

# Every child, every chance



## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT – RESULTS

<b>Title of Policy</b>	Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan
<b>Summary of aims and desired outcomes of Policy</b>	To make considerable progress towards the 2023/24 interim targets outlined within the Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill.
<b>Directorate: Division: Team</b>	Housing & Social Justice: Social Justice & Regeneration Division: Social Justice Strategy

### Executive Summary

The public sector equality duty requires the Scottish Government to pay “due regard” to the need to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The Scottish Government therefore undertook an EQIA as part of the process to develop the first Delivery Plan due under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 to support the improvement of the relevant National Outcomes for children and families.

The Delivery Plan covers the period 2018 - 2022 and is required to set out a range of policies and proposals that will contribute to meeting the interim and final targets outlined within the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017. The Act required that an assessment of the contribution of each of the measures, must be set out, alongside the financial resource required.

The Act specifically required the Plan to set out:

- measures to provide financial support for children and parents,
- measures to support children living in a household where the household’s income is reduced or costs of living increased because a member of the household has a protected characteristic, and
- measures to support children living in lone parent households.

The development of the Delivery Plan identified a range of priority groups where the evidence shows us that prevalence of child poverty is higher. These priority groups each relate to one or more protected characteristics:

- Households with a disabled parent or child
- Minority ethnic households
- Larger families (many of which are minority ethnic families)
- Lone parents (90% of whom are women).
- Mothers aged under 25
- Families with a child under one year of age.

The impact of each policy or proposal in the Plan is assessed against these priority groups with the analysis presented in the Chapter 7 of the Delivery Plan and detail provided in **ANNEX 2**.

**The analysis presented in this EQIA is a summary consideration across the range of policies and proposals and the range of protected characteristics.** It aims to set out the strategic equality issues that were considered in developing the first Delivery Plan and to highlight specific areas of discrimination, barriers to equality or opportunities for advancement of equality related to protected characteristics.

The EQIA shows that the broad principles and policies of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan will be positive across protected characteristics. Several protected characteristics; disability, race and gender have evidenced higher levels of poverty and hence any action to reduce poverty through impacting on the drivers of child poverty should be beneficial. However, **a key point to note here is that each policy and proposal within the Plan will require its own detailed EQIA as it is taken forward.**

Minimum consultation requirements were placed upon Scottish Ministers as a part of the Act. To respond to this, as well as our duties under the Public Sector Equality Duty, discussions were held with a range of stakeholders to learn about their views on barriers and opportunities presented by the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act. These views and a range of statistics and research evidence are taken into account in developing the EQIA and the Plan itself. A full list of stakeholders consulted is included in chapter 1.

A separate Children's Right and Wellbeing Impact Assessment is also available as **ANNEX 4** of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

# CHAPTER 1 – BACKGROUND AND SCOPE

## Introduction

The EQIA is set out in 3 chapters. The first chapter sets out the background to the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act, its Delivery Plan and the scope of this EQIA. The second chapter summarises what we know about child poverty related to the full range of protected characteristics. The final chapter takes a strategic look across the policies and proposals in the Delivery Plan to identify impacts.

## Background

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Bill was introduced on 9 February 2017 in response to UK Government changes to the Child Poverty Act 2010 which removed the UK 2020 child poverty targets and amended the remit of the Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission. Once it had completed its parliamentary stages, the Bill became the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 in December 2017.

The Act sets in statute four income based targets to be met by 2030/31, and interim targets, based on the same measures, to be met by 2023/24. The targets are largely focused on the income of the household, while also considering housing costs, as well as wider costs of living; captured through the material deprivation measure.

The 2030 targets are that, after housing costs, of children living in households in Scotland:

- (a) fewer than 10% live in relative poverty,
- (b) fewer than 5% live in absolute poverty,
- (c) fewer than 5% live in combined low income and material deprivation,
- (d) fewer than 5% live in persistent poverty

In 2015/16, more than one in four children in Scotland (26%) were living in relative poverty after housing costs (AHC). Although less than the comparable figures for the UK as a whole (30%), this is unacceptably high.

Further, our Scotland level child poverty projections produced by Howard Reed at Landman Economics and Graham Stark at Virtual Worlds Research project that by 2030/31, and based on currently announced UK and Scottish policies, around 38% of children could be living in relative poverty, 32% in absolute poverty, 17% in low income and material deprivation and 16% in persistent poverty. These projections are published and available on the Scottish Government website.

## The Scope of the EQIA

The Delivery Plan addresses the issue of child poverty in Scotland. It therefore affects all children and their parent(s)/guardian(s) who are living in or at risk of living in poverty in Scotland. Children are considered to be in poverty if they live in

households which are below the poverty threshold on any of our 4 measures set out above.

As children are part of the household unit, when assessing poverty it is necessary to consider the circumstances of the household as a whole. The Plan sets out the central premise that poverty results from the inter-relationship between three key drivers:

- Income from employment
- Income from Social Security and
- Costs of living.

Chapter 2 of the EQIA therefore seeks to identify issues by protected characteristic that reduce the ability of parents to obtain sufficient income from employment or from social security or brings families increased costs compared to other households.

The Delivery Plan includes a range of policies and proposals that will impact on all three drivers. Chapter 3 of the EQIA takes a strategic assessment of the policies across protected characteristics to identify potential impacts. A further chapter of the Delivery Plan also contains policies to help families living in poverty now by mitigating the impact of poverty or improving future prospects for children. Chapter 3 of the EQIA also takes a strategic look at these policies but given that this section is about children's outcomes rather than the three key drivers, this section should be read alongside the Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights states that "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and respect" and that everyone should enjoy these rights irrespective of race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan seeks to ensure that those rights are progressed to reduce the negative impacts of poverty on children in Scotland. It does this both through setting out a range of policies and proposals and by ensuring that the views of people with lived experience of poverty are taken into account.

In terms of policies within the Plan, direct impacts can be seen in relation to the right to Social Security (Article 22); the right to work (Article 23) and the right to a decent standard of living (Article 25). Direct links can also be made to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals of 'No Poverty (Goal 1)' and 'Decent Work and Economic Growth (Goal 8)'. There are opportunities for further goals and rights to be progressed as work continues, for example in terms of zero hunger (UN Goal 2), gender equality (UN Goal 5), good health and well-being (UN Goal 3) and quality education (UN Goal 4), but our primary aim is to raise the disposable income of those in poverty.

In terms of process, the Delivery Plan has attempted to build on the Fairer Scotland conversation and the establishment of Poverty Truth Commission-type organisations to include the views of people with lived experience of poverty. The UN has noted that establishing these processes is as important as establishing policies. Specific engagement was undertaken with various stakeholders and interest groups to inform and influence the Delivery Plan, exceeding the minimum consultation requirements

outlined within the Bill. During this external engagement on the Delivery Plan, issues were explored to better understand how poverty impacts on groups with different protected characteristics and to consider the specific needs of these groups when developing the Plan. Such issues are noted in the relevant section below along with additional statistics or research. Consulted groups are noted below.

