16 education and training in England, the UK Government is neither responsible for nor has a role to play in the establishment of private training or education organisations. These are matters for individuals and organisations themselves, who, if they wish to do so, are free to set up a private training or education organisation.

There are established market entry processes⁶⁵ and guidance⁶⁶ if such a private provider wishes to receive public funding to deliver post 16 education or training.

Article 14

The Parties undertake to recognise that every person belonging to a national minority has the right to learn his or her minority language.

In areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities traditionally or in substantial numbers, if there is sufficient demand, the Parties shall endeavour to ensure, as far as possible and within the framework of their education systems, that persons belonging to those minorities have adequate opportunities for being taught the minority language or for receiving instruction in this language.

Paragraph 2 of this article shall be implemented without prejudice to the learning of the official

⁶⁵ UK Government (2014) *16 to 19 education (non apprenticeship): market entry*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-education-market-entry>

⁶⁶ UK Government (2018) *Guidance: Accessing ESFA systems*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-become-an-approved-training-provider-and-bid-for-funding>

language or the teaching in this language.

UK Government

The UK Government recognises that indigenous and minority languages form an important part of the heritage and cultural wealth of the United Kingdom, and are a means of cultural expression for communities across the UK.

The UK Government works closely with the devolved governments and the Government of Ireland to support, promote and share best practice in the teaching and use of minority languages. The British-Irish Council operates a dedicated policy cooperation forum on indigenous and minority languages which meets at official and ministerial level.

The UK Government works with Cornwall to support the Cornish priorities. The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities has provided significant capital and revenue funding to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Councils, including £500,000 in the 2023 Cornish devolution deal for the protection and promotion of the Cornish language.

The UK Government is committed to increasing the number of pupils studying languages to GCSE level, including languages that are commonly spoken in modern day Britain. It is for this reason that teaching of languages is in the national curriculum from age 7 to 14. The UK Government does not, however, inscribe any specific languages into the national curriculum. Schools are free to decide which languages are taught as part of their curriculum, both at primary and secondary school, and the UK Government does not specify which languages should be taught or how to teach them. When deciding which languages to offer their pupils, schools are likely to consider the needs of the community in which they serve.

As part of the UK Government's Language Hubs programme⁶⁷, the National Consortium for Languages Education (NCLE) will seek to improve access to, and the profile of, home, heritage, and community languages (HHCL). There are no specific languages included as part of this, but NCLE will promote and support greater access to accreditation through GCSE and other suitable qualifications for HHCL and pedagogic advice on how to support pupils.

In recognition of the continuing need to recruit languages trainees to teaching, the UK Government has increased the languages (including ancient languages) bursary for the 2023/2024 academic year to £25,000.

Furthermore, we recognise that English language skills are vital for Ukrainians to integrate into the UK and find employment. The UK Government announced £11.5 million in the Spring Budget 2023 to fund intensive English language courses and employment support for up to 10,000 eligible individuals (across the UK) under the three humanitarian Ukraine visa schemes. This programme, known as STEP Ukraine, is expected to boost the number of Ukrainians entering the UK labour market for the first time, as well as helping those already under-employed into high-paid roles. This will support their integration whilst in the UK, and economic independence – a critical enabler of access to the private rented sector.

STEP Ukraine provides an intensive, online English Language learning programme with a suggested 17.5 hours of English learning a week (of which 12.5 hours is live teacher-led learning), over a period of 10 weeks, alongside 12 weeks of individualised wrap around employability support. This flexible,

⁶⁷ UK Government (2022), *Guidance: Access Support From School Hubs*
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-support-from-school-hubs>

online offer will ensure that those with childcare or other responsibilities will be more able to access this support. World Jewish Relief has been appointed to deliver this programme in partnership with the British Council.

Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Department of Education remains under a legal duty to encourage and facilitate Irish medium education.

Scotland

The Scottish Government has continued to sustain the funding of Gaelic Education for Local Authorities at the level in the report. Local Authorities across Scotland continue to access these funding streams with growing interest in Gaelic capital projects. Some Local Authorities, like East Renfrewshire, have accessed funding as they are at the early stages of delivering Gaelic Primary provision.

