

Scottish Human Rights Commission submission as part of the sixth monitoring cycle under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM)

August 2026

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1. About the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC)

The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) is Scotland's "A" Status accredited National Human Rights Institution (NHRI). We are a public body created by the Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006. The SHRC is independent of Government and accountable to the people of Scotland via the Scottish Parliament.

The SHRC is one of three "A" Status NHRIs in the UK¹, operating within a broad statutory mandate which covers monitoring, reporting and implementation functions. Our mandate is set out in the [Scottish Commission for Human Rights Act 2006](#). This report is provided under our s.4 duty to monitor law, policy and practice, as well as the obligations set out in the [Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions \(The Paris Principles\)](#).

We deliver our mandate through a [four-year strategic plan](#), which currently focuses four priority areas: poverty, places of detention, access to justice and the rights of specially-protected groups.²

2. Introduction

The SHRC is pleased to provide this report to inform the sixth monitoring cycle of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland under the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.³

The information and analysis included in this report is intended to support the Advisory Committee's assessment of progress made specifically in Scotland on implementing the Framework Convention. We do not provide commentary on every article in the Framework Convention. Instead, we focus on:

- Activity that has taken place primarily since the Committee's last monitoring visit to the UK in 2022;
- Issues raised in our existing work aligned to our [2024-2028 Strategic Plan](#) priorities;
- Areas in the UK [State Report](#) (May 2024) where, in our opinion, there are gaps in relevant information; and
- Ongoing concerns raised in the previous [Opinion Report \(Dec 2022\)](#).

2.1. Evidence base

This report draws on evidence from our other international treaty submissions, as well as our domestic monitoring and spotlight projects and emerging areas of research. This includes evidence gathered through consultation with rights holders. Where we wish to provide additional comments on information shared in the State report, we have included new information or analysis from desk based review of published research or official Scottish Government data.

The SHRC has identified the rights of at-risk specially protected groups under human rights law and access to justice as strategic priorities for 2024-2028. A key strand of work which bridges both these priorities is our report [“No man's land” A human rights assessment of the ‘Tinker Experiment’ and redress for its victims](#). This outlines key recommendations for the Scottish Government around redress and reparations for victims of the ‘tinker experiment’, a programme of forced assimilation of Gypsy Travellers in Scotland. In January 2026, we wrote to the Advisory Committee to share a copy of this publication. The report provides the Committee with relevant information largely in respect Article 5 of the Framework Convention.

This recent spotlight work on Scotland's Gypsy Travellers has provided us with rich data on the experiences of this group, which is strongly reflected throughout this report. We have also drawn on wider engagement work undertaken with other groups of rights holders who are protected by the Framework Convention as part of our periodic reporting to UN treaty bodies.⁴

2.2. Scope and approach to terminology

This report focuses on the rights of national minorities in Scotland.

The UK has a devolved constitutional settlement, which means that the primary responsibility for legislation and delivery is split between the Scottish and UK Parliaments. Matters devolved to Scotland include justice, detention, policing, health, education, social care and some elements of social security and taxation. While the UK retains the sole authority to enter into international obligations, the Scottish Parliament has a legal responsibility for compliance with and implementation of treaties to which the UK is a party in devolved matters. Immigration, employment and equality law are largely reserved to the UK Government.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) has a human rights mandate in Scotland across areas of reserved competence and as the equality law regulator, including the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The SHRC recognises that the Convention does not provide a universal definition of "national minority" and allows some discretion to national governments to decide who is included within the scope of its provisions.⁵ For the purposes of this report, we have interpreted the scope as covering all "racial groups" as protected by the Equality Act 2010.⁶ This mirrors the UK government's approach, as outlined in its baseline report.⁷

We also recognise that people's identities are multi-dimensional, and that some people are more likely to be impacted by intersectional forms of marginalisation.

There is a lack of consensus on the preferred use of language and terminology to discuss racialised and ethnic communities, both globally and within Scotland. We acknowledge that some terms used throughout this paper may not resonate or be the way in which individuals choose to define themselves.

The evidence throughout this report draws from an array of data sources which employ different concepts and descriptors; as such the language in this report often reflects that used in the original sources as well as how it is framed within legislation and policy. This is indicated where possible throughout the document.

3. Key areas for the Committee to consider as part of its visit to Scotland

The SHRC encourages the Advisory Committee to engage with the Scottish Government around the following questions:

General

1. What measures will the State take to raise awareness of the Framework Convention, including the Committee's findings and recommendations?

Article 3: Free Self-identification

2. What action is Scottish duty bearers taking to fill gaps in data collection and harmonisation, including in the collection and dissemination of intersectional data?

Article 4: Non-discrimination

3. How will the Scottish Government align its Anti-Racism Delivery Plan with recommendations made by international human rights treaty bodies, including those that come from the Advisory Committee?
 4. How will the Scottish Government improve transparency in relation to the Scottish Budget, and ensure that any action plans or delivery plans are closely aligned to the relevant budget portfolios?
 5. How will duty bearers use tools developed by the Scottish Government, such as the Human Rights Tracker Tool and the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming toolkit, to improve monitoring and accountability on the rights of national minorities in Scotland?
 6. How will the Scottish Government address gaps in protection for national minorities in Scotland, for example via the introduction of a Human Rights Bill
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which incorporates the protections in the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination? What is the timeframe for delivering this legislation?

Article 5: Maintenance of Minority Culture

7. What measures is the Scottish Government taking to enhance the economic, social and cultural rights of those living in rural areas, particularly the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to protect the sustainability of minority language communities.
8. How will the Scottish Government engage meaningfully with the concept of restorative reparations for historic injustices in relation to Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.
9. How will the Scottish Government and local authorities increase the availability and sustainability of culturally appropriate accommodation for Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.

Article 6: Protection Against discrimination, hostility and violence

10. What measures are Scottish duty bearers taking to address the high levels of hate crime and increasing reports of racially motivated violence and harassment in Scotland, and to build confidence amongst communities to report hate crimes when they occur?
 11. What human rights considerations are being made in relation to the policing of protests outside hotels housing asylum seekers in Scotland?
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Article 8: Freedom of Religion

12. How will the State ensure that children in Scotland can opt out of religious education in school as part of the right to freedom of religion?
13. What recent measures have Scottish duty bearers taken to address sectarianism in Scotland?

Article 12: Education and research

14. How will Scottish duty bearers monitor and respond to incidents of racism in schools?
15. How will the Scottish Government improve the educational outcomes of Scotland's Gypsy Travellers?

Article 15: Participation of national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and public affairs.

16. What non-legislative measures is the Scottish Government taking to address inequalities in the labour market and address exploitative employment practices towards migrant workers?
 17. How will the Scottish Government address racialised inequalities in relation to healthcare, including around data collection, and how will they address gaps in access to healthcare in remote and rural areas?
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4. Measures taken to raise awareness of the Framework Convention

The Scottish Government has undertaken some work to raise the profile of human rights treaty body recommendations. However, we are not aware of any specific targeted work that has been undertaken in Scotland to raise public awareness of the Framework Convention or to promote the findings and recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

In 2026 the Scottish Government launched the first phased of a [human rights tracker tool](#). The tracker tool currently captures recommendations from UN human rights treaty bodies, but does not at this time extend to those made under Council of Europe treaties. The Scottish Government is expected to take a decision on future extension of this tool in 2026.

5. Measures taken to implement fifth cycle recommendations: Areas suggested by SHRC for consideration by the Committee

5.1. Article 3: Free Self-identification

5.1.1. Data collection, use and availability

Scottish duty bearers are not currently delivering best practice in collecting, analysing and presenting disaggregated ethnicity data across a range of policy areas in Scotland. The SHRC and other organisations have noted this in relation to many different duty bearers and policy areas, for example in health⁸ and justice.⁹

The Scottish Government has itself acknowledged a need for improvements and has committed to a programme of work to address gaps in current practice.¹⁰ While this commitment is welcome, the weaknesses in availability of and use of disaggregated data collection hinders a thorough assessment of implementation of the FCNM and other human rights obligations. This is especially the case when considering intersectional forms of marginalisation.

The State report provides an overview of work undertaken by the Scottish Government to review ethnicity categories in advance of the 2022 Census. The Scottish Government has also held a public consultation on future reforms to the 2031 Census.¹¹ In the short term there is a need to review the extent to which other sources of data collection have been brought in line with the previous census

categories.¹² This would help monitoring efforts and potentially harmonise and ensure accuracy across available data to support effective planning of public services.

The Scottish Government launched a two-year [Equality Evidence Strategy](#) in March 2023¹³ and published its [final evaluation](#) in June 2026, noting that 29 actions had been completed, with 5 remaining ongoing and 19 actions being delayed.¹⁴ An [Equality Evidence Finder](#) database provides public access to data, but there are currently notable gaps across a range of sectors in relation to ethnicity. The SHRC has previously encouraged the Scottish Government to commit further to exploring opportunities to align the Equality Evidence Strategy with data needs under human rights monitoring and the National Performance Framework (NPF).¹⁵

Our general position that good quality intersectional data is essential for informing policy is supported by other stakeholders.¹⁶ The latest [Equality Outcomes \(2025-29\)](#) contain commitments which would address some of these asks,¹⁷ but it is too early to determine whether they are on track to being delivered.