### **Parent Focus Groups**

3-D Drumchapel  
Contact Scotland  
Falkirk Council  
Fife Gingerbread  
Maryhill Women's Centre  
One Parent Families Scotland (lone mothers and lone fathers' groups)  
Poverty Truth Commission (focus group of parents)  
Parents with disabilities

### **Children and Young People Focus Groups**

The Children's Parliament  
The Prince's Trust  
Young Scot

### **Organisations**

Aberlour Homes for Good Children in Scotland  
Article 12  
BEMIS  
Big Lottery Scotland  
British Red Cross  
CEMVO Scotland  
Church of Scotland  
Circle  
Citizens Advice Scotland  
Action for Children  
Community Care Providers Scotland  
Contact  
Cyrenians  
Falkirk Council  
Geeza Break  
Glasgow Disability Alliance  
Home Start  
Inclusion Scotland  
Interfaith Scotland  
Joseph Rowntree Foundation  
Barnardos

LGBTI Youth  
NG Homes  
One Parent Families Scotland  
Oxfam Resonate Together  
Parent Network Scotland  
Peek Project  
Save the Children  
People First  
Radiant and Brighter  
Scottish Refugee Council  
Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum  
Scottish Women's Aid  
SCVO  
Shetland Islands Council  
Star Project  
Fife Gingerbread  
Scottish out of School Care Network  
Stepping Stones for Families  
Who Cares Scotland  
Children 1st Shelter

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **CHILD POVERTY AND THE PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS**

This chapter sets out a summary of what we know about child poverty and protected characteristics. It is based on a range of published statistics, research evidence and the views of people identified through stakeholder engagement. There are gaps in our knowledge and evidence and we will be looking to develop this as we take forward the Scottish Government's Equality Evidence Strategy<sup>1</sup>.

There are three sections within each protected characteristic below.

- The first describes issues in terms of the relationships between the protected characteristics and the key drivers of child poverty; income from employment; income from social security and costs of living.
- The second section summarises views of stakeholder groups with regard to the protected characteristics.
- The final section lists areas where the implementation of the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act could present opportunities to advance equality for the protected characteristic. However it also makes clear that many of these issues are structural systemic problems and this first Delivery Plan can only be part of the answer.

In reading this, it is important to note that child poverty is experienced in many different ways in different families across Scotland. In 2017, the Scottish Government published a report to help illustrate this breadth of experience<sup>2</sup>. It is also important to note that every family will display a combination of different protected characteristics. Although the analysis below focuses one by one on protected characteristics, we do not want to underplay this huge variation. It is important to remember both the intersectionality of protected characteristics and the wide range of family circumstances that influence the barriers people face and their lived experience of poverty.

## **Gender**

### **Description of relationship between child poverty and gender**

Children need to be cared for. Throughout Scottish society, irrespective of other protected characteristics, evidence shows us that women undertake the great majority of caring in both the formal and informal sectors, with care being both paid and unpaid. Care brings many positive rewards to the woman who cares, to the child, to the household unit and to society more generally. However, it reduces the time and energy that individual mothers have available for paid work, limiting their

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<sup>1</sup> Scotland's Equality Evidence Strategy <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/07/9574>

<sup>2</sup> Poverty in Perspective: A typology of Poverty in Scotland  
<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0051/00515779.pdf>

choices in terms of career and work location. This, in turn, can reduce women's earned income potential over a lifetime and their pension for retirement.

Care decisions, whilst shaped by societal expectations, are usually agreed at a household level. At an individual level, the decisions may make sense but at a societal level, it is the unpaid role of one partner, usually the woman<sup>3</sup>, that allows the other partner to work full-time, and this contribution to the economy can often be discounted. Such inequality in care responsibility drives aspects of the gender pay gap whilst hiding the true costs and benefits of care. Gender issues therefore take a central role in tackling child poverty.

Gender gaps in participation in the paid labour market have narrowed over time but it is still the case that women are less likely to participate. Furthermore, when women do participate, this is more likely to be on a part-time basis and, as noted above, they are more likely to have to take breaks in their careers in order to accommodate unpaid caring roles. Time out for caring also creates specific barriers when women want to re-enter the paid labour market. On-going work with stakeholders to develop a Scottish Gender Index is helping to quantify some of these differences whilst differences in work and pay are regularly reported on the Scottish Government website.

When a household only contains one adult, this caring role can be particularly difficult to handle. Death of a partner, divorce or separation can be catastrophic for the remaining partner, particularly if they do not have the financial means to house and provide for children or the experience and skills to obtain quality paid work. The vast majority of lone parent families are headed by a woman and we know that in the event of separation or the loss of a partner, women can be especially vulnerable to entering poverty.

Evidence suggests that lone parents also struggle to get the Child Maintenance that they are entitled to from the non-resident parent, which can exacerbate the risk of poverty. This is a reserved policy area and this Delivery Plan does not address it, although there may be opportunities to consider this in future Plans. However as a key issue for lone parents it is included here. Changes to the Child Maintenance System (CMS), including the introduction of fees, are designed to encourage parents to work out their own private arrangements, without involving the CMS. However research by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) found that 3 months after Child Support Agency (CSA – the previous system) case closure, over half (56%) of receiving parents did not have a maintenance arrangement in place<sup>4</sup>. The £20 application fee acted as a disincentive for involving the CMS, with those on very low incomes (i.e. with a gross annual household income below £15,600) being least likely to report that they could afford the fee.

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<sup>3</sup> Family Resource Survey data shows that when looking at households where one adult is working full-time and one part-time in Scotland, in 91% of cases the person working part-time is a woman. (FRS, 2014/17)

<sup>4</sup> DWP Survey of Child Support Agency case closure outcomes - Full report [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/576574/rr935-child-support-agency-case-closure-outcomes-survey.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/576574/rr935-child-support-agency-case-closure-outcomes-survey.pdf)



Lone parents have been identified as a priority group for the Delivery Plan and further analytical evidence is presented in **ANNEX 2**.

However, even in two adult households, having a child leads to many women leaving or downgrading their career in order to balance care responsibilities. When the household has a low income, the lack of affordable childcare may make these situations, in both lone parent and two adult households, more likely. It appears that there are many children who live in poverty where the one adult is in paid work full-time, but the second adult is in paid work part-time or does not have paid work.

As noted above, the overall participation rate of women in the paid labour market has been increasing (Chart 1). However, it is not just access to employment but the nature of that employment that is important. The issues around women and care are layered on top of other gender specific issues which reduce earning potential for women (Chart 2).

There is a well-recognised issue with horizontal (across industries) segregation in the labour market, with women over represented in some areas, often referred to as the 5 C's of caring, cashiering, catering, cleaning and clerical. These sectors have historically low pay, low progression and low status but can often provide more flexible hours making them a practical option.