The Scottish Government is aware of the needs of the sector and working with partners, including the Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Universities, to increase routes into Gaelic Medium Education and to ensure these individuals have the right level of support to help them succeed in their chosen field.

The Scottish Languages Bill is in part designed to fulfil a commitment towards establishing a ‘new strategic approach’ to Gaelic education. Its provisions aim to amend the existing system for delivering Gaelic medium and Gaelic learner education by making it more accessible at all levels – from early years to further and higher education. It is expected that this will build on the advances made by Gaelic within the state school system over the last 40 years.

The Bill also introduces measures for the incorporation of the Scots language within Scotland’s schools. Through the Bill, Scottish Ministers and education authorities will have a responsibility to promote the Scots language as part of Scotland’s general educational provision.

Article 15

The Parties shall create the conditions necessary for the effective participation of persons belonging to national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and in public affairs, in particular those affecting them.

UK Government

Political participation

Devolution in the UK allows local places to take tailored approaches to tackle common challenges. This means it offers important opportunities to learn about what works in different contexts. That is why in the Levelling Up White Paper, the UK Government committed to working with the devolved governments and local leaders across the UK to bring together evidence, helping to empower leaders across the UK to make the best decisions for their citizens, providing greater insight and opportunities to improve public services.

The UK Government has negotiated a number of devolution deals since publishing the White Paper. These deals represent meaningful progress towards achieving that commitment to extend, deepen and simplify devolution across England and make progress on the UK Government’s local leadership

mission: to ensure that, by 2030, every part of England that wants a devolution deal will have one with powers at or approaching the highest level of devolution with a simplified, long-term funding settlement.

Learning about what works in different contexts is underpinned by coherent data from across the UK. The UK Government is supporting the Office for National Statistics (ONS) to deliver on the aims of the Statistics Concordat. Refreshed in 2021 between the UK Government and devolved administrations, the concordat sets out how the administrations will work together to deliver an agreed suite of coherent, reliable, consistent and timely statistics about and across the UK. The ONS are working with the devolved administrations to bring together new UK-wide datasets in several priority areas, enabling new insights not previously possible.

Work and employment

At the end of December 2023 there were 5.2 million individuals from an ethnic minority background in employment. This was an increase of 280,000 on the year, and is a record high. The ethnic minority employment rate was 68.9%.

The UK has been doing more to support people from ethnic minority backgrounds. The UK Government's strategy for increasing ethnic minority employment is based on providing access to mainstream services that are designed to be flexible to meet local needs and circumstances. The UK Government is also taking action in local authority areas with high ethnic minority population and high ethnic minority employment gap, identified from the Race Disparity Audit, updated annually since 2017. Together they represent over half of the national ethnic minority employment gap.

The UK Government has also launched the In-Work Progression offer for low paid Universal Credit claimants⁶⁸. The UK Government knows certain ethnic minority groups are overrepresented in lower-skilled and lower-paying occupations and underrepresented at more senior levels, meaning that they face additional challenges to moving out of low-paid work. The UK Government estimate that around 1.3 million low-paid benefit claimants will be eligible for help to progress into higher-paid work. To expand the impact of this support, there will be future requirements that some claimants engage with this offer.

Belonging to a part of community is essential in the way in which the United Kingdom promotes community relations and mutual respect. This is evident in the initiatives that are taken to integrate communities together, including those who have arrived in the UK. A focus on integration is being able to work, live and thrive in the community. The Refugee Employability Programme is an initiative that supports refugees with the skills they need to work and build their lives in England. This includes English language, employment, and integration support. Being delivered across each of the nine regional strategic migration partnership geographical areas in England means this regional approach will allow suppliers to form close working relationships with local services, enabling more effective partnership working. By promoting community relations and creating an inclusive environment, we can build mutual respect across the United Kingdom.