5.1.2. Recording demographic change

The 2022 Scottish census data analysis on 'Ethnicity, National Identity, Language and Religion' (published in May 2024), provides the most up to date official picture of Scotland's population. This showed that 12.9 per cent of people in Scotland had a 'minority ethnic background', an increase from 8.2 per cent in 2011.¹⁸ The most noticeable increases in population groups were recorded in 'mixed or multiple ethnic identities,' 'other white' and 'other ethnic' group categories,¹⁹ with significant rises also recorded across 'Arab, Arab Scottish or Arab British', 'African, African Scottish or African British' and categories encompassing Asian¹ categories.²⁰

However there was a decline in the number of 'White: Gypsy/ Travellers' recorded in 2022 compared with 2011.²¹ It is not possible to make a direct comparison between the 2011 and 2022 census results due to new categories of 'Roma' and 'Showman/Showwoman' being added in 2022.²² The Scottish Government has

¹ Which includes the categories of 'Pakistani, Pakistani Scottish or Pakistani British', 'Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British', 'Bangladeshi, Bangladeshi Scottish or Bangladeshi British', 'Chinese, Chinese Scottish or Chinese British' and 'Other Asian backgrounds'

acknowledged that census data may constitute a significant underestimation of population size for Gypsy Traveller communities for a range of reasons.²³ The SHRC is concerned therefore that the [current Gypsy/Traveller action plan](#)²⁴ does not sufficiently address the how potential gaps in data about population size may affect service provision, for example a shortfall in culturally appropriate accommodation.²⁵

5.2. Article 4: Prevention of discrimination

5.2.1. The Race Equality Framework

The Scottish Government has taken steps to address racial inequalities in Scotland via an overarching [Race Equality Framework \(2016-2030\)](#), under which it has developed series of shorter term action plans. The final plan under the Framework²⁶ - the [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#), was published in March 2026. The 2026-2030 Delivery Plan explicitly aims to tackle systemic, structural and institutional racism as well as prevent racist behaviour.²⁷ This followed a notable gap since 2023 when the government undertook an anti-racism progress review to examine progress made against the Framework.²⁸

The Delivery Plan commits to aligning anti-racism efforts with international human rights obligations and treaty monitoring processes, as well as using international scrutiny to strengthen domestic accountability. However, it does not explicitly engage with the Framework Convention.

The SHRC's 2024 [Parallel report to the UN Committee Against all forms of Racial Discrimination \(CERD\)](#) outlined a range of persistent racial inequalities across outcomes in Scotland,²⁹ for example in relation to health, poverty, justice and education. In the SHRC's recent (June 2026) follow-up report to CERD, we expressed regret that Scottish Government did not take the opportunity to align the Delivery Plan more closely with the Committee's Concluding Observations.³⁰

We also note that actions within the 2023 Delivery Plan are not linked to specific budget lines or spending plans in the [2026-27 Scottish Budget](#)³¹ which limits our ability to evaluate whether the Plan has been adequately resourced.

An Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland (AROS) has been established to support community led efforts to tackle systemic racism in the public sector. AROS is funded by the Scottish Government and hosted by the University of Strathclyde, in partnership with the Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights (CRER).³² As a new body under development, to date it has focused largely on recruiting its leadership, management team, and Strategic Advisory Board. It has also been developing a strategy and delivery plan.³³ The Scottish Government notes that the Observatory

will play a future role in supporting better use of data to enhance delivery the Race Equality framework, as well as providing robust scrutiny and accountability of Scottish Government's commitments.³⁴ We consider that this work presents opportunities to embed rights realisation into AROS's accountability role, for example, progress on the 2024 CERD Concluding Observations.

5.2.2. Equality, human rights and the Budget

The SHRC assesses Scotland's budgetary process in line with the International Budget Partnership's (IBP) Global Open Budget Survey (OBS). In July 2024, we published our [second report on Scotland's performance in the OBS](#), which highlights that while transparency around the budget process has improved, it still falls below international best practice.³⁵ This lack of transparency makes it difficult to properly scrutinise resource allocation for some of the policy areas relevant to the implementation of the FCNM.

The [2026-27 Scottish Budget](#) has a £72 million commitment to 'Equalities, Inclusion and Human Rights' under the social justice portfolio, however no further detail is provided about how this will be allocated. This also represents a reduction in allocation from the previous two financial years.³⁶ The SHRC recognises however that there may be other portfolios that include measures which contribute to delivery and policies within the scope of the Framework Convention.³⁷

To support the national budget process, the Scottish Government now produces a [Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment \(SIIA\)](#), which is a new approach to 'assessing the equality, fairness and other impacts of the Scottish Government's key tax and spending decisions at strategic fiscal events, such as the Budget'.³⁸ The SIIA brings together the Scottish Government's statutory obligations across five legal duties into a single process and replaces the previous Equality and Fairer Budget statement (EFBS). The stated intention behind this change was to produce a more integrated, upfront assessment of impacts and to ensure that evidence on impact informs the Scottish Government's budget choices earlier and more effectively in the decision-making process.³⁹ However the product still only offers limited visibility of how it shapes decisions in real time, does not provide a fully cumulative picture across all spend and has variable linkage to specific budget lines and how budget decisions address the evidence on which it is based. While human rights are mentioned, this is not structured nor supported by clear indicators.

The SHRC has been engaged in the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights Budget Advisory Group for many years with the aim of improving the human rights based approach to budget formulation, revenue raising and resource

allocation, and mainstreaming human rights and will continue to provide relevant advice on human rights budgeting where appropriate.

5.2.3. Equality and human rights mainstreaming

The Scottish Government's [Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Policy 2025-2030](#)⁴⁰ sets out its approach to embedding equality and human rights into both the government and the wider public sector. The Mainstreaming Policy is supported by an [Action Plan](#)⁴¹ and a [Toolkit](#).⁴² While the SHRC welcomed the commitment to progressing the strategy, we have called for clearer definitions and the promotion of well-defined measurement frameworks rooted in international human rights standards, noting that implementation may be challenging without a legislative underpinning.⁴³

The SHRC has welcomed the Scottish Government's launch of a publicly available and free to use [human rights tracker tool](#), which allows users to search a database of relevant UN treaty body recommendations by theme, including in relation to 'equality and inclusion'.⁴⁴ The tool is designed to improve transparency, as well as supporting civil society and the Scottish Parliament to monitor progress and hold government to account.⁴⁵ Further work is required to ensure actions are mapped against the recommendations if the tracker is to function as an accountability mechanism.

The SHRC has also welcomed the Scottish Government's [high level action plan](#) setting out specific steps it is taking in relation to devolved matters to respond to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights' Concluding Observations on the UK.⁴⁶ We would encourage this approach to be adopted with all treaty body recommendations, including Council of Europe treaties such as the Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities.

5.2.4. Incorporation of international standards

The SHRC has long advocated for broader incorporation of international human rights standards as a route to enhancing access to justice in Scotland.⁴⁷ In 2024, we welcomed the passing of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024⁴⁸, which establishes duties on devolved public bodies to consider and comply with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This includes incorporation of the obligation in Article 2 on protecting children and young people from discrimination, including on the grounds of race.

Given the relatively short length of time since the Act came into force, there has thus far been limited litigation that led to significant developments in the application of Article 2 UNCRC. The SHRC is actively monitoring developments in line with new

legal powers under the Act and has begun engaging with a small number of cases.⁴⁹ We have also expressed some concerns about new legislation not being drafted within scope of the compatibility duty in the UNCRC (Scotland) Act 2024.⁵⁰

Beyond this however, the SHRC⁵¹ has expressed disappointment about delays to the introduction of a Human Rights Bill. The Scottish Government's commitment to this legislation included incorporation of several UN human rights treaties, including the International Convention in the Eliminations of All forms of Racial Discrimination.⁵² The Human Rights Bill has also been framed as central to embedding anti-racism across Government in its Anti-Racism delivery plan 2026-2030.⁵³

Our concerns about the delay and strength of the potential legislation are shared by multiple civil society organisations.⁵⁴ The previous Equality, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee of the Scottish Parliament also noted that the failure to introduce the Bill during the 2021-2026 parliamentary session was of particular concern, given that the Bill has been routinely heralded as the Scottish Governments' 'flagship response' in response to challenges raised about human rights'.⁵⁵

A [discussion paper](#) published in July 2025 lays out the Scottish Government's thinking on potential provisions of a future Human Rights Bill for Scotland; in response we welcomed future opportunities to strengthen the ability of independent public bodies, including the SHRC, to promote and protect human rights.⁵⁶ These proposals include specific protections of rights in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).

The Scottish Government has renewed its commitment to bring forward a Human Rights Bill in this Parliamentary session,⁵⁷ committing to do so in its manifesto for the May 2026 Scottish Parliament election. In delivering this, the Scottish Government should ensure that treaty incorporation into Scots law is effective in improving access to justice for rights holders, and in setting clear responsibilities and accountability mechanisms for duty bearers to realise treaty rights. Alongside the Bill, the Scottish Government should progress broader policy and legislative work to achieve these objectives, such as ensuring complaints mechanisms are fit for purpose and delivering redress for past and ongoing human rights violations.

5.3. Article 5: Maintenance of Minority Culture, including religion, language and traditions.

5.3.1. Official languages

The [Scottish Languages Act 2025](#) formally recognises both Gaelic and Scots as official languages of Scotland. Further provisions aim to research their use and establish teaching standards,⁵⁸ although not all sections of the Act are yet in force.