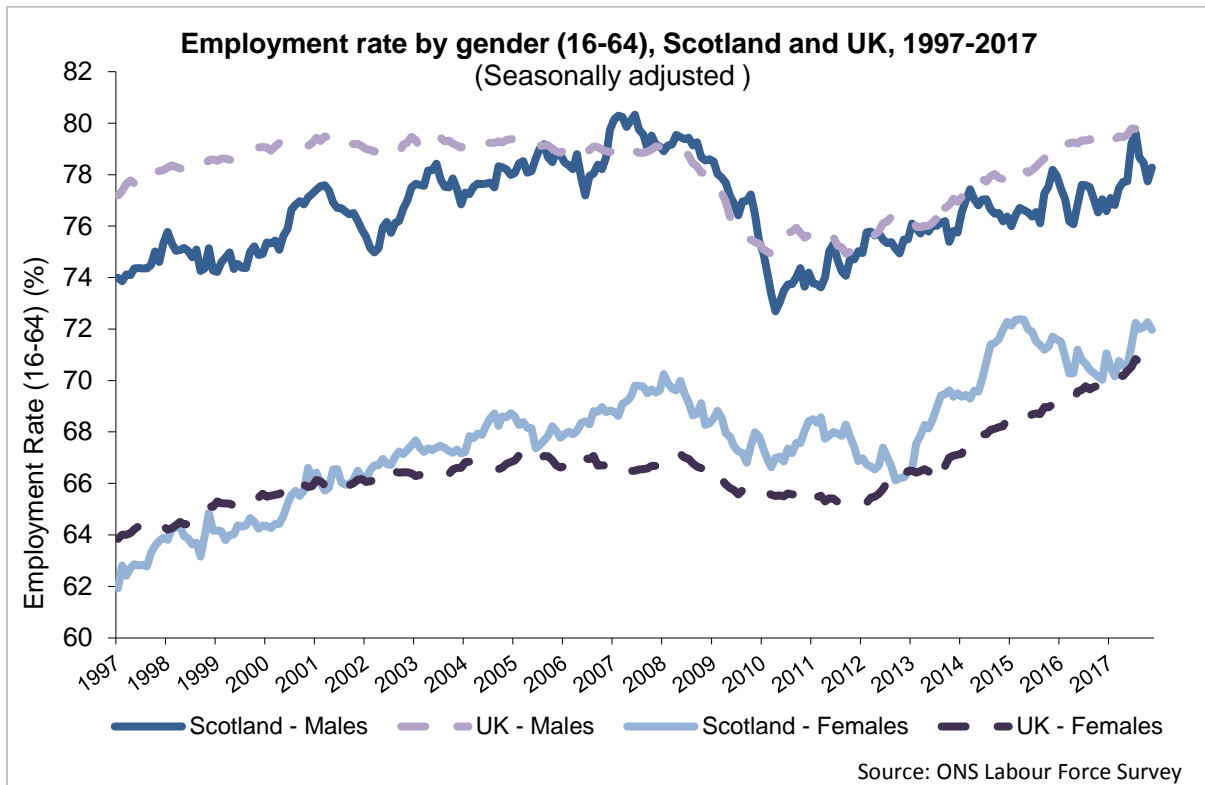
As a result of lower income from earnings and their care role, women tend to rely on social security for a higher proportion of their income. Recent work by the UK Women's Budget Group provides an assessment of the disproportionately negative impact of recent changes in UK welfare policy on women<sup>5</sup>.

Gender therefore runs throughout the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan as a key component. However, analysis on income and household income from normal sources does not allow effective disaggregation of gender, apart from in households where there is only one adult. This is an area where we will look to improve income data to be able to further evidence trends.

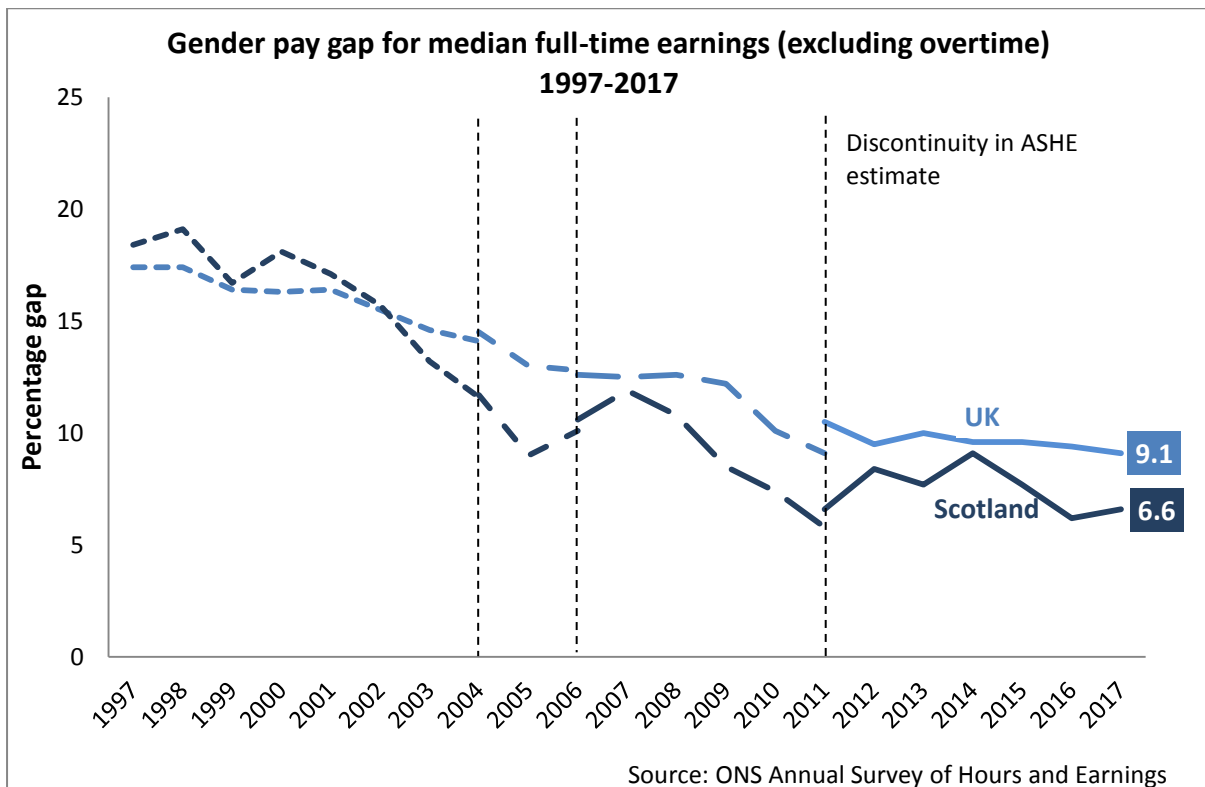
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<sup>5</sup> Women's Budget Group press release (2017)  
<https://wbg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/pre-budget-press-release-nov-2017-15-11.pdf>

**Chart 1 Employment Rate by Gender**



**Chart 2 Gender pay gap for median full-time hourly earnings (excluding overtime) April 1997 to 2017**



In discussion with stakeholders, specific issues and barriers raised with regard to gender included:

- Although welcoming the inclusive growth framework, Scottish Government should do more to articulate how reducing women's poverty is part of their economic planning with key priorities of unpaid care and care work sector.
- Early education should be provided from the start of a child's life in a way which is accessible and affordable for single mothers.
- Efforts should be made to improve the system of child maintenance. Only a small percentage of absent fathers pay the full amount of child maintenance and many pay nothing.
- Both government and employers should do more to support women who are returning to the labour market

In addition, the recent Scottish Government consultation on 'Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls'<sup>6</sup> is relevant here. In this consultation, stakeholders raised concerns about lack of economic opportunities acting as a barrier to women leaving abusive relationships. If a woman does leave, she then faces the additional vulnerabilities associated with homelessness and becoming a lone parent household. This was seen as a particular issue for women who might have no recourse to public funds due to their migration status.

### **Opportunities to tackle discrimination and advance equality on gender**

There are many structural issues around gender which are being taken forward in Scotland through the inclusive growth framework and specific policy development around expanding child care, reducing the gender pay gap, promoting STEM subjects to girls at school, college and the workforce, preventing violence against women and girls and seeking gender equality on public boards. Child poverty actions can directly support and provide a clear rationale for others to support these broad societal and cultural changes. In addition, 'Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls' recognises the importance of addressing women's economic inequality as integral to the aim of eradicating violence against women and girls.

Specific policies and proposals listed in the Delivery Plan could contribute towards addressing the following key issues:

- Reducing the gender pay gap
- Increasing the value of care to society, for example developing skills, progression and wage levels in the formal care sector
- Increasing the provision of formal care to allow more women to enter paid employment

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<sup>6</sup> <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/equally-safe-consultation-draft-delivery-plan-2017-21-analysis-responses/>

- Assisting women to return to the paid employment market after a period of caring.

## **Age**

### **Description of relationship between child poverty and age**

The whole Act and the Delivery Plan is about children. Childhood is a part of the age protected characteristic, and children cannot by their own actions remove themselves from household poverty. A separate Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment is provided in the Delivery Plan's **ANNEX 4**.