The UK Government is also working to identify other ways to unblock barriers, helping Ukrainians, Afghans and refugees access employment, commensurate with their skill set, and encouraging our employer and Refugee Employment networks to advertise job vacancies. In addition, Job Centre Plus teams provide individually tailored employment support including access to DWP employment

⁶⁸ UK Government (2021), *Research and analysis: Supporting Progression Out of Low Pay: A Call to Action*. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-progression-out-of-low-pay-a-call-to-action>

programmes such as Restart and Sector-based Work Academies. The UK Government also directs Ukrainians with work related qualifications to the UK National Information Centre (UK ENIC) for the recognition and evaluation of international qualifications and skills, as well as signposting to the relevant professional regulators, all of which is available as comprehensive guidance on GOV.UK.

Housing

The UK Government is committed to delivering the affordable, safe housing that people in England require. That is why through the Affordable Homes Programme, the UK Government are spending £11.5 billion to help deliver tens of thousands of homes for rent and sale right across the country.

The UK Government's Levelling Up White Paper committed to providing more social rent homes, and a significant volume of the homes delivered through the AHP will be made available for Social Rent. This directly helps those more economically vulnerable members of the community, or those who are at risk of homelessness.

Whilst increasing levels of Social Rent will have a net positive impact across all sections of society, increasing levels of Social Rent may specifically benefit those from minority ethnic backgrounds who benefit disproportionately from social housing, this is particularly true in London.

Since 2010, the UK Government has delivered over 696,100 new affordable homes, including over 482,000 affordable homes for rent, of which over 172,600 are homes for Social Rent.

Health and care

It is vital that everyone has access to the health and care they need. The UK Government is proud of the proactive steps taken during the pandemic to improve outcomes for ethnic minority groups, including efforts to disseminate information about COVID-19 in minority languages.

The UK Government recognises there is still more to do, and the gap in the number of years people live in good health is stark and unacceptable. Health disparities exist across a wide variety of conditions from cancer to mental health and contribute to the unacceptable variation in life expectancy and healthy life expectancy.

Not only is this important for individuals but a healthy population reduces pressure on the NHS and wider public services and supports a strong economy through increased productivity and labour market participation. The ambition to improve healthy life expectancy by five years by 2035 and reduce the gap between areas where it is highest and lowest by 2030, committed to in the Levelling Up White Paper, is UK Government policy.

The UK Government's approach will continue to focus on supporting people to live healthier lives, helping the NHS and social care to provide the best treatment and care for patients and tackling health disparities through national and system interventions such as the NHS Core20PLUS5 programme, which is designed to support Integrated Care Systems to drive targeted action in healthcare inequalities improvement.

On the 24 January 2023, UK Government announced the plan to publish the Major Conditions Strategy. This strategy will explore how to tackle the key drivers of ill-health in England, reduce pressure on the NHS and reduce ill-health related labour market inactivity. The strategy will focus on six major groups of conditions – cancers, mental health, cardiovascular disease (including stroke and diabetes), dementia, chronic respiratory diseases, and musculoskeletal disorders – that account for

around 60% of ill-health and early death in England.

The UK Government have now published the initial report ‘Major Conditions Strategy: Case for change and our strategic framework’⁶⁹ which identifies the importance of tackling inequalities to improve health outcomes. It sets out what has been learned so far, and shares what the government plans to focus on next to develop the final strategy. This strategic framework is a roadmap for change that sets out the importance of a whole life course approach. The UK Government has also recognised that individual conditions cannot be tackled in isolation, choosing to take a person-centred approach. Covering prevention, early diagnosis, treatment and long-term care, we make the case for empowering people through supported self-management of their health and wellbeing, where appropriate.

To improve both the quality of data collected within NHS services and the ability to link data across NHS services, it is important to consider how data concerning people’s protected characteristics could best be standardised. For example, the Government Statistical Service (GSS) Harmonisation team in the Office for National Statistics (ONS), are developing updated harmonised standards for ethnicity data collection across government. The GSS Harmonisation team’s plans for ethnicity and other priority areas, as outlined in the harmonisation workplan published in February 2022⁷⁰, will be updated once the ONS’ public consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales⁷¹ has concluded. This will allow the ONS time to review this source of relevant responses from users about their needs. This information will also be used to inform their future research plans.

Online

The UK Government’s Online Safety Act seeks to protect the exclusion of ethnic minorities online by tackling racist abuse, where it is illegal or in breach of major companies’ terms of service.