Currently, 17 out of 32 local authorities in Scotland offer Gaelic medium education.⁵⁹ A Scots Language Award is also available.⁶⁰ Other European and international languages are taught in schools, but access to specific language teaching varies across Scotland.⁶¹

The 2022 census results show that there has been an increase in the number of people who had some skills in Gaelic (an increase to 2.5 per cent compared to 1.7 per cent of people since 2011) and in Scots (an increase to 46.2 per cent compared with 37.7 per cent in 2021). The highest concentration of Gaelic speakers was recorded in Na h-Eileanan Siar, where 57.2 per cent of the population had some Gaelic skills.⁶² Other areas such as the Islands and Argyll also report significantly higher levels of Gaelic ability than the national average.⁶³

The SHRC's local monitoring report on [Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Highlands and Islands](#) acknowledges that significant efforts and investment have been made by the Scottish Government in preserving and promoting the Gaelic language.⁶⁴ However the evidence we gathered also supports the Advisory Committee's earlier observations (2022) that the vitality of minority language communities is being undermined by the impact of tourism on the affordability of local homes.⁶⁵

The SHRC's monitoring also found that failures to realise ESC rights in the Highlands and Islands correlates with levels of depopulation of these areas, which has a long-term impact on the cultural life of those communities. Some measures have been introduced to mitigate the impact of this, for example allowing councils to charge additional council tax for empty or second homes.⁶⁶

Since the introduction of [BSL \(Scotland\) Act](#) in 2015, British Sign Language (BSL) has also been recognised as an official language of Scotland, requiring Ministers to promote, and facilitate the promotion of, the use and understanding of BSL. The Act requires that National Sign Language Action Plans are produced and requires

certain listed authorities such as councils, health boards and educational institutions to publish their own BSL plans setting out the measures they propose to take to promote the language along with timescales for their achievement. Since the passing of the Act, two National Sign Language Plans have been published by the Scottish Government.

The Scottish Parliament's Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice undertook an inquiry in 2025 into action taken by the Scottish Government and listed authorities during the decade since the Act had passed. It reported that the Act had resulted in 'significant benefits to BSL users in Scotland, but recognised that progress has been uneven with substantial challenges remaining in place'.⁶⁷ The BSL Act demonstrates the positive impact of legislation and investment in language for minority groups; the Scottish Government should consider lessons learned from this positive impact when considering how to protect minority languages.

5.3.2. Scotland's Gypsy Travellers

Scottish Government and COSLA's second joint action plan on [Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers 2 \(2024-2026\)](#)⁶⁸ was published in 2024 against a backdrop of increased attention and investigation into the situation of Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.⁶⁹ The previous Equality, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committees of the Scottish Parliament strongly advised in its legacy report that its successor committee monitors the plan's implementation.⁷⁰

The SHRC published the report ["No man's land" A human rights assessment of the 'Tinker Experiment' and redress for its victims](#) in January 2026. A copy of this report was shared directly with the Advisory Group at this time.

The report concludes that the harms caused by the 'Tinker Experiment' are not solely historic; victims are still living with the consequences, including unsafe housing, cultural loss, discrimination, stigma, poor health outcomes and barriers in education and employment and these failings need to be urgently addressed. The SHRC also highlighted that substandard accommodation conditions currently experienced by Scotland's Gypsy Travellers impact on a range of other rights. We specifically raised issues in relation to Articles 8 and Article 14 of the ECHR, Article 2 of ICESCR and Article 5(e) of CERD, all of which require states to both prohibit and take active steps to eliminate discrimination in rights such as adequate housing.

The [legal analysis](#) which informed this report has now also been published and we will be sharing with key decision-makers to encourage the adoption of recommendations.

Concerns about standards and facilities on many sites, as well as the hazardous nature of their locations, have been raised by different sources.⁷¹ Many sites are close to hazards that impact on quality of life⁷² and are exposed to substandard conditions,⁷³ despite being subject to statutory minimum standards⁷⁴. The Scottish Housing Regular found serious failings on several official sites in 2024⁷⁵ and 2025.⁷⁶

The Scottish Government has provided a twenty million pound Accommodation Fund for local authorities to increase provision and make site improvements.⁷⁷ Some academics⁷⁸ and civil society organisations⁷⁹ have warned that the funds will not necessarily address the hazardous or undesirable location of the sites.

The SHRC's overall assessment is that despite a multitude of laws, policies, strategies, action plans and funding commitments that have emerged since 2001,⁸⁰ there has been little material improvement in the lived experience of Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.⁸¹ The recommendations we make in our report *No Man's Land* support enhancing access to justice where these past commitments have failed to be delivered.

Our report documents some relevant progress since the Committee published its Fifth [Opinion report of the visit to the UK](#) (May 2023), for example the public apologies issued by the First Minister of Scotland, Perth and Kinross Council and the Church of Scotland. We have however noted that the apology does not meet human rights standards adopted by the UN General Assembly in relation to remedy and reparation for victims of human rights violations.

The SHRC received a response to the report's findings from the Scottish Government in March 2026, setting out the Government's current and planned actions to address issues faced by Scotland's Gypsy Travellers. Most of these were in train prior to the publication of our report. One new commitment was for a £10,000 cultural fund to be used to raise awareness of cultural activities specifically linked to the "Tinker Experiment(s) in the Perth and Kinross area in 2026/27. However, based on our existing evidence the SHRC does not consider the Scottish Government's response thus far engages adequately with the requirements of the human rights framework for a transformative reparations approach.

5.4. Article 6: Protection against discrimination, hostility and violence

5.4.1. Hate crime

As Scotland's NHRI we have publicly raised our own concerns, and those based on reports from civil society organisations, of increased levels of racist abuse and harassment in Scotland over the past year.⁸² We are increasingly alarmed about an increase in public discourse which presents the rights of migrants as a threat to others, either in terms of access to public services or public safety. We have warned that these messages are likely to contribute to a climate of hostility towards people from racialised communities, migrants and new Scots. In June 2025, the SHRC published a public statement in response to acts of violence targeting Muslim people in public spaces.⁸³

In Scotland, as elsewhere in the UK there have been protests outside hotels accommodating people seeking asylum,⁸⁴ as well as other public spaces such as primary schools.⁸⁵ People and organisations working with those affected have told us that activities at these protests have impacted community safety and wellbeing. The SHRC has directly called on the Scottish Government and Police Scotland to condemn racial abuse and take steps to ensure that the safety of individuals and the community is a key consideration in the proportionate policing of such activities.⁸⁶

In April 2024, the [Hate Crime and Public Order \(Scotland\) Act 2021](#) came into force, which consolidated provisions in relation to racially aggravated harassment and hate crime.² The Act replicated existing offences of stirring up of racial or religious hatred and expanded the use of 'stirring up offences' to include hatred based on sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity as well as subsequently to sex, from 2027. The Scottish Government also launched a refreshed [Hate Crime Strategy](#) in March 2023.⁸⁷ Although multiple aggravators can be applied to the same offence, the 2021 Act does not enable intersectional use of its provisions.⁸⁸

² The Act replicated existing offences of stirring up of racial or religious hatred and expanded the use of 'stirring up offences' to include hatred based on sexual orientation, disability and transgender identity.

In February 2026, the Scottish Government published its [first annual report](#) on hate crime recorded by the police under Section 15 of the 2021 Act, covering the period 2024-25.⁸⁹ During the period under review, the report shows that:

- the police recorded 8,538 hate crimes in Scotland, with over three-fifths (62 per cent) of these including a race aggravator and seven per cent including religion as an aggravator.
- 'Threatening or abusive behaviour', 'Racially aggravated conduct' and 'Common Assault made up 82 per cent of all recorded hate crime.'⁹⁰
- 29% of all religion aggravated hate crimes which were not directed at the police also had a race aggravator.

Court proceedings were commenced in respect of 80 per cent of race aggravated charges and 81 per cent of religion aggravated charges in 2024-25. Twenty-seven charges were also reported under section 4(1) of the Act which related to stirring up hatred against a group based on race, colour, nationality or ethnic origin.⁹¹

The Office of the Procurator Fiscal has highlighted that the 2024-25 charges relating to race crime represented a decrease of 2.2 per cent compared with the previous year, however the 2024-25 figure is still 15 per cent higher than 2018-19.⁹² The number of charges with a religion aggravator also decreased 5.1 per cent between 2023-24 and 2024-25.

While these statistics provide an important picture of patterns around hate crime, the SHRC is also concerned that there remains reluctance amongst some communities to report hate crimes when they occur. Insights shared with us as part of development of a [lived experience report to CERD](#) highlighted that many people were unsure of what constituted a hate crime and saw no benefit or incentive to report what happened to them when they did experience harassment, due to fear of inaction or not being taken seriously.⁹³ Some migrants and asylum seekers were also fearful of contact with the police due to their insecure immigration status. The historic over-policing of some minority ethnic communities,⁹⁴ coupled with ethnic minorities being under-represented in Police Scotland has been shown to contribute to distrust in the police among some communities.⁹⁵ This indicates that the police need to do more to build trust with certain groups and confidence in hate crime reporting.

5.4.2. Policing

There are still of widespread concerns about the treatment of racialised minorities across the criminal justice system. A 2023 report on [ethnicity and the justice system](#) considered overrepresentation of certain minority ethnic groups as both victims of crime and in incarcerated populations. At the same time, the data suggested that people from minority ethnic groups were under-represented in the justice sector workforce.⁹⁶

A civil society report on racial inequality in Scotland has indicated that some minority ethnic groups are also disproportionately subjected to strip searches in Scotland.⁹⁷ There is also evidence to suggest a lack of coherent data regarding the ethnicity of those who die in state care, including prisons, police custody, following police contact, mental health detention and immigration detention.⁹⁸

In 2022, the outgoing Chief Inspector of Police Scotland publicly acknowledged that institutional racism, sexism, misogyny, and discrimination exist within Police Scotland.⁹⁹ A public inquiry into the death of Sheku Bayoh, who died after being restrained in police custody, is examining whether race was a factor in his death.¹⁰⁰

5.5. Article 8: Freedom of Religion

5.5.1. The right to opt in or out of religious observance

The SHRC is concerned that the recently passed Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Act 2026¹⁰¹ falls short of implementing a clear recommendation from the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that children should be able to independently opt-out of religious observance in schools to guarantee their right to freedom of religion.¹⁰²

The Act goes some way to enhancing children's rights by giving children the right to opt in to religious observance in Scottish state schools when their parents are seeking to withdraw them.¹⁰³ However, there is no parallel right of the child to opt out of this observance where their parents wish them to attend.¹⁰⁴ The SHRC provided advice to the Scottish Parliament to inform their consideration of this Act, but regrettably the Scottish Parliament did not legislate to uphold the right to opt out of religious education, thereby creating an exemption from the UNCRC Act it had previously passed to uphold children's rights.