However, the approach to the Delivery Plan is to increase disposable income for families and from this perspective there are two specific issues related to age. First, literature evidence that younger parents are more likely to be in poverty; second, evidence that parents with a very young child are more likely to be in poverty. These are layered on top of broader issues related to young people which will impact on them as young parents now or in the future. These general topics are discussed first before moving on to the specific evidence for young parents. Issues around the birth of a child, very young children and poverty are described in the section on pregnancy and maternity below.

### **Life chances for children and young people in Scotland today**

Naomi Eisenstadt, the First Minister's Independent Poverty and Inequality Advisor, produced a 2017 report<sup>7</sup> on the life chances of children and young people in Scotland which was accompanied by an evidence review<sup>8</sup>. In general, the review showed that:

- Younger households are more likely than older households to not manage well financially, to have no savings and to have much lower wealth.
- Being unemployed when young leads to a higher likelihood of long-term negative outcomes in later life in terms of employment, pay, life chances and health.
- Young adults are more likely to experience low quality employment, including low pay and insecure work. Moreover, being better qualified is less of a guarantee of better-paid work than in the past.
- While education is less of a guarantee of quality employment than it once was, educational attainment is still a key driver of access to the labour market.
- As would be expected, young adults generally report better physical health than older age groups and mental health indicators for children, young people and adults in Scotland have been generally stable over the past decade. However, 16-24 year olds are more likely than older age groups to self-report having ever self-harmed and mental wellbeing is found to deteriorate with age during early adolescence.
- In terms of risky health behaviours, rates of tobacco and alcohol use, rates

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<sup>7</sup> Life chances of young people: Report to the First Minister  
<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/07/2537>

<sup>8</sup> Life chances of young people: Evidence Review <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/life-chances-young-people-scotland-evidence-review-first-ministers-independent/>

of teenage pregnancy and youth offending have declined over the last decade. The review concludes by identifying eight areas of potential concern for the life chances of today's young people:

- An increasing proportion of young adults are living in the private rental sector or with their parents, and fewer are able to save for a deposit to buy their own home
- Young adults are particularly likely to be in low quality employment compared to older age groups and to past generations
- For a significant minority of young adults labour market entry and labour market progression are major challenges
- Young people, particularly those not going directly to university, are having to negotiate increasingly complicated transitions from school into employment
- There is continued gender segregation in subjects studied during education and training, and in the labour market
- Educational attainment is persistently low for some groups of school leavers
- There is some evidence of growing mental health issues for young people, particularly young women
- The persistence of health inequalities and slower declines in rates of certain risky health behaviours in the most deprived areas compared to the least deprived areas.

This analysis shows a range of inequality of outcomes which could make it hard for young people as parents to move out of poverty.

## **Young Mothers and Young Parents**

As Chart 3 shows, the number of children born to younger mothers has been falling steadily since the 1970s. On-going policies to inform young people about safe sex and contraception and the impact of having a child on their future lives appears to be reducing teenage pregnancy. However, in 2016 there were still 13.5 births per thousand women aged 15-19 and it is highly unlikely that young women of this age, without wider family support, could have the financial backing to avoid child poverty. Young parents (Young Mums) are identified as a priority group for the Delivery Plan and specific analysis is provided in its **ANNEX 2**.

Two data sources have provided a range of useful information on young mothers: a report from the Young Woman's Trust<sup>9</sup> (YWT); and findings from Growing Up in Scotland looking specifically at young mothers who were under 20, and those who were 20-25, when their first child was born<sup>10</sup>.

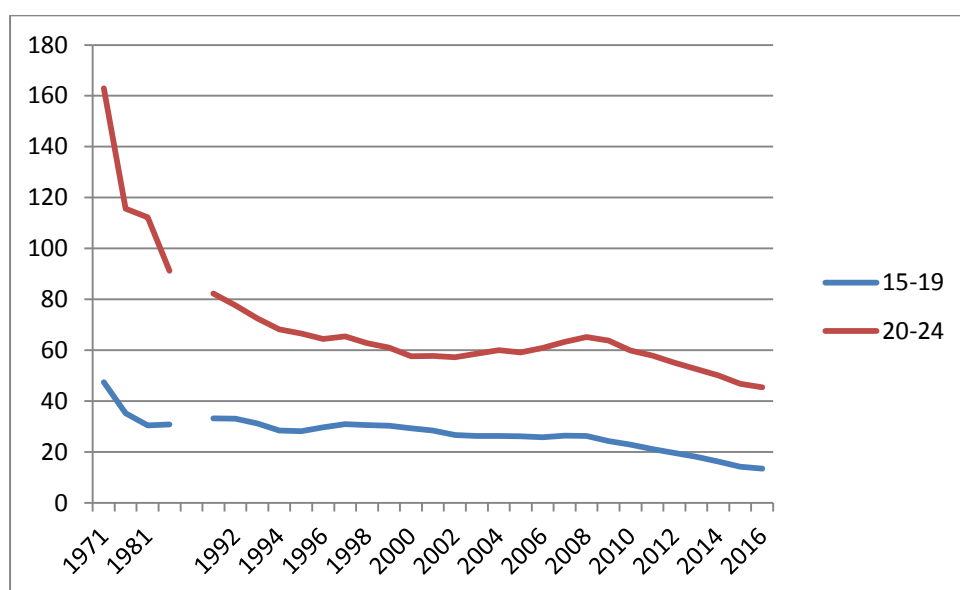
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<sup>9</sup> Young Woman's Trust (2017) What Matters to Young Mums?

[https://www.youngwomenstrust.org/assets/0000/6339/Young\\_Mums\\_report\\_version\\_2.pdf](https://www.youngwomenstrust.org/assets/0000/6339/Young_Mums_report_version_2.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Knudsen, L & Bradshaw, P (2017) Growing up in Scotland: Patterns of maternal employment and barriers to paid work. Scottish Government. <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/6970>

Chart 3 - Number of births per thousand younger mothers from 1971 to 2016



Source: NRS Vital Events Tables (Birth)

Findings from these sources show that young mothers tend to be less well-educated than older mothers when their first child is born. Although young mothers do resume their education at a later stage, they remain less well educated compared to older mothers who have continued to upgrade their qualifications at a higher rate:

- When the first child was aged 10 months, 17% of mothers aged under 20 had qualifications at Higher Grade or above compared with 50% of mothers in their early twenties and 80% of those aged 25 or older.
- When the child was aged two, around a quarter (24%) of mothers aged under 20 had achieved a qualification at Higher Grade or above compared with three-quarters (76%) of older mothers. By age six this figure was 37% for mothers under 20.

Young mothers were less likely to be in work when their first child was 10 months old, with education being found to be a key predictor of later employment:

- When their child was aged 10 months old, mothers aged under 20 were significantly less likely to be in employment (including on maternity leave) than those aged 20 or over. As maternal age increased, so too did likelihood of employment. At 10 months, 21% of mothers under 20 were employed compared with 55% of those in their early twenties and 83% of those aged 25 or older. Employment rates amongst mothers aged under 20 did increase over time however, reaching 43% by age six, though this was still considerably lower than for older mothers.

Not surprisingly, given lower employment and educational levels, prevalence of low income is higher for young mums, with a high proportion of that income coming from various social security entitlements:

- When their baby was 10 months, most mothers aged under 20 (72%) had a household income in the bottom quintile, compared to 40% of mothers aged 20 to 24 and 12% of those aged 25 or older.
- When the child was aged 10 months, 89% of mothers under 20 were in receipt of child tax credit, 57% received income support, 51% received housing benefit and 43% received council tax benefit. The comparable figures for those aged 20-24 were lower (at around 24% for each benefit) but the proportion of those aged 25 and older receiving these benefits was much lower again at around 5-6% for each benefit.