Once the Online Safety Act’s regulatory regime is in place, in-scope user-to-user services must implement proportionate systems and processes designed to prevent individuals from encountering priority illegal content via their service and to minimise the length of time for which any such content is present. Priority offences include public order offences. They will need to swiftly take down any other illegal content where they become aware of it. In-scope search services have comparable duties.

Most Category 1 services already prohibit hate speech that falls below the criminal threshold. The Online Safety Act will force Category 1 services to enforce their terms of service. If a company says something is banned, they must remove it. The Act will also give adult users of Category 1 services greater control over the content that they see, including related to that which is abusive or incites hate on the basis of race and religion. Users will be proactively asked about how they would like to use these tools at the first possible opportunity. When applied, the user empowerment content tools will reduce the likelihood that users encounter such content or will alert users to the nature of it.

⁶⁹ Major Conditions Strategy: Case for change and our strategic framework (2023). Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/major-conditions-strategy-case-for-change-and-our-strategic-framework/major-conditions-strategy-case-for-change-and-our-strategic-framework--2>

⁷⁰ Government Statistical Service (2022), *Harmonisation Team Workplan*. Available at: <https://analysisfunction.civilservice.gov.uk/policy-store/gss-harmonisation-team-workplan/>

⁷¹ Office for National Statistics (2023) Consultation on the future of population and migration statistics in England and Wales. Available at: <https://consultations.ons.gov.uk/ons/futureofpopulationandmigrationstatistics/>

Where an in-scope service fails to fulfil its duties under the Act, Ofcom will be able to use their suite of enforcement powers, including issuing fines, requiring them to take steps to come into compliance and applying to the court for business disruption measures (including blocking).

Scotland

The Scottish Government is committed to inclusive engagement with Gypsy/Traveller and Roma communities. The Scottish Government work closely with representative stakeholders to ensure their needs and voices are reflected within policymaking structures. The Scottish Government host regular community conversations to allow a chance for community members to question decision makers about the progress of the Gypsy/Traveller Action Plan and to also discuss ongoing live concerns affecting their communities.

The most recent ONS Annual Population Survey (APS) statistics for Scotland show:

- the employment rate for minority ethnic groups aged 16 to 64 was estimated at 67.6% in January – December 2022, lower than the rate for white groups (74.9%).
- the employment rate gap was 7.4% in 2022; the lowest employment rate gap since the series began.

On 9 December 2022, the Scottish Government published its new *A Fairer Scotland for All: An Anti-Racist Employment Strategy*⁷², outlining a list of key commitments the Scottish Government will undertake to address racial inequality in the workplace. The strategy supports and encourages employers, offering clear and practical guidance to improve data practices and practices across the employment journey to improve the recruitment and representation of staff from minority backgrounds and build fair, diverse and inclusive workplaces.

The strategy is a live document, and one that will guide the government’s collective action. It will continue to evolve based on the identified priorities of those who experience the harm of racism, support to employers to address labour market inequality, and in response to labour market changes, and actions to support its implementation were published alongside the refreshed Fair Work Action Plan⁷³.

The Scottish and UK Governments formally signed Full Deal for the Islands Growth Deal on 20 January 2023. This represents a ten-year programme of economic investment to the Outer Hebrides, Shetland and Orkney. The Deal is led by regional partners, and the first Deal projects entered delivery in Spring 2023. Following agreement of Heads of Terms in 2021, regional partners are also developing proposals to shape investment in the Argyll and Bute Growth Deal, which will focus on strengthening communities by making Argyll & Bute a more attractive place to live and work.

Additionally, the Highlands and Islands Regional Economic Partnership (HIREP) was established in December 2021, to bring together regional interests, focus and align resources, and develop a long-term economic strategy for the region to identify and maximise economic opportunities and trends. It aims to enable inclusive, sustainable and resilient economic growth throughout the region, and includes a specific remit to understand sub-regional economic dynamics and, where appropriate, formulate solidarity actions to ensure that no part of the Highlands and Islands is left behind.