The Act does however include a power for the Scottish Ministers to make regulations to provide a right for pupils to opt-out of religious observance in the future.

5.5.2. Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland

The 2024 Concluding Observations from the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racism (CERD) recommended that the Scottish Government specifically ‘develop measures to effectively address ethnic and religious prejudice in Scotland’.¹⁰⁵

A series of Working Groups have examined issues around tackling sectarianism¹⁰⁶ and facilitating peaceful processions¹⁰⁷ in Scotland over a number of years¹⁰⁸ and various projects aimed at taking community-based approaches to address sectarianism have been funded by the Scottish Government since 2012.¹⁰⁹

As of 2023, the Scottish Government reported that they had accepted the definition of intra-Christian sectarianism which was set out by the [Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland](#) in 2016, and further reported that it had invested “over £15.5 million since 2012 to tackle sectarianism” through “the broadest and most comprehensive set of activities in response to this issue that there has ever been.”¹¹⁰

However, the SHRC has not been able to identify much in the way of recent and publicly available information on these activities or future commitments since the CERD recommendation was received in 2024.¹¹¹ We are aware that updated Guidance on [Marches, Parades and Static Demonstrations](#) was published by the Scottish Government in March 2024¹¹² and a Marches, Parades and Protests Forum was established in 2025 to share best practice and address emerging challenges concerning the facilitation of peaceful assembly.¹¹³

As outlined in section 5.6. the Hate Crime and Public Order Act 2021 was passed to consolidate and modernise the hate crime framework, introducing new 'stirring up offences' that relate to religious prejudice. According to the first annual report on hate crime recorded by the police under s.15 of this Act:¹¹⁴

- 7 per cent of hate crimes reported to Police Scotland in 2024-2025 had a religious aggravator.
- Of these, 35 per cent demonstrated prejudice towards the Catholic Community, 29 per cent towards the Muslim community, 18 per cent towards the Protestant community, 14 per cent towards the Jewish community.¹¹⁵

Although religious aggravators existed prior to the Hate Crime and Order Act, the way in which data is recorded has changed, meaning that like-for-like comparisons with figures from before the Act was implemented is not possible.¹¹⁶ However, older data sets suggest that the overall proportion of hate crimes recorded as

demonstrating a religious prejudice has remained fairly consistent over time.¹¹⁷ These older data sets do not include information on the nature of the religious prejudice displayed.

Greater detail in the official statistics produced by Police Scotland and the Scottish Government represent an example of positive progress towards more systematic data collection, as recommended by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in their 2016 Concluding Observations to the UK.¹¹⁸

Issues of peaceful policing of assemblies, including marches and protests, have been raised in relation to several religious and / or racial or ethnic minority groups.¹¹⁹ It is imperative that policing response to protests is both proportionate and rights-respecting to protect the right to freedom of assembly and of expression, while also protecting religious and/or racial minority groups from the risk of increased hate crime.

Scotland continues to have denominational schools as part of the State education system. The SHRC acknowledges that there are deeply held and complex perspectives on the future of these schools. The SHRC has indicated our support for the general proposition that children should also be able to opt-out of religious observance in schools in Scotland in order to guarantee their right to freedom of religion as protected by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹²⁰ We expand on our work in this area in section 5.5.1. of this submission.

5.6. Article 12: Education and Research

5.6.1. Tackling racism in schools

The Scottish Government has established an Anti-Racism in Education Programme (AREP) in 2021¹²¹ and has undertaken various activities to deliver four identified priority areas: curriculum reform,¹²² diversity in the education workforce,¹²³ dealing with racist incidents¹²⁴ and leadership/progression learning.¹²⁵

Nonetheless, there remains gaps in delivery across various areas of this programme. For example:

- There have been inconsistencies in how racist behaviour is recognised, addressed and recorded in schools, which can lead to low confidence in reporting incidents.¹²⁶ New guidance published in [2025](#) and [2026](#) has the potential to address this, although as it is non-statutory accountability for implementation is limited.¹²⁷

- Despite a slight increase in the number of 'minority ethnic teachers' working in schools between 2023 and 2024, Scotland is falling short of meeting its target that four per cent of the workforce will come from a 'minority ethnic background'.¹²⁸ Teachers who identify as being from 'minority ethnic backgrounds' constitute fewer than one per cent of promoted posts.¹²⁹
- A national Building Racial Literacy programme run by Education Scotland has trained four cohorts since 2022.¹³⁰ However, the programme is not run across all schools in Scotland.¹³¹ This may contribute to capacity gaps to be able to deliver an antiracist curriculum.

SHRC has heard directly – including from young people¹³² - about the enduring prevalence of racism in schools and barriers to accessing education, which is supported by other research.¹³³ Some of the associated issues include a lack of support for pupils with low English language skills in school, higher levels of exclusion and disproportionate barriers to attainment for children from some ethnic minority groups,¹³⁴ and barriers to accessing information about entitlement and supports available for further and higher education, with residency requirements excluding some migrant young people.¹³⁵ All these issues can contribute to poorer educational outcomes.

5.6.2. Gypsy Traveller learners and educators

Various stakeholders have expressed longstanding concerns about the rates of exclusion and poor educational outcomes for Gypsy Traveller children in Scotland.¹³⁶ These inequalities impact on a range of other life outcomes.

The most recent census results provide only limited analysis so far, but show that 43.8 per cent of the Gypsy/ Traveller population reported to having no qualifications compared with 16.6 per cent for the rest of Scotland.¹³⁷ Previous analysis based on the 2011 census data and other sources has indicated that Gypsy/ Traveller children experience low school attendance rates (particularly at secondary school level), high rates of exclusions, high levels of Additional Support needs and low levels of attainment.¹³⁸

[The Scottish Traveller Education Programme \(STEP\)](#), a national knowledge exchange centre funded by Scottish Government and based at the University of Edinburgh, has highlighted a range of education barriers which affect children from 'Gypsy/Traveller communities'. These include a failure of education policy to align with practice, experience of persistent racism and discrimination within schools, lack of understanding about 'Gypsy/Traveller culture' to parental fears of secondary

school, high levels of digital poverty and ineffective communication between schools and families.¹³⁹ Disruptions to education amongst Scotland's Gypsy Traveller communities have also been attributed to a lack of secure base (a stable, culturally appropriate and legal place to live and access facilities and public services) and the provision of sites which are remote from centres and have poor public transport links.¹⁴⁰

We have identified State efforts to respond to some of these barriers through, for example, the [2018 guidance on 'Improving Educational Outcomes for Children and Young People from Traveller Cultures'](#) and the [Gypsy Traveller Action Plan](#).¹⁴¹ However the recent census data points to continued poor educational outcomes.

5.7. Article 15: Conditions for the effective participation of national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and public affairs.

5.8. Employment

There remains significant labour market inequality and an under-representation in employment of 'Black and minority ethnic' groups across a range of sectors.¹⁴² While employment law is reserved to the UK Parliament, the Scottish Government can take non-legislative action to promote fairer employment; its approach is set out in the [Fair Work Framework](#) and [Action Plan](#),¹⁴³ and guidance to support specific groups, such as the [Anti-Racist Employment Strategy](#).¹⁴⁴

The [Anti-racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#) notes that many of the actions in the Anti-Racist Employment strategy have already been completed, and that next steps will include engaging with stakeholders on subsequent priorities.¹⁴⁵ However, evidence from a range of sources show that 'Black and minority ethnic groups' are still more likely to experience underemployment, insecure work, occupational segregation and be less likely to enter employment or modern apprenticeships programmes to support people into work.¹⁴⁶

Our engagement with Scottish NGOS as part of the development of our ICESCR parallel report surfaced concerns about exploitative employment practices, with certain groups identified as being particularly vulnerable to the risks of exploitation, especially migrant workers and those who are not allowed to work such as asylum seekers.¹⁴⁷ Migrant workers, whose accommodation is often tied to their work, face increased risk of immediate homelessness if their employment is terminated. They also have no access to worker representation in the form of trade unions and do not accrue access to employee protections because of the length of the contract.

Asylum seekers in the UK are not allowed to work and are required to live on around £7 a day in asylum support.¹⁴⁸ Although Scottish Government has previously proposed a pilot project enabling asylum seekers to take up employment in Scotland,¹⁴⁹ the proposal was rejected by the UK Government in Feb 2025.¹⁵⁰

5.9. Health and Care

Health and wellbeing outcomes, including public health indicators, are consistently reported as being poorer among racialised communities in Scotland.¹⁵¹ Our previous monitoring reports have documented a range of racialised inequalities in the experiences of accessing healthcare services and treatment in Scotland, including in relation to mental healthcare,¹⁵² maternity care,¹⁵³ Covid-19 mortality and other associated impacts.¹⁵⁴ Some groups, including Black and minority ethnic communities,¹⁵⁵ migrants and asylum seekers¹⁵⁶ and Scotland's Gypsy Travellers¹⁵⁷ are more likely to experience poor health and face additional barriers to accessing the right support when needed.