Young parents are also more likely to be lone parents and to still be a lone parent when the first-born child is 6, although they may or may not have formed relationships in the interim.

- When the child is aged 10 months, mothers aged under 20 were less likely to be living with the child's father. Thirty per cent of mothers aged under 20 lived with the child's father compared with 56% of those in their early twenties and 89% of those aged 25 or older.
- By the child's sixth birthday, mothers aged under 20 when the child was born are still more likely than older mothers to be lone parents (45%, compared to 32% for those in their early 20s and 10% for those aged 25 and older).

The YWT report found 27% of mothers aged 16-24 were using foodbanks or had used them in the past. The same report found that of more than 300 mothers aged under 25, 45% said they refrained from eating proper meals in order to ensure their children were fed. Sixty one per cent said they were only just managing financially.

### **Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to age**

- The availability of childcare near to or within colleges was raised as a particular issue for teenage parents seeking to further their education
- Minimum wage for 16 year olds was thought to be too low, particularly where young people already have a child or are living and managing their own home.

### **Opportunities to tackle discrimination and advance equality on age**

As most of the evidence here relates to young mothers, many of the issues raised above for women in general are still relevant. In addition specific opportunities raised here include:

- Reducing stigma and discrimination around pregnancy and maternity (also discussed later in this report).
- Increasing skills levels and encouraging opportunities for young mothers in higher paid and growing sectors.
- Supporting increasing aspirations and vocational choices for girls and young women at school and colleges.

- Supporting efforts to reduce teenage pregnancy to allow mothers to be more financially secure before having children.
- Increasing the provision of affordable childcare to allow more young women to enter paid employment.
- Continuing to target programmes of support to help overcome some of the vulnerabilities associated with young parents.

## Disability

### Description of relationship between child poverty and disability

Almost one third of households with a disabled person were in poverty (31%) in 2015/16. In total, around 410,000 households in poverty in Scotland included a disabled person (42% of all households in poverty) of which 370,000 households included a disabled adult while 70,000 households included one or more disabled children. Given the high prevalence of poverty for disabled people, families with a disabled adult or child are a priority group in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan.

The employment rate for disabled people is significantly below that for the general population (APS, 2017) so disabled parents who are able to work may find it difficult to be accepted into paid work.

Disability also creates additional costs which are described more fully in the Delivery Plan's **ANNEX 2**. These include accommodation, heating, equipment, transport, medical supplies and insurance. There is debate amongst stakeholders about how disability poverty should be measured, and whether Scottish Government's published figures adequately account for these additional costs of living. For this reason our new statistics published in March 2018 provide two different measures of disability poverty.

As well as the additional costs of living for disabled people, their capacity - and the capacity of other household members - to earn income can be negatively impacted. Depending on the nature of disability one or more household members may be required to act as a carer full or part time which reduces the time that they would be able to undertake paid work.

A report by Scottish Government in 2017 set out the impacts of UK welfare changes for disabled people<sup>11</sup>. This report showed significant negative impacts on disabled people in Scotland due to recent changes, with 44% of disabled households potentially seeing their DLA/PIP award reduced or removed and 7,000-10,000 disabled people being affected by work allowance changes. The report goes on to discuss the results of a survey by the Disability Benefit Consortium suggesting that disabled people attending for welfare assessment felt the stress and anxiety

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<sup>11</sup> Impact of UK welfare changes on disabled people <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/impact-uk-welfare-policy-disabled-people/pages/2/>



associated with the assessment made their condition worse and that a majority of those surveyed felt that assessors did not understand their condition. Finally, a new policy to restrict eligibility for additional bedrooms has had a disproportionate impact on disabled people who are more restricted in the types of homes that are suitable and the space that they need. Without Scottish Government mitigation through Discretionary Housing Payments, over 40,000 disabled people claiming Employment and Support Allowance would lose around £12.50 per week (£650 per year) due to this bedroom tax.

### **Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to disability**

Through engagement with stakeholder bodies listed in Chapter 1 it was identified that there are additional financial challenges faced by the family of a disabled parent or child. Issues raised include:

- Fuel poverty: if a child has mobility issues, heating costs can be much higher. Particular conditions can be exacerbated by the cold too.
- Additional costs associated with having a disabled child such as costs of equipment, specialist therapies, home adaptations etc.
- Travel – cost of taxis to and from hospital where it's not possible to use public transport (and public transport may not even be available in some areas).

Engagement also raised other issues around improving quality of life noting that isolation is a particular issue, especially in school holidays and that access to programmes such as fitness and music can improve quality of life. Consultees also noted that it would be better to think about the household as a holistic whole rather than thinking about policies for children and adults separately – hence the Delivery Plan focus on priority families with a disabled adult or child.

For many consultees, childcare was seen as the single biggest issue. Consultees noted that specialist childcare usually isn't available, so parents of disabled children are unable to work, and even where it is available, places are so limited that there are huge waiting lists.

There were also specific issues mentioned related to specific disabilities.

- Information for parents provided by schools often wasn't in an easy read format which was challenging for parents with learning difficulties.
- Financial support but also wider support and information were needed to help blind or deaf parents when engaging with agencies. For example, leaflets and staff fluent in British Sign Language (BSL).
- Online systems could be a huge barrier for deaf and deaf-blind parents – thinking for example of Universal Credit.

### **Opportunities to tackle discrimination and advance equality on disability**

There are many structural issues around disability which are being taken forward through the Disability Action Plan – A Fairer Scotland for Disabled People. A separate plan for BSL users, the British Sign Language (BSL): National Plan 2017 to

2023 has been developed to help ensure deaf and deafblind BSL users are fully involved in all aspects of daily and public life. Child poverty actions can support this broader cultural change and provide a clear rationale for others to support change.

Addressing the key issues raised through the Delivery Plan will complement wider action:

- Increase employment rate for disabled parents
- Reduce fear and discrimination around employment for disabled parents
- Increase skill levels and encourage opportunities in higher paid and growing sectors for disabled parents
- Reduce essential costs
- Help meet additional specialist costs for equipment for disabled children through maximising take-up of relevant social security
- Increase availability of specialist childcare
- Increase educational attainment for disabled children so that as adults they will have better life chances and employment prospects.

## **Pregnancy and Maternity**

### **Description of relationship between Child Poverty and Pregnancy and Maternity**

Households with children aged 0-4 are at high risk of poverty, but the risk is much higher when the youngest child is aged less than one year old. Families with a new child are more likely to enter poverty, even when controlling for other factors. Research from 2015 found a quarter of 'new families' are in poverty in the year after having their first child<sup>12</sup>. For new lone parents, this figure was much higher. For these reasons, households with a young child are a priority group in the Delivery Plan.

The majority of households in poverty have at least one adult working. Unsurprisingly, most new mothers who were not working, nor looking for work, stated "looking after their own children" as a reason for not working. This was true for both mothers in low income households and those above the poverty threshold.

In 2017, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission commissioned a programme of research to investigate the prevalence and nature of pregnancy discrimination and disadvantage in the workplace<sup>13</sup>. The results in their report are based on interviews with 3,034 employers and 3,254 mothers and found that the majority of employers reported that it was in their interests to support pregnant women and those on maternity leave and they agreed that statutory rights relating to pregnancy and maternity are reasonable and easy to implement.