The Islands Programme is spending £25.8 million of Infrastructure Investment Plan capital funding

⁷² Scottish Government (2022), *Anti-Racist Employment Strategy - A Fairer Scotland for All*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fairer-scotland-anti-racist-employment-strategy/>

⁷³ Scottish Government (2022) *Fair Work action plan: becoming a leading Fair Work nation by 2025*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/fair-work-action-plan-becoming-leading-fair-work-nation-2025/>

over the period of this Parliament to support delivery of the National Islands Plan (NIP)⁷⁴ and the commitments that it delivers. The Scottish Government has committed £4 million capital through the Islands Programme in 2023/24, supporting a range of areas, including tourism, infrastructure, innovation, energy transition and skills. As part of the Scottish Government's Emergency Budget Review, it announced a new £1.4 million Island Cost Crisis Emergency Fund for 2022/23 and for 2023/24 a further £1 million has been committed through the Islands Cost Crisis Emergency Fund. The Carbon Neutral Islands (CNI) project will support six islands in Scotland to become carbon neutral in a just way by 2040. To support the CNI project, six Community Climate Change Action plans have been launched for the relevant island communities (Yell, Hoy, Barra, Raasay, Islay and Great Cumbrae).

As one part of a robust governance structure, the National Islands Plan Delivery Group was established in June 2021. This supports implementation of the NIP and ensures that work is driven forward in a collaborative way that truly involves island communities. The Group stems from Strategic Objective 13 of the NIP and from the Scottish Government's commitment to establish a group to closely monitor the delivery of the Plan and the accompanying Implementation Route Map⁷⁵. The group meets regularly to examine progress and help to identify critical priorities to work towards meeting the commitments within the NIP. Delivering a fair, integrated, green and inclusive plan requires strong collaboration and partnership, and the NIP Delivery Group provides this collaborative working space. Membership of the group comprises Scottish Government, local authorities, Third Sector representation, community groups, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, COSLA, Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland, relevant academics and subject experts.

Health and Care

Reducing health inequalities, improving population health and creating a more sustainable health and care system are top priorities for the Scottish Government. As such, Scottish Government is taking steps to address the significant and persistent health inequalities experienced by minority ethnic and Gypsy Traveller communities in Scotland. A senior Steering Group on Racialised Health Inequalities in Health and Social Care has been established to drive improvements to access, experience and outcomes for adversely racialised communities, delivering on Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 & Ethnicity recommendations⁷⁶ and Race Equality Framework for Scotland⁷⁷ goals. Good progress has been made on several recommendations, including initial work to improve the collection of ethnicity data through the vaccinations programme. Significant work was also undertaken to make public health messaging more inclusive, notably through efforts to improve Covid vaccine uptake through targeted communications and stronger collaboration with minority ethnic, religious and community groups.

Sustained improvements to the collection and use of ethnicity data in health and care remains a high priority. These datasets are critical to identifying and addressing long-standing inequalities more effectively, and to measure progress of actions taken to reduce these inequalities. Work is also underway to improve access to and experience of key health services including maternal care, mental health, CVD and type 2 diabetes prevention.

⁷⁴ Scottish Government (2019), *The National Plan for Scotland's Islands*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-plan-scotlands-islands/>

⁷⁵ Scottish Government (2022), *National Islands Plan: Implementation Route Map 2022*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-islands-plan-implementation-route-map-2022/>

⁷⁶ Scottish Government (2020) *Expert Reference Group on COVID-19 and Ethnicity: recommendations to Scottish Government*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/expert-reference-group-on-covid-19-and-ethnicity-recommendations-to-scottish-government/>

⁷⁷ Scottish Government (2016) *Race equality framework for Scotland 2016 to 2030*. Available at: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/race-equality-framework-scotland-2016-2030/>

We recognise the need to address specific barriers to access experienced by Gypsy Traveller communities. In response, Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) published a joint action plan in October 2019 setting out concrete steps to improve outcomes across health, education, accommodation, equality and social security for Gypsy Traveller communities. The plan ran until September 2023. Significant progress was made on health-related actions, with a focus on targeted approaches to address barriers and challenges raised directly by communities. Actions included:

- the distribution of ‘GP Access cards’, designed to provide easily understandable information on how to register with a GP practice;
- working with the community to increase awareness of rights in relation to accessing treatment and health services. This work was supported by the introduction of a specific agreement (Our Health, Our Rights, Our NHS)⁷⁸ which outlines how Health Boards can work with Gypsy/Traveller communities to meet the NHS Scotland’s Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities;
- action to encourage increased engagement and dialogue with the community to remove barriers that limit access to health and care services through the Community Health Worker (CHW) service. Community Health Workers are members of the Gypsy Traveller community that have been recruited, trained and are supported to provide information and support on a wide range of health and social care issues, as well as gathering and sharing other valuable qualitative data on issues being experienced by those in the Gypsy/Traveller community.