Our report on Economic, Social and Cultural rights in the Highlands and Islands¹⁵⁸ outlined a range of physical barriers to accessing healthcare. Rights holders told us that they must travel great distances to access both basic and more specialist health services. Similar findings were reflected in a 2024 inquiry into Remote and Rural Healthcare by the Scottish Parliament's Health, Social Care and Sport Committee.¹⁵⁹

In its 2025 Concluding Observations to the UK, the ICESCR Committee made recommendations about improving health services in remote and rural areas and removing stigma and informational and technological barriers to access to health for marginalised communities, including 'Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, undocumented migrants and asylum seekers in Scotland'.¹⁶⁰ The Scottish Government's High Level Action Plan in Response to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights outlines some measures in progress to reduce health inequalities, including in areas with high proportions of asylum seekers.¹⁶¹ More specific information on efforts to reach other groups would be welcomed by the SHRC.

The Scottish Government's first [Data Strategy for Health and Social Care](#), published in February 2023, commits to improving the quality and consistency of data, including ethnicity data, to ensure that equitable care is provided for everyone in Scotland requiring it.¹⁶² However there are areas where data collection could be improved. For example, a 2025 report published by the Scottish Health Equity Unit noted that 'Scotland does not publish data on deaths due to drugs, alcohol or suicide disaggregated by ethnicity and, more generally, health outcomes by ethnic group are poorly recorded and reported'.¹⁶³ Public Health Scotland's report on Racialised Health Inequalities published in 2023 also noted that 'more work is needed across other datasets to allow routine monitoring of racialised health inequalities across the health and care system'.¹⁶⁴

6. Conclusion

While some progress has been made since the Advisory Committee's last visit to Scotland, in the SHRC's view there remain ongoing concerns in relation to the implementation of several of the Committee's previous recommendations. These include the accommodations needs of Scotland's "Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities"; promoting a climate of mutual respect and address hate speech and hate crime; tackling racist bullying in schools and improving educational outcomes for 'minority communities' and improving access to healthcare for 'minority communities'.

The evidence shared throughout this report also suggests that there are other areas where progress has not been sufficient and / or where data and evidence is lacking that would help the Advisory Group to target its consideration during the visit.

Our recommendations for areas of focus for the Advisory Committee's visit can be found at the start of this document. We hope that these questions can contribute to a thorough and effective review which results in targeted advice to Scottish duty bearers to enhance implementation of the Framework Convention.

6.1. Recommended questions for the Advisory Group's visit

The SHRC encourages the Advisory Committee to engage with the Scottish Government around the following questions:

General

1. What measures will the State take to raise awareness of the Framework Convention, including the Committee's findings and recommendations?

Article 3: Free Self-identification

2. What action is Scottish duty bearers taking to fill gaps in data collection and harmonisation, including in the collection and dissemination of intersectional data?

Article 4: Non-discrimination

3. How will the Scottish Government align its Anti-Racism Delivery Plan with recommendations made by international human rights treaty bodies, including those that come from the Advisory Committee?
 4. How will the Scottish Government improve transparency in relation to the Scottish Budget, and ensure that any action plans or delivery plans are closely aligned to the relevant budget portfolios?
 5. How will duty bearers use tools developed by the Scottish Government, such as the Human Rights Tracker Tool and the Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming toolkit, to improve monitoring and accountability on the rights of national minorities in Scotland?
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6. How will the Scottish Government address gaps in protection for national minorities in Scotland, for example via the introduction of a Human Rights Bill which incorporates the protections in the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination? What is the timeframe for delivering this legislation?

6.2. Article 5: Maintenance of Minority Culture

7. What measures is the Scottish Government taking to enhance the economic, social and cultural rights of those living in rural areas, particularly the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, to protect the sustainability of minority language communities.
8. How will the Scottish Government engage meaningfully with the concept of restorative reparations for historic injustices in relation to Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.
9. How will the Scottish Government and local authorities increase the availability and sustainability of culturally appropriate accommodation for Scotland's Gypsy Travellers.

6.3. Article 6: Protection Against discrimination, hostility and violence

10. What measures are Scottish duty bearers taking to address the high levels of hate crime and increasing reports of racially motivated violence and harassment in Scotland, and to build confidence amongst communities to report hate crimes when they occur?
 11. What human rights considerations are being made in relation to the policing of protests outside hotels housing asylum seekers in Scotland?
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6.4. Article 8: Freedom of Religion

12. How will the State ensure that children in Scotland can opt out of religious education in school as part of the right to freedom of religion?
13. What recent measures have Scottish duty bearers taken to address sectarianism in Scotland?

6.5. Article 12: Education and research

14. How will Scottish duty bearers monitor and respond to incidents of racism in schools?
15. How will the Scottish Government improve the educational outcomes of Scotland's Gypsy Travellers?

6.6. Article 15: Participation of national minorities in cultural, social and economic life and public affairs.

16. What non-legislative measures is the Scottish Government taking to address inequalities in the labour market and address exploitative employment practices towards migrant workers?
 17. How will the Scottish Government address racialised inequalities in relation to healthcare, including around data collection, and how will they address gaps in access to healthcare in remote and rural areas?
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7. Endnotes

¹ The Scottish Human Rights Commission is one of three UK NHRIs. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the NHRI for England and Wales and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is the NHRI for Northern Ireland. There is also a Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland (CYCPS), whose office is mandated to protect the human rights of children and young people.

² SHRC (2024) [Strategic Plan 2024-28](#)

³ Council of Europe National Minorities (FCNM)- [‘Role of NGOs’](#) webpage

⁴ See:

- SHRC (2024) [The Views of People in Scotland: ICERD Lived Experiences Report](#)
- SHRC (2025) [‘Annex C - Summary of Evidence from Civil Society’](#) in Parallel Report of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to Replies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the list of issues in relation to its seventh periodic report to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

⁵ UK Government (July 1999) [Report Submitted by the UK Pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1 of the Framework Convention for the Protections of National Minorities.](#)

⁶ Equality Act 2010 s.9

⁷ The Baseline Report acknowledges that National Minority is not a legally defined term in the UK and based its report on the definition of racial group which was set out in the Race Relations Act 1976 which include ethnic minority communities and Scots, Irish and Welsh, are defined as racial groups by virtue of their national origins. See UK Government (July 1999) [Report Submitted by the UK Pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1 of the Framework Convention for the Protections of National Minorities.](#) The Race Relations Act has since been superseded by the Equality Act 2010.

⁸ For example, see:

- Catalano, C. et. Al (2025) [2025 Inequality Landscape Health and Socio-economic Inequality in Scotland in 2025](#). Scottish Health Equity Research Unit
- Public Health Scotland (May 2023) [Monitoring racialised health inequalities in Scotland Data and evidence](#)
- Glasgow Centre for Population Health (accessed June 2026). Webpage: [Racialised health inequalities](#)

⁹ For example, see:

- Scottish Government (March 2021). [Race and the justice system research audit: findings report](#)

¹⁰ Scottish Government (2026). [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#)

¹¹ Scottish Government (2025). [Consultation: Scotland's Census 2031 - Topics](#)

¹² For example, see:

- Scottish Government (2023). [Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025](#)
- Scottish Government (2021). [Ethnic group classifications for data collection paper](#)
- A harmonized set of questions aligned with the 2022 is available for public bodies to use in their collection of ethnicity data, but it is unclear how it is being applied, see: Scottish Government (March 2022). [Data collection and publication - ethnic group: guidance](#)
- CRER (2024) has called for this in this paper: [Ethnicity and Socio-economic Deprivation in Scotland](#)

¹³ Scottish Government (2023). [Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025](#)

¹⁴ Scottish Government (June 2026). [Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-2025: evaluation](#). The evaluation noted some challenges including some limited impacts or too early to identify impact, barriers regarding available resources for data collectors outside Scottish Government, changes to methodology and staffing and resources (amongst other things).

¹⁵ See:

- SHRC (Oct 2022). [Equality Evidence Strategy 2023-25: Consultation Response](#)
- SHRC (March 2026). [Feedback on the Proposed Refreshed National Performance Framework](#)

¹⁶ See for example: EHRC (2022) [EHRC Response to the Equality Evidence](#); Grampian Regional Equality Council (2022) [Response to the Equality Evidence Strategy consultation](#); Scottish Government (2024) [Intersectional Evidence Review: Minority Ethnic Women's Experiences in Scotland](#)

¹⁷ Scottish Government (2025) [Equality Outcomes 2025-2029](#)

¹⁸ Scotland's Census (May 2024). [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion](#)

¹⁹ Scotland's Census (May 2024). [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion](#)

²⁰ CRER (June 2024) [Blog: Scotland's Census 2022: What do the latest statistics tell us about minority ethnic groups in Scotland?](#)

²¹ The 2022 census recorded 3,343 people²¹ under the white: gypsy/traveller category, representing 0.06per cent of the overall population. By contrast in 2011, this figure was 4,200²¹ (0.08per cent of the population). Scotland's Census (May 2024). [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion](#)

²² Scottish Government (July 2025). [Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland: an analysis of Scotland's Census 2022](#)

²³ Organisations working with Gypsy/ Traveller communities in Scotland have estimated the Gypsy Traveller population of Scotland to be between 15,000 and 20,000. The Scottish Government has acknowledged that 'Gypsy/Travellers can be more difficult to count in the census and other surveys, due to the fact that they move around, feel the need to hide their identities due to fear of discrimination, or feel a disconnect with any benefits from completing these surveys. See: Scottish Government (2024) [Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers 2 Action Plan 2024-2026](#)

²⁴ Scottish Government (2024) [Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers 2 Action Plan 2024-2026](#)

²⁵ Scottish Government (2024) [Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers 2 Action Plan 2024-2026](#)

²⁶ This supersedes the first Race Equality Action Plan (2017-2018), as well as the 'Race Equality: Immediate Priorities Plan' which was published in Sept 2021 in response to data indicating the impact of longstanding racial inequalities in relation to mortality and morbidity during the Covid-19 pandemic.