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<sup>12</sup> Child Poverty Transitions (DWP) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/child-poverty-transitions-exploring-the-routes-into-and-out-of-poverty>

<sup>13</sup> Pregnancy and Maternity Discrimination Findings <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/managing-pregnancy-and-maternity-workplace/pregnancy-and-maternity-discrimination-research-findings>

However, the research also found that:

- Around one in nine mothers (11%) reported that they were either dismissed; made compulsorily redundant, where others in their workplace were not; or treated so poorly they felt they had to leave their job; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 54,000 mothers a year.
- One in five mothers said they had experienced harassment or negative comments related to pregnancy or flexible working from their employer and /or colleagues; if scaled up to the general population this could mean as many as 100,000 mothers a year.
- 10% of mothers said their employer discouraged them from attending antenatal appointments; if scaled up to the general population this could mean up to 53,000 mothers a year.

Similar findings were identified in a report from the YWT which found that many women had encountered unhelpful attitudes and discriminatory or unlawful practices from employers.

- 25% had experienced discrimination when their employer found out they were pregnant.
- 39% had been illegally questioned in an interview about how being a mother affects their ability to work
- 26% had requests for flexible working related to their pregnancy or child turned down.<sup>14</sup>

These findings are slightly at odds with attitudes in the population as a whole. The Scottish Social Attitudes Survey (SSAS) (2015)<sup>15</sup> found low levels of discriminatory attitudes to women who had taken maternity leave. Respondents were asked to assess whether a woman who took a year off for maternity leave was equally deserving of a promotion as a female employee who had not taken any additional time off. Nearly 9 in 10 (89%) thought that both women were equally deserving of a promotion.

However, SSAS also found much stronger support for 6 months of paid maternity leave than for 6 months paid paternity leave, indicating that stereotypical views about who should take time out of paid employment to care for a small child still exist. In 2015, over 8 in 10 agreed that mothers should have the right to six months paid leave (85%) compared with just over half agreeing that fathers should have the same right to six months paid leave (55%). This did represent an increase from 46% agreeing that fathers should have this right in 2010.

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<sup>14</sup> Young Woman's Trust (2017) What Matters to Young Mums?

[https://www.youngwomenstrust.org/assets/0000/6339/Young\\_Mums\\_report\\_version\\_2.pdf](https://www.youngwomenstrust.org/assets/0000/6339/Young_Mums_report_version_2.pdf)

<sup>15</sup> Scottish Social Attitudes 2015: attitudes to discrimination and positive action

<https://beta.gov.scot/publications/scottish-social-attitudes-2015-attitudes-discrimination-positive-action/>

The support for new parents through the social security system guarantees some financial support, but the system is complex, and the amount received depends to some extent on previous work status. A new child will increase eligibility for a variety of social security benefits.

Finally, we know that the first year of a child’s life can require substantial additional expenditure by parents, especially for the first child.

**Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to pregnancy and maternity**

No specific issues were raised by stakeholders that have not been picked up elsewhere.

**Opportunities to tackle discrimination and advance equality on pregnancy and maternity**

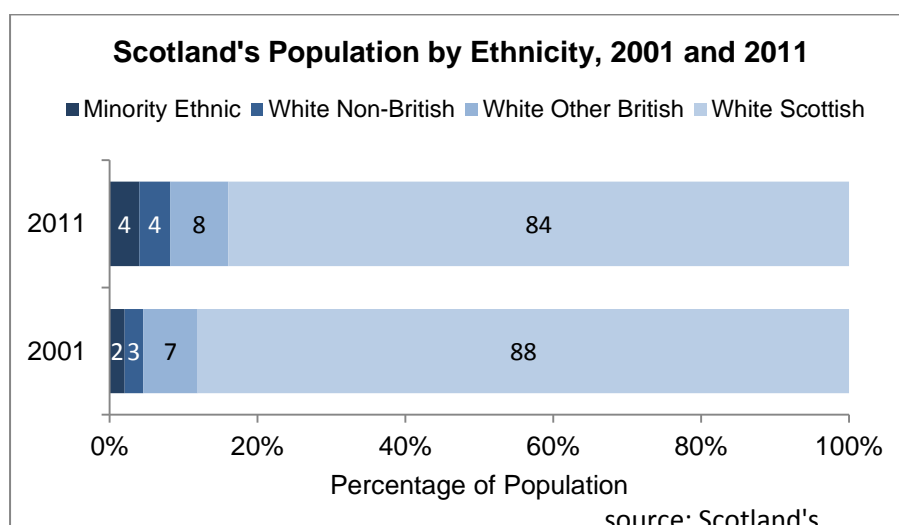
- Continue to support employers to understand their legal responsibilities for pregnancy and maternity discrimination in the workplace
- Reduce discrimination related to pregnancy and maternity
- Assist new mothers with additional essential costs for first child
- Increase availability of affordable childcare from 6 months

**Race**

**Description of the relationship between Child Poverty and Race (ethnicity)**

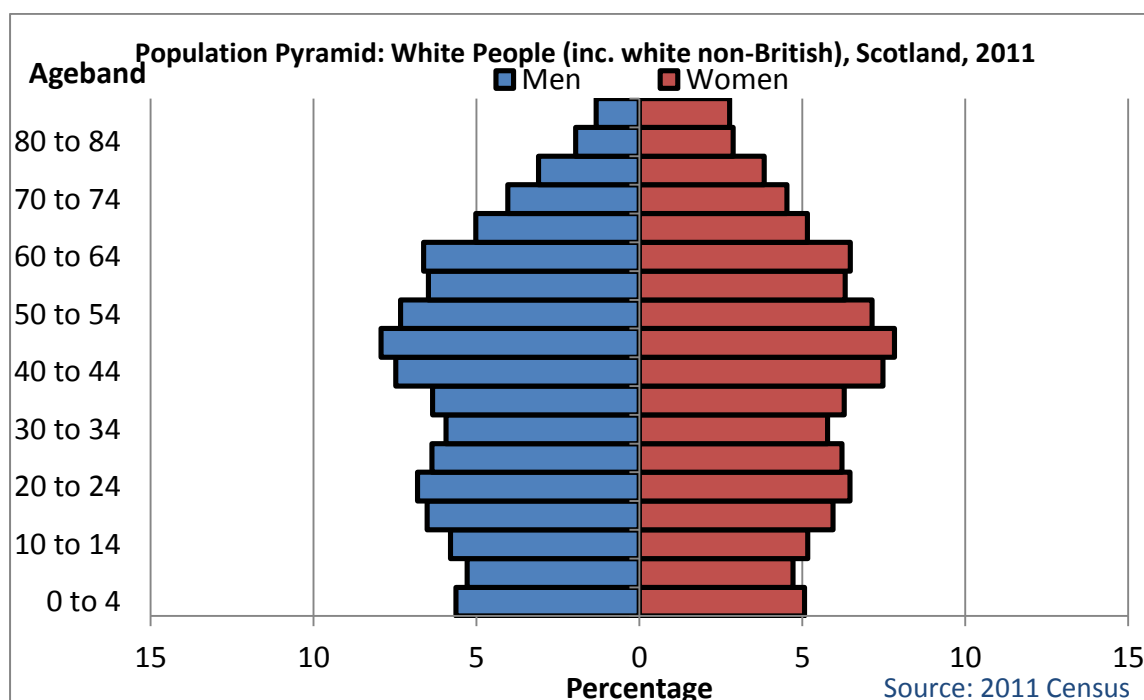
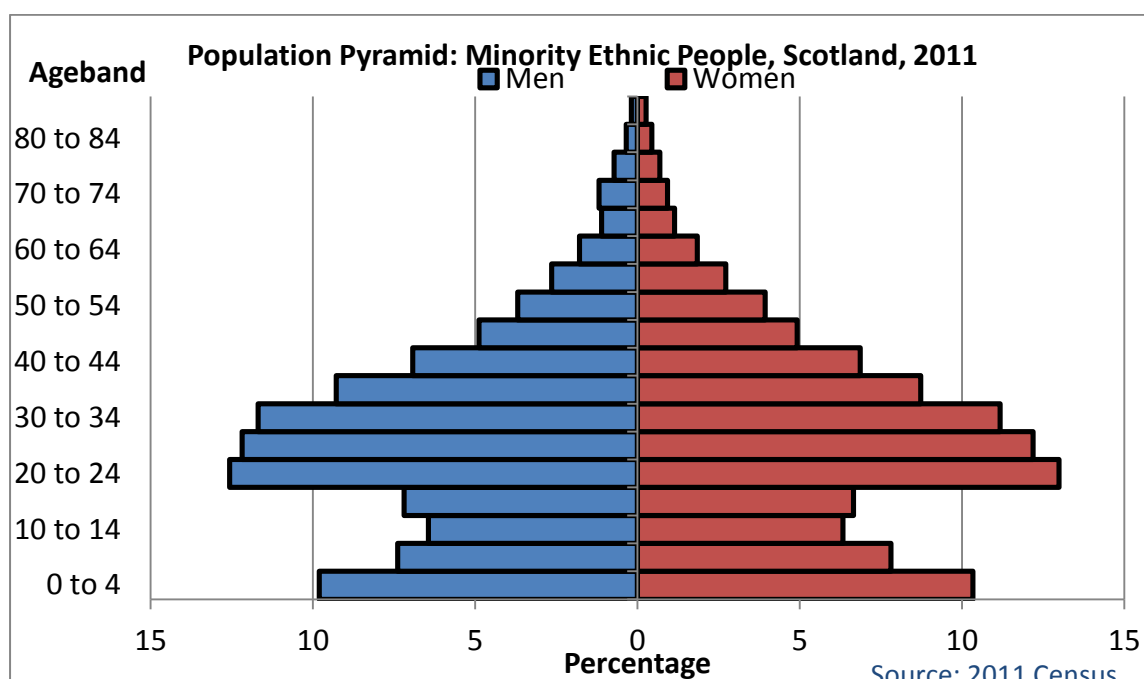
Scotland’s minority ethnic population doubled from 2% to 4% in the decade to 2011 and over the same period there was a fall of 4 percentage points in the proportion of people who identified as White: Scottish (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Scotland’s population by ethnicity, 2001 and 2011 (Census)