Data on successes and challenges of the Gypsy Traveller action plan is currently being gathered to inform a review report set to be published in summer 2024, alongside a refreshed plan.

The spatial planning system in Scotland has a clear agenda to enhance opportunities for engagement, facilitating greater empowerment of communities and putting their voices at the heart of the system. In Scotland, the development plan sets out the long-term spatial strategy for development. It is formed of national planning policy and strategy set out in the National Planning Framework, and local development plans prepared by planning authorities across the country. The development plan forms the basis of decision making on individual planning applications. Recent changes introduced by the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 mean that in addition to seeking the views of the public at large in preparing Evidence Reports that inform the preparation of local development plans, planning authorities are to also seek the views of Gypsies and Travellers, among other non-minority groups.

Wales

Welsh Government’s recently published National Immunisation Framework (NIF)⁷⁹ has a strong focus on equity. The Wales COVID-19 equity report includes coverage of minority ethnic groups with a view to highlighting the causes of unequal uptake of vaccine amongst minority groups and developing policy to address this.

Within the NIF Implementation, plans are in train to develop a Mobile Vaccination Unit fleet for Wales and a Community Level Provision project. These efforts relate to all ‘hard to reach’ communities, including the Traveller community.

Similar initiatives to target vaccine-related communication in minority languages (as mentioned in paragraph 232) were also undertaken in Wales to increase the uptake of vaccination in those communities.

⁷⁸ NHS Scotland. *Our health, our rights, our NHS*. Available at: <https://www.scotphn.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Our-Health-Our-Right-Ours-NHS.pdf>

⁷⁹ Welsh Government (2022), *National immunisation framework for Wales*. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/national-immunisation-framework-wales>

The Welsh language has equal status to English in Wales, and as such the production of Public Health information in the Welsh language is routine. The implementation of the NIF is underway with vaccine equity at its core. Vaccine Equity Strategies will be provided by every health board in Wales and will include planned approaches to vaccine related communications in minority languages and will outline approaches to ensure accessibility to vaccines and vaccine related information is available to as many as possible.

To address vaccine inequity, locally led equity-focussed interventions will also include partnership working involving trusted voices, community champions and third sector organisations representing the needs of minority groups. As well as regional and community-based interventions, a national expert Vaccine Equity Committee is in operation to ensure the best possible approaches to vaccine equity are implemented and evidence of good practise is shared regionally and nationally.

See lines under Article 4 for progress on support for businesses.

Article 16

The Parties shall refrain from measures which alter the proportions of the population in areas inhabited by persons belonging to national minorities and are aimed at restricting the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention.

Article 17

The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to establish and maintain free and peaceful contacts across frontiers with persons lawfully staying in other States, in particular those with whom they share an ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious identity, or a common cultural heritage.

The Parties undertake not to interfere with the right of persons belonging to national minorities to participate in the activities of non-governmental organisations, both at the national and international levels.

Article 18

The Parties shall endeavour to conclude, where necessary, bilateral and multilateral agreements with other States, in particular neighbouring States, in order to ensure the protection of persons belonging to the national minorities concerned.

Where relevant, the Parties shall take measures to encourage transfrontier co-operation.

UK Government

The UK has a longstanding tradition of ensuring rights and liberties are protected domestically and of fulfilling our international human rights obligations. The UK actively engages with the United Nations Human Rights Council and associated bodies.

The UK Government became a signatory to The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (ECRML) in 2000 and ratified it in 2001. As a party to the treaty, the UK continues to uphold the commitments to protect minority or regional languages in this country which includes: respect for the geographical area of each language; the need for promotion; facilitation and/or encouragement of the use of these languages in speech and writing. The UK Government recognises that indigenous and minority languages form an important part of the heritage, cultural wealth and are a means of cultural expression for communities across the UK.