²⁷ Scottish Government (2026). [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#)

²⁸ Scottish Government (2023) [Anti-Racism in Scotland Progress Review 2023: The Race Equality Framework and the Immediate Priorities Plan](#)

²⁹ For example, see:

- AROS (Dec 2024) [Building a national anti racism accountability organisation A report for the future Anti-racism Observatory for Scotland.](#)
 - Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity (Dec 2024). [Racism, belonging and COVID's legacy of ethnic inequalities in Scotland: A report of the Evidence for Equality National Survey \(EVENS\)](#)
 - Glasgow Open Justice Centre and Making Rights Real (April 2026) [The Legal Rights of Scottish Gypsy Travellers: Scoping Report . University of Glasgow.](#)
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- Scottish Government (March 2022) [Suicide Prevention Action Plan Action 7 RESEARCH Experiences of Adversely Racialised People In Scotland Related to Suicide Ideation](#)

³⁰ SHRC (2026) [SHRC Follow Up Comments to Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

³¹ Although the Delivery Plan does state that the Scottish Government is working to embed equality and human rights across all stages of the budget process. See Scottish Government (2023) [Anti-Racism in Scotland - Progress Review 2023: The Race Equality Framework and the Immediate Priorities Plan](#)

³² [Anti-Racism Observatory for Scotland website](#)

³³ AROS (2026) [A warm hello and update](#)

³⁴ Scottish Government (2026) [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#)

³⁵ SHRC (2023) [Scotland's Open Budget Survey 2023](#)

³⁶ Scottish Government (2026) [Scottish Budget 2026-27](#). 92.2m was allocated in 2024-25, 74.4m allocated in 2025-26 and 72m allocated in 2026-27.

³⁷ The Scottish Government did not undertake a consultation as part of the budget process, although various parliamentary committees undertook their own pre-budget scrutiny. The Scottish Women's budget group has noted that despite efforts of some parliamentary Committees to engage with lived experience throughout the parliamentary term, pre-budget scrutiny processes are not widely accessible to the general public, see Scottish Women's Budget Group (2026). [Analysis of the Scottish Budget 2026-2027 Equality Considerations](#)

³⁸ Scottish Government (2026) [Scottish Budget 2026-27, Spending Review and Infrastructure Delivery Pipeline: strategic integrated impact assessment - gov.scot](#)

³⁹ Scottish Women's Budget Group (2026). [Analysis of the Scottish Budget 2026-2027 Equality Considerations](#)

⁴⁰ Scottish Government (2025). [Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy 2025-2030](#)

⁴¹ Scottish Government (2025) [Equality and human rights mainstreaming action plan - gov.scot](#)

⁴² Scottish Government (2025) [Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Toolkit](#)

⁴³ SHRC (2025) [Consultation response: Equality and Human Rights Mainstreaming Strategy](#)

⁴⁴ [Human Rights Tracker - Theme: Equality and inclusion](#)

⁴⁵ [Human rights: Tracker Design Group - gov.scot](#)

⁴⁶ Scottish Government (2025) [Scottish Government High Level Action Plan in response to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Concluding Observations](#)

⁴⁷ SHRC webpage: [Incorporation: a new Human Rights law for Scotland](#)

⁴⁸ [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(Incorporation\) \(Scotland\) Act 2024 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴⁹ See for example: SHRC (2026) [Minute of written submission in accordance with rule of court 25A.7 On behalf of the Scottish Human Rights Commission, in causa The Scottish Ministers against Jim Mongan](#)

⁵⁰ The SHRC is concerned that reforms to religious observance and religious education via the Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Act 2026 have been drafted outside the scope of the compatibility duty in the UNCRC (Scotland) Act 2024, which is one of the fundamental ways in which rights are given practical effect in Scotland by the UNCRC Act. This is because rather than creating standalone legislative provisions, it amends the Education (Scotland) Act 1980- a piece of pre-devolution legislation that falls outwith the scope of the Act. See: SHRC (2025) [Stage 3 Briefing - Children \(Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty\) Bill](#)

⁵¹ See:

- SHRC (2024) [Letter to First Minister John Swinney 03072024](#)
- SHRC (2024) [Commission statement on Human Rights Bill for Scotland](#)

⁵² Scottish Government (2025) [A Human Rights Bill for Scotland: Discussion Paper](#)

⁵³ Scottish Government (2026). [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#)

⁵⁴ Human Rights Consortium Scotland (2024). News item: [100+ Organisations Write to the First Minister to Reverse Delaying Scottish Human Rights Bill | News | Human Rights Consortium Scotland](#)

⁵⁵ Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee (2026) [Legacy Report of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, Session 6](#) (see page 21)

⁵⁶ See:

- SHRC (2025). [Letter to Cab Sec about SHRC Powers and Human Rights Bill](#)
- SHRC (2025) [Human Rights Bill for Scotland discussion paper](#)

⁵⁷ Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee [Session 6] (Jan 2026) [Human Rights Bill for Scotland](#). Scottish Parliament.

⁵⁸ As well as a range of other measures. See: Scottish Government (2025) [Growing Scotland's Languages](#).

⁵⁹ Education Scotland (2025). Wepage: [Gaelic Medium Education \(Foghlam tro Mheadhan na Gàidhlig\)](#)

⁶⁰ Qualifications Scotland. Webpage: [Scots Language Award SCQF level 3, 4, 5 and 6](#)

⁶¹ Qualifications Scotland. Webpage: [National Qualifications subjects](#)

⁶² Scotland's Census (May 2024). [Scotland's Census 2022 - Ethnic group, national identity, language and religion](#)

⁶³ Scottish Government (2026). [National Islands Plan](#).

⁶⁴ Scottish Human Rights Commission (2024) [Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the Highlands and Islands](#)

⁶⁵ Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (2022) [FIFTH OPINION ON THE UNITED KINGDOM](#)

⁶⁶ For example see:

- Webpage: [Council Tax for empty homes and second homes - mygov.scot](#)
- Highland Council (2026) Webpage: [Council Tax: second homes and long-term empty homes](#)

⁶⁷ Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee (2025) [Report on British Sign Language \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#). SP Paper 872 4th Report (Session 6), see page 39.

⁶⁸ One of the plan's outcomes is 'Empower Communities, Improve Representation, and Tackle Racism and Discrimination', under which sits eight strategic objectives encompassing a range of actions with stated deadlines.

⁶⁹ Including an independent report commissioned by the Scottish Government (2025) [Archival Research Conducted to Explore 20th Century Policies Affecting Gypsy/Traveller](#)

⁷⁰ Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee (March 2026) [Legacy Report of the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee, Session 6](#). SP Paper 1093 6th Report, 2026 (Session 6)

⁷¹ Research has highlighted that 46per cent of the 56 mapped sites in Scotland were 50 metres or less from hazards and locations with pollution and environmental degradation For example see:

- Quarmby, K (2023). Mapped: Authorised Gypsy/Traveller sites are near sewage plants and rubbish dumps. The Ferret, available: [Mapped: Authorised Gypsy/Traveller sites are near sewage plants and rubbish dumps \(theferret.scot\)](#)
 - Clark C. (2024) The Green Agenda: Why the Provision and Development of Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland is a Health Hazard as Much as an Accommodation Priority. *Social Policy and Society*. Published online 2024:1-13. doi:10.1017/S1474746424000034 [The Green Agenda: Why the Provision and Development of Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland is a Health Hazard as Much as an Accommodation Priority | Social Policy and Society | Cambridge Core](#)
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⁷² Many authorised sites are situated close to hazards that impact on quality of life and health, which includes motorways, industrial estates, sewage plants and recycling and refuge centres and areas that are prone to flooding. Proximity to such hazards exists alongside being geographically isolated from essential services such as health and education.

⁷³ Existing sites have complaints of vermin, mould, pollution (air, noise and land), lack of appropriate hygiene facilities, blocked drains, and termite or insect infestations. This is especially concerning given that some local authorities charge more rent for gypsy traveller sites than they do for local council housing. Gypsy/ Travellers on local authority sites are also at increased risk of fuel poverty due to reliance on bottled gas and electric contracts sold them by local authorities. See:

- Clark C. (2023) ['The Green Agenda: Why the Provision and Development of Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland is a Health Hazard as Much as an Accommodation Priority'](#) in *Social Policy and Society*. Published online 2024:1-13. doi:10.1017/S1474746424000034
- Scottish Women's Budget Group (nd) [A gender budgeting analysis of Scottish Gypsy/Traveller sites](#)
- Planning Aid Scotland (2015) [Gypsy/ Travellers and the Scottish Planning System: A Guide for Local Authorities. #2 in a series of 5.](#)

⁷⁴ Scottish Government (2015) [Improving Gypsy/Traveller sites: guidance on minimum sites standards and site tenants' core rights and responsibilities](#)

⁷⁵ The Scottish Housing Regulator found serious failings Fife Council's Tarvit Mill Gypsy/Traveller site in 2024. It highlighted a lengthy delay to the redevelopment of the site, serious issues with the quality of the decant accommodation including health and safety concerns and lack of communication from the Council about the issues they had raised. Due to this, it found that Fife Council had failed to meet its obligations under the Scottish Social Housing Charter and that the decant site did not meet the Scottish Government's Minimum Site Standards. See: [Regulator finds serious failings in Fife Council Gypsy/Traveller site | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

⁷⁶ In 2025, it also found serious failings in Perth and Kinross' two Gypsy/ Traveller sites- Bobbin Mill and Double Dykes, which it investigated after local residents has raised concerns with them. They found that both sites have failed to meet its obligations under the Scottish Housing Charter and did not comply with the Scottish Government's Minimum Standards. The council are currently in the process of

modernising and updating sites with support of a subsidy from the Scottish Government. See: [Regulator finds serious failings in Perth & Kinross Council Gypsy/Traveller Sites | Scottish Housing Regulator](#)

⁷⁷ Scottish Government webpage: [Accommodation and planning - Gypsy/Travellers - gov.scot](#)

⁷⁸ Clark C. (2023) '[The Green Agenda: Why the Provision and Development of Gypsy/Traveller Sites in Scotland is a Health Hazard as Much as an Accommodation Priority](#)' in Social Policy and Society. Published online 2024:1-13. doi:10.1017/S1474746424000034

⁷⁹ MECOPP and the Scottish Women's Budget Group (2024) have highlighted this has happened, even where none of the Accommodation Fund has been awarded for redevelopment and there is no other evidence of funding being allocated from the local authority capital budgets. MECOPP and Scottish Women's Budget Group (2024). [A gender budgeting analysis of Scottish Gypsy/Traveller sites](#).