The minority ethnic (ME) population is younger than the white population (Chart 5). The median (average) age of minority ethnic people living in Scotland was around 27, in comparison to around 42 for the white population. This is important to keep in mind when comparing outcomes between the two groups. However, it is particularly important in the context of child poverty because a greater proportion of the ME population are of child-bearing age and therefore likely to have a higher birth rate and possibly have younger children. Both of these factors are linked to higher levels of child poverty.

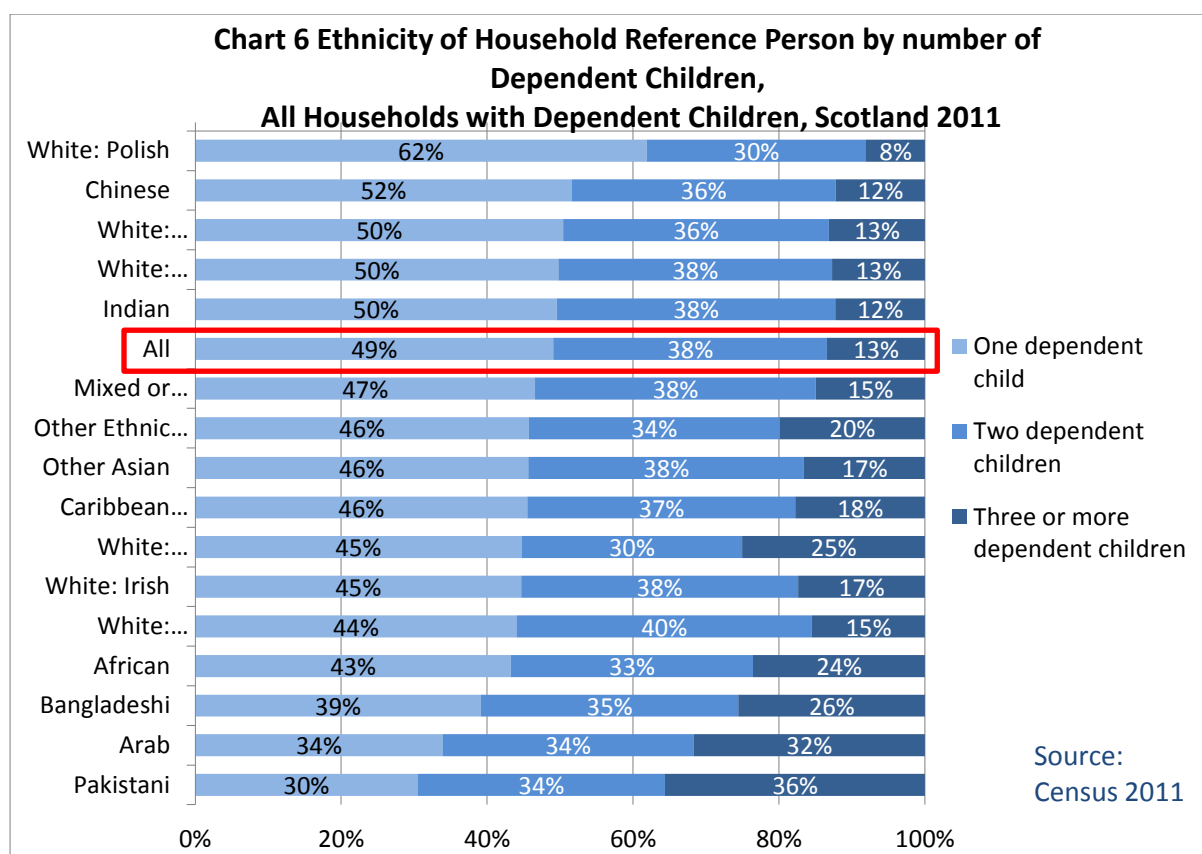
**Chart 5: Population Age of Minority Ethnic Population, 2011 (Census)**



In the Family Resources Survey (FRS) the 'Mixed', 'Black / Black British' and 'Other' ethnic groups all have sample sizes that are too small to reliably report on their own. Therefore, although it is far from ideal, they have been combined into a single category so that poverty can be discussed.

Children from minority ethnic (non-white) groups are more likely to be in poverty, both before and after housing costs, compared to those from the 'White - British' group. For example, in 2015/16 on an After Housing Costs basis, the FRS shows that 25% of White Other, 32% of Asian/Asian British and 39% of Other households were in relative poverty compared to 18% of White British.

Families with three or more children have been included as one of the priority groups within the Delivery Plan, and there is evidence that certain ME groups are more likely than the White-Scottish group to have three or more children. For example, findings from the 2011 Census showed that, of families headed by a White Scottish household reference person 13% had three or more dependent children (Chart 6). This figure was much higher for some ethnicities. It was highest for the Pakistani group (36%), then Arab (32%), Bangladeshi (26%); White:Gypsy/Traveller (25%) and African (24%).