The British-Irish Council is established by Strand Three of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, and its membership is specified in this treaty.

Article 19

The Parties undertake to respect and implement the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention making, where necessary, only those limitations, restrictions or derogations which are provided for in international legal instruments, in particular the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in so far as they are relevant to the rights and freedoms flowing from the said principles.

Section III

Article 20

In the exercise of the rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention, any person belonging to a national minority shall respect the national legislation and the rights of others, in particular those of persons belonging to the majority or to other national minorities.

Article 21

Nothing in the present framework Convention shall be interpreted as implying any right to engage in any activity or perform any act contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and in particular of the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

Article 22

Nothing in the present framework Convention shall be construed as limiting or derogating from any of the human rights and fundamental freedoms which may be ensured under the laws of any Contracting Party or under any other agreement to which it is a Party.

Article 23

The rights and freedoms flowing from the principles enshrined in the present framework Convention, in so far as they are the subject of a corresponding provision in the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms or in the Protocols thereto, shall be understood so as to conform to the latter provisions.

Section IV

Article 24

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe shall monitor the implementation of this framework Convention by the Contracting Parties.

The Parties which are not members of the Council of Europe shall participate in the implementation mechanism, according to modalities to be determined.

Article 25

Within a period of one year following the entry into force of this framework Convention in respect of a Contracting Party, the latter shall transmit to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe full information on the legislative and other measures taken to give effect to the principles set out in this framework Convention.

Thereafter, each Party shall transmit to the Secretary General on a periodical basis and whenever the Committee of Ministers so requests any further information of relevance to the implementation of this framework Convention.

The Secretary General shall forward to the Committee of Ministers the information transmitted under the terms of this article.

Article 26

In evaluating the adequacy of the measures taken by the Parties to give effect to the principles set out in this framework Convention the Committee of Ministers shall be assisted by an advisory committee, the members of which shall have recognised expertise in the field of the protection of national minorities.

The composition of this advisory committee and its procedure shall be determined by the Committee of Ministers within a period of one year following the entry into force of this framework Convention.

Section V

Article 27

This framework Convention shall be open for signature by the member States of the Council of Europe. Up until the date when the Convention enters into force, it shall also be open for signature by any other State so invited by the Committee of Ministers. It is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval. Instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval shall be deposited with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Article 28

This framework Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date on which twelve member States of the Council of Europe have expressed their consent to be bound by the Convention in accordance

with the provisions of Article 27.

In respect of any member State which subsequently expresses its consent to be bound by it, the framework Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of the deposit of the instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval.

Article 29

After the entry into force of this framework Convention and after consulting the Contracting States, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe may invite to accede to the Convention, by a decision taken by the majority provided for in Article 20.d of the Statute of the Council of Europe, any non-member State of the Council of Europe which, invited to sign in accordance with the provisions of Article 27, has not yet done so, and any other non-member State.

In respect of any acceding State, the framework Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of the deposit of the instrument of accession with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Article 30

Any State may at the time of signature or when depositing its instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, specify the territory or territories for whose international relations it is responsible to which this framework Convention shall apply.

Any State may at any later date, by a declaration addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, extend the application of this framework Convention to any other territory specified in the declaration. In respect of such territory the framework Convention shall enter into force on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such declaration by the Secretary General.

Any declaration made under the two preceding paragraphs may, in respect of any territory specified in such declaration, be withdrawn by a notification addressed to the Secretary General. The withdrawal shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of three months after the date of receipt of such notification by the Secretary General.

Article 31

Any Party may at any time denounce this framework Convention by means of a notification addressed to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.

Such denunciation shall become effective on the first day of the month following the expiration of a period of six months after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary General.

Article 32

The Secretary General of the Council of Europe shall notify the member States of the Council, other signatory States and any State which has acceded to this framework Convention, of:

- *any signature;*

- *the deposit of any instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession;*
- *any date of entry into force of this framework Convention in accordance with Articles 28, 29 and 30;*
- *any other act, notification or communication relating to this framework Convention.*