⁸⁰ In 2001 there was a pivotal Inquiry of the Scottish Parliament then Equal Opportunities Committee on 'Gypsy Travellers and Public sector policies'. See Equal Opportunities Committee (2001). [Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies: Volume 1](#). SP Paper 356

⁸¹ For example, an analysis for the Scottish Census published in 2025 highlighted that fewer Gypsy/ Travellers reported being able to speak, read and write English compared with the rest of the population, more reported having no qualifications, fewer reported being economically active and higher numbers reported having a limited health condition. Scottish Government (July 2025). [Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland: an analysis of Scotland's Census 2022](#)

See:

- Scottish Human Rights Commission (June 2026). News item: [Scottish Human Rights Commission deeply concerned by recent violence on the streets in Scotland](#)
- SHRC (2025) [State of the Nation Report: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Scotland](#)

⁸³ Scottish Human Rights Commission (June 2026). News item: [Scottish Human Rights Commission deeply concerned by recent violence on the streets in Scotland](#)

⁸⁴ See for example:

- BBC (10 April 2026). News item: [Men guilty of part in violent anti-asylum Epping hotel protest - BBC News](#)
- The Scotsman (23rd Aug 2025). News item: [Hundreds gather for Perth protests over asylum hotels](#)

⁸⁵ The Scotsman (24th Nov 2025). News item: [Fears of more 'toxic' protests as council refuses to cancel English classes at Glasgow school](#)

⁸⁶ See:

- Scottish Human Rights Commission (Aug 2025). News item: [Scottish Human Rights Commission deeply concerned about anti-migrant protests](#)
- Scottish Human Rights Commission (6 Nov 2025) [Letter to Police Scotland](#). SHRC202571
- Scottish Human Rights Commission (9 June 2026) [Letter to Chief Constable Police Scotland](#) SHRC202622

⁸⁷ Scottish Government (March 2023). [Hate Crime Strategy](#).

⁸⁸ SHRC (July 2024) [Parallel Report for the Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland \(UK\) under Article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#).

⁸⁹ Scottish Government (Feb 2026). [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

⁹⁰ Scottish Government (Feb 2026). [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

⁹¹ COPFS (June 2025). [Hate crime in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

⁹² COPFS (June 2025). [Hate crime in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

⁹³ SHRC (2024) [The Views of People in Scotland: ICERD Lived Experience Report](#)

⁹⁴ Institute for Educational and Social Equity and Scottish Institute for Policing Research (April 2025). [Implementing Anti-Racism in the Context of Policing: A Systematic Review](#)

⁹⁵ CRER reports that only 1.8 per cent of officers and 2.1 per cent of police staff come from Black and minority ethnic backgrounds, see CRER (2025) [State of the Nation 2025 - Vol 1](#)

⁹⁶ Scottish Government (2023). [Ethnicity in the Justice System](#)

⁹⁷ CRER's state of the nation report, published in Dec 2025, highlights that some minority ethnic groups are also disproportionately subjected to strip searches in Scotland; their analysis of Police Scotland operational data found that 1 in 27 stop and searches of people from African, Caribbean and Black backgrounds include a

strip search, compared to 1 in 52 searches for white Scottish/British people. CRER (2025) [State of the Nation 2025 - Vol 1](#)

⁹⁸See:

- Armstrong, S., Allen, L., Cobain, R., Russo, D. and Barkas, B. (April 2025) [Nothing to See Here: Deaths in custody and their investigation in Scotland – 2024](#).
- CRER (2025) [State of the Nation 2025 - Vol 1](#)
- Police Scotland (March 2025). [Freedom of Information Response FOI 23-2790](#)

⁹⁹ Police Scotland (25 May 2023). News item: [Chief Constable statement on institutional discrimination](#)

¹⁰⁰ The Inquiry is currently receiving closing submissions until Sept 2026 and will report thereafter: [Update on closing submissions | Sheku Bayoh Inquiry](#)

¹⁰¹ The key provisions of the Bill are not yet in force as of May 2026

¹⁰² See:

SHRC (November 2025) [Briefing CRC Amendment Bill](#).

The UN Human Rights Committee has also interpreted the right not to profess any religion or belief as a fundamental part of right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, see UN Human Rights Committee (2003) [GENERAL COMMENT ADOPTED BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE UNDER ARTICLE 40, PARAGRAPH 4, OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS](#)

¹⁰³ See:

- [Children \(Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty\) \(Scotland\) Bill | Scottish Parliament Website](#)
- [Children \(Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty\) \(Scotland\) Act 2026](#)

¹⁰⁴ SHRC (November 2025) [Briefing CRC Amendment Bill](#)

¹⁰⁵ Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2024). [Concluding observations on the combined 24th to 26th periodic reports of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland : Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#) (see paragraphs 21-22)

¹⁰⁶ An Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism (AGOTS) was established in 2012 to define and examine the consequences of sectarianism in Scotland. The group published its findings in 2015, making thirty recommendations calling for clearer responsibility-taking and action in all social settings associated with sectarianism. This covered specific aspects of research to be developed and sector-specific recommendations. See: [Tackling Sectarianism and its Consequences in Scotland: Final Report of The Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland \(ioe.ac.uk\)](#)

¹⁰⁷ An Action Group on Processions published its [final report](#) in June 2024, making six recommendations to improve facilitation of processions for the Scottish Government, CoSLA and Police Scotland to consider. The Group considered the conclusions and recommendations of a short life working group on Facilitating Peaceful Assemblies in Scotland as well as previous recommendations from work commissioned by the Scottish Government on processions. The recommendations were accepted and were to be taken forward by Scottish Government in partnership with COSLA and local authorities, Police Scotland and independent experts. See:

- Scottish Government (2024). [Report of the Action Group on Processions](#).
- COSLA (2024) [COSLA Strategic Update - 26 September 2024 | Scottish Police Authority](#)

¹⁰⁸ An Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism (AGOTS) was established in 2012 to define and examine the consequences of sectarianism in Scotland. The group published its findings in 2015, making thirty recommendations calling for clearer responsibility-taking and action in all social settings associated with sectarianism. This covered specific aspects of research to be developed and sector-specific recommendations. See: Scottish Government (2015). [Tackling Sectarianism and its Consequences in Scotland Final Report of The Advisory Group on Tackling Sectarianism in Scotland – April 2015](#)

¹⁰⁹ Scottish Government (2023). [Hate Crime Strategy for Scotland](#)

¹¹⁰ Scottish Government (2023). [Hate Crime Strategy for Scotland](#).

¹¹¹ Action on Sectarianism webpage: [Reports - Action on Sectarianism Scotland](#)

¹¹² Scottish Government (2024). [Marches, Parades and Static Demonstrations Guidance](#).

¹¹³ Scottish Government and Scottish Community Safety Network (Jan 2026). [Marches, Parades & Protests Forums 2025 Summary Report](#)

¹¹⁴ Scottish Government (Feb 2026). [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#) (table 6 and table 12).

¹¹⁵ These figures refer to non-police victims. See Scottish Government (2026) [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#).

¹¹⁶ Scottish Government (Feb 2026). [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

¹¹⁷ Scottish Government (Feb 2026). [Hate crimes recorded by the police in Scotland, 2024-25](#)

¹¹⁸ UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination(2016). [Concluding observations on the combined 21st to 23rd periodic reports of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#); para 16. A similar recommendation was made again in the Committee's 2024 Concluding Observations to the UK. See UN

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (2024). [Concluding observations on the combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), para 20.

¹¹⁹ For example see: [SHRC Follow Up Comments to Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination](#)

¹²⁰ SHRC (2025). [Briefing to Parliament on Children \(Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty\) Bill 2025](#)

¹²¹ Scottish Government webpage: [Anti-Racism in Education Programme - gov.scot](#)

¹²² Scottish Government webpage: [Curriculum reform subgroup - gov.scot](#)

¹²³ Scottish Government webpage: [Diversity in the Teaching Profession and Education Workforce subgroup - gov.scot](#)

¹²⁴ Scottish Government webpage: [Racism and racist incidents subgroup - gov.scot](#)

¹²⁵ Scottish Government webpage: [Education Leadership and Professional Learning subgroup - gov.scot](#)

¹²⁶ Since 2016, efforts have been made to institute a central recording framework for racist incidents in schools via SeeMis, however a 2023 national thematic review carried out by the Chief Inspector of Education into bullying found that its use was not consistent across all schools. See:

1. Education Scotland (Feb 2023). [Approaches to recording and monitoring incidents of bullying in schools National thematic review](#).
2. Scottish Government (June 2023). [Race Equality and Anti-Racism in Education Programme Scottish Government, Stakeholder Network Group minutes June 2021: racist incidents and racist bullying workstream](#)

¹²⁷ New guidance published by the Scottish Government in June 2025, on [addressing racism and racist incidents](#) states clearly that all reports of racist incidents should be recorded (ideally within 3 working days),¹²⁷ however the guidance is non-statutory¹²⁷ and it is unclear whether it has yet led to more consistent reporting practises. The guidance has been welcomed by the Teachers Union who pointed out that staff are equally impacted by racism in schools.¹²⁷ Subsequent guidance on a [Whole School Approach to Racism and racist incidents](#) was published in 2026, which is intended to be read alongside the 2025 publication. See:

- Scottish Government (June 2025) [Addressing racism and racist incidents in schools](#)
- Scottish Government (2026). [Whole School Approach to Racism and Racist Incidents](#)

Some organisations such as CRER have called for mandatory logging of all racist incidents in schools, see BBC (19 May 2025). News item: [Racism forced my daughter to move primary schools, mum says](#)

¹²⁸ The antiracism education programme set a target to achieve at least 4 per cent of ethnic minority teachers in schools in Scotland by 2030, in line with 2011 census data. One of the primary aims is for children and young people to have role models that are representative of their lived experience. The Diversity in the Teaching Profession and Education Workforce (DITPEW) subgroup is taking forward action to meet this target. See: Scottish Government (April 2023) [Diversity in the teaching profession: annual data report 2023 - gov.scot](#)

¹²⁹ The [Diversity in the teaching profession: annual data report 2025](#) shows that there has been a slight increase in the number of minority ethnic teachers working within Scotland's schools from 987 in 2023 to 989 in 2024.¹²⁹ However this still represents only around 1.9 per cent of the workforce and therefore falls short of meeting the 4 per cent target. In light of the fact that the 2022 census data reflects increase in the ethnic minority population in Scotland, the fact that diversity target is not being met is of even greater concern. See: Scottish Government (April 2023) [Diversity in the Teaching Profession Annual Data Report 2025](#)

¹³⁰ Education Scotland webpage: [Building Racial Literacy](#)

¹³¹ Hay, N., Davies, E. and Sapouna, M. (June 2024). ' [Teacher responses to racially motivated bullying in Scotland](#)' in Sec. Language, Culture and Diversity Volume 9 - 2024 | <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2024.1376017>

¹³² This evidence was obtained as part of our engagement under the recent monitoring cycle under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination (ICERD).

¹³³ See for example:

- CRER (2025). [State of the Nation 2025 - Vol 1](#)
- Francis, D.A (Oct 2025) "[Nae problem here](#)": Troubling race and racism in Scottish education. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2025.105092>.

¹³⁴ [Human Rights Consortium Scotland \(2022\) Summary of points raised in Scotland's Human Rights Report Card: Universal Periodic Review civil society workshops in November -December 2021](#)

¹³⁵ [Human Rights Consortium Scotland \(2022\) Summary of points raised in Scotland's Human Rights Report Card: Universal Periodic Review civil society workshops in November -December 2021](#)

¹³⁶ For example, see:

- Marcus, G. (2019). [Gypsies and Travellers in Education: Hidden, Deviant or Excluded](#). In: Gypsy and Traveller Girls . Studies in Childhood and Youth. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.
- Scottish Parliament Equal Opportunities Committee (2001). [Inquiry into Gypsy Travellers and Public Sector Policies: Volume 1](#). SP Paper 356. First report 2001.
- Advisory Committee on Scotland's Travelling People (June 1892) Third Term Report: 1979-1982. Available at the National Library of Scotland.
- Research published as recently as 2024 by STEP reflect similar, ongoing issues: STEP (2024). [Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures](#)

¹³⁷ Scottish Government (July 2025). [Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland: an analysis of Scotland's Census 2022](#)

¹³⁸ See:

- Scottish Government webpage: [Gypsy/Travellers: Education](#)
- Scottish Government (2018). [Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures](#)
- Riddell, S. (2021) '[The rights of children from Gypsy/Traveller and Roma backgrounds in Scotland](#)' in Hungarian Educational Research Journal, volume 12, issue 1. (2021) <https://doi.org/10.1556/063.2021.00088>

¹³⁹ STEP (2024). [Improving educational outcomes for children and young people from travelling cultures](#)

¹⁴⁰ Planning Aid Scotland (2015) [Gypsy/ Travellers and the Scottish Planning System: A Guide for Local Authorities. #2 in a series of 5.](#)

¹⁴¹ Scottish Government (2024) Improving the Lives of Scotland's Gypsy/Travellers 2 Action Plan 2024-2026

¹⁴² See:

- CRER (2025). [State of the Nation 2025 - Vol 1](#)
- Equalities and Human Rights Committee (2020). [Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress?](#) SP Paper 854 3rd Report, 2020 (Session 5)

¹⁴³ Scottish Government (2022) [Fair Work action plan: becoming a leading Fair Work nation by 2025](#)

¹⁴⁴ A 2020 Scottish Parliament Committee Inquiry examining race equality, employment and skills noted a lack of progress on race equality outcomes. The Scottish Government accepted and pledged to implement the recommendations through its Fairer Scotland for All: An Anti-Racist Employment Strategy. See: -Equalities and Human Rights Committee (2020). [Race Equality, Employment and Skills: Making Progress?](#) SP Paper 854 3rd Report, 2020 (Session 5)

- Scottish Government (2021). [Tackling race inequality in employment: statement](#)
- Scottish Government (2022). [Anti-racist employment strategy - A Fairer Scotland for All](#)

¹⁴⁵ It also commits to working with the UK government and others to ensure that ethnicity pay gap reporting is implemented in a way that meets the needs of adversely racialised people in Scotland. See Scottish Government (2026) [Anti-Racism Delivery Plan 2026-2030](#)

¹⁴⁶ See:

- Scottish Government (Feb 2026) [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: statistical summary July 2023](#)
 - Research by the EHRC found that less than 2 per cent of all apprenticeships in Scotland are taken by people from minority ethnic communities: EHRC (2022) [Modern Apprenticeships Equality & The Economy : Spreading The Benefits](#)
 - Our own lived experience engagement for CERD also cited lack of employment support as an issue. See: SHRC (2024). [The Views of People in Scotland: ICERD Lived Experience Report](#)
 - People from a minority ethnic background have accounted for 12per cent (11,539) of participants receiving No One Left Behind support since April 2019: Scottish Government (2026) [Scotland's Devolved Employment Services: No One Left Behind Statistical Summary for April 2019 to September 2025](#)
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- EHRC (2022). [Inquiry into racial inequality in health and social care workplaces | EHRC](#)

¹⁴⁷ SHRC (2025) [Parallel Report of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to Replies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the list of issues in relation to its seventh periodic report to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#), See Annex C- Summary of Evidence from Civil Society

¹⁴⁸ UK Government webpage: [Asylum support: What you'll get - GOV.UK](#)

¹⁴⁹ [Scottish Government \(2024\) Scottish Asylum Right to Work Proposal](#)

¹⁵⁰ [Labour Government Blocks SNP Plan on Work Rights for Asylum Seekers - VisaVerge](#)

¹⁵¹ See:

-SHRC (2024). [NHRI Input to the List of Themes for the Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland \(UK\) under article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#)

- SHRC (2025). [Parallel Report of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to Replies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the list of issues in relation to its seventh periodic report to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#).

¹⁵² See:

- SHRC (2024). [Parallel Report for the Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland \(UK\) under Article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#).
- SHRC (2025). [Parallel Report of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to Replies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the list of issues in relation to its seventh periodic report to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#)

¹⁵³ SHRC (2024). [Parallel Report for the Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland \(UK\) under Article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#).

¹⁵⁴ For example, see:

- SHRC (2021) [Comments on the UK's 40th National Report on the Implementation of the European Social Charter](#).
- SHRC (2021). [COVID-19 Status Certificates: Human Rights Considerations](#)
- SHRC (2025). [Human Rights and COVID: Reflections on the COVID Inquiry](#)

- SHRC (2024). [Parallel Report of the Scottish Human Rights Commission to Replies of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the list of issues in relation to its seventh periodic report to the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#) SHRC submission to UN on ICERD

¹⁵⁵ See:

- SHRC (2024). [Parallel Report for the Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland \(UK\) under Article 9 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#)

-SHRC (June 2023). [Background Information for the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance in advance of its 2023 visit to the United Kingdom:Sixth round country monitoring.](#)

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ The 2022 census revealed that Gypsy/Travellers were more likely than the general population to have a limiting longer-term health problem or disability (23.4 per cent compared with 10.8 per cent), with fewer reporting having good or very good health. See: Scottish Government (2025) [Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland: an analysis of Scotland's Census 2022 - gov.scot](#). Public Health Scotland has acknowledged that Gypsy/ Travellers also have higher mortality rates, morbidity and co-morbidity rates, lower levels of childhood immunisations, higher than average levels of obesity, hypertension, risk factors for diabetes and risk of cardiovascular disease compared with the general population. They also have higher risks for poor mental health, mental illness and suicide. See: Public Health Scotland (April 2023). [Improving access for Gypsy/Travellers to the NHS and health and social care in Scotland Considerations for carrying out an equality and health inequality impact assessment.](#)

¹⁵⁸ SHRC webpage: [ESC rights in the Highlands and Islands | SHRC Spotlight Projects](#)

¹⁵⁹ Health, Social Care and Sport Committee (2024). [Remote and Rural Healthcare Inquiry](#) 13th Report, 2024 (Session 6).

¹⁶⁰ SHRC (2025). [State of the Nation Report: Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in Scotland](#)

¹⁶¹ Scottish Government (2025). [Scottish Government high level action plan in response to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights concluding observations.](#)

¹⁶² Scottish Government (2023). [Health and social care: data strategy.](#)

¹⁶³ Scottish Health Equity Unit (2025). [Inequality Landscape Health and Socio-economic Inequality in Scotland in 2025](#) (page 84).

¹⁶⁴ Public Health Scotland (2023). [Monitoring racialised health inequalities in Scotland Data and evidence Monitoring racialised health inequalities in Scotland](#)