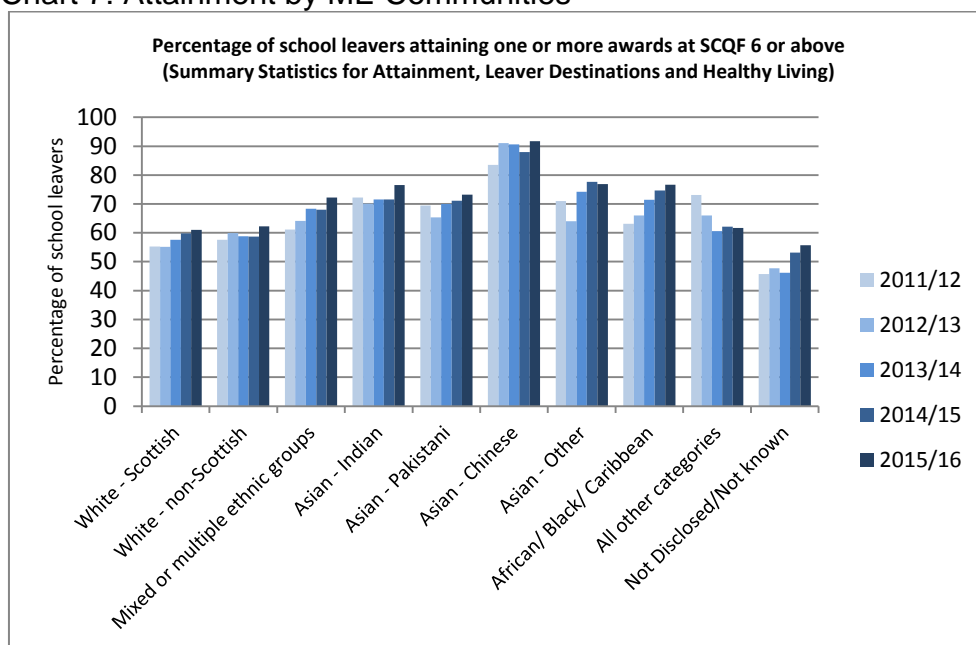


Evidence shows that employment rates are lower for certain ME groups. For example Census data shows that 22% of Africans were unemployed compared to

18% of Gypsy/Travellers; 17% Arabs; 16% Caribbean/Black and 13% Pakistani<sup>16</sup>. A range of issues are included in here such as the age of workers, the level and nature of skills, the location of required work, immigration status but also the incidence of racial discrimination in the workplace.

One important factor in explaining the link between poverty and ethnicity is the fact that some ME communities are over-represented in low-paid work, despite evidence that suggests that gaps in skills levels have now closed and ME children achievement at school is high. Children from non-white ME groups tend to have higher levels of school achievement than those from the White Scottish ethnic group (Chart 7). Looking at the proportion of school leavers achieving one or more SCQF level 6 or better (Higher) in 2015/16<sup>17</sup>, the highest rates were found amongst pupils recorded as Asian-Chinese (92%), then Asian-Other, Asian- Indian, African/ Black/ Caribbean (all 77%) and Asian – Pakistani (73%), compared to 62% for White-Other and 61% for White-Scottish. However, there is some evidence to suggest that higher attainment by minority ethnic young people at school does not always translate into Higher Education and or positive quality employment.

Chart 7: Attainment by ME Communities



In a recent survey of social attitudes in 2015, there was a general reduction in discriminatory attitudes across the board. However, discriminatory attitudes did still exist, with views on Gypsy Traveller / Roma Community and Muslim community remaining particularly high. Further, around a quarter (26%) of people agree that 'People from ethnic minorities take jobs away from other people in Scotland' (SSAS 2015).

<sup>16</sup> Analysis of Census

[http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/8716?\\_ga=2.6811634.1704435638.1521729422-169120219.1501147473](http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2015/03/8716?_ga=2.6811634.1704435638.1521729422-169120219.1501147473)

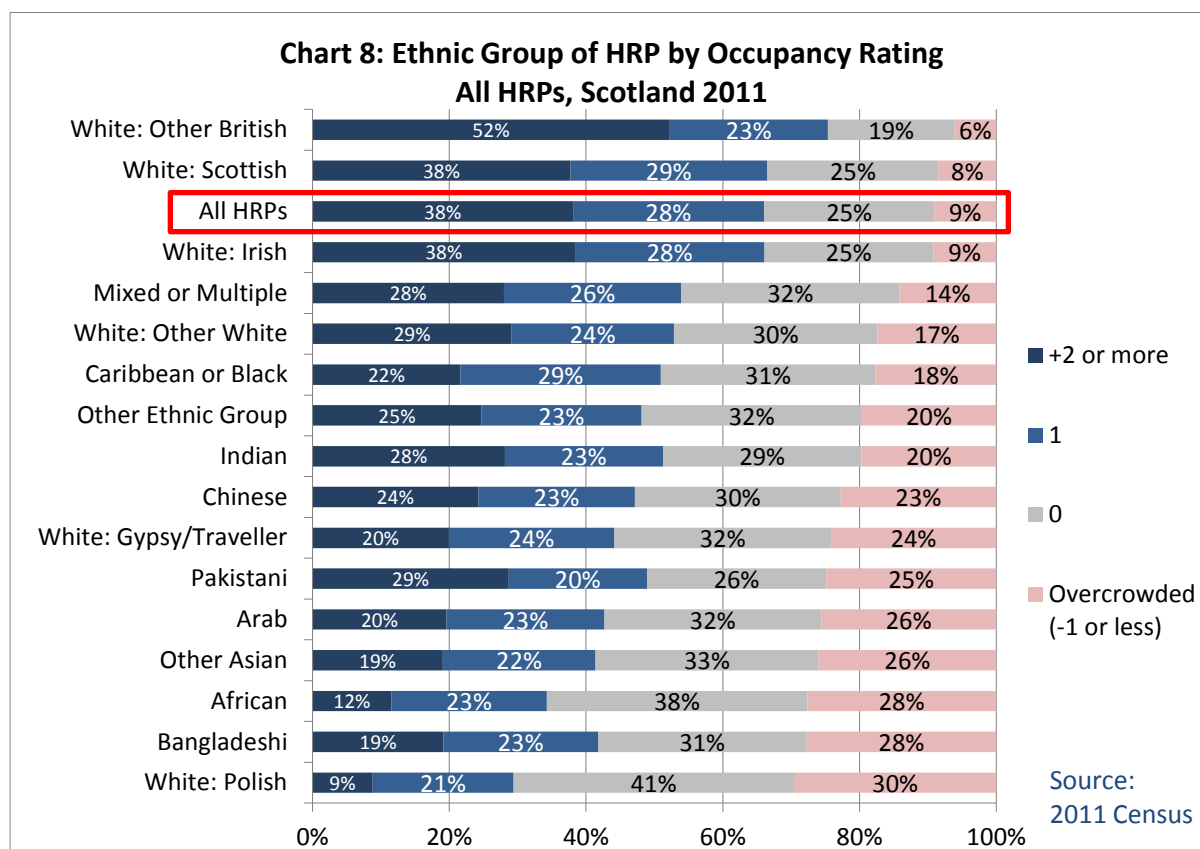
<sup>17</sup> Summary Statistics for Attainment, Leaver Destinations and Healthy Living, Scottish Government, June 2017 <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0052/00521269.pdf>

However, UK research<sup>18</sup> shows that, as well as differences between ethnic groups, there is substantial variation within ethnic groups, with some having much greater degrees of economic inequality among members than others.

Furthermore, UK-wide analysis by the National Equality Panel found that over the last 40 years the growth in income inequality across the UK is mainly attributable to growing gaps within groups rather than between them, so that to achieve a more equal society there is a need to narrow the gaps both between and within groups (Hills et al., 2010<sup>19</sup>).

A further factor relating to poverty for ME households is increased housing costs. Evidence on housing costs is limited but from the Census it is clear that there is a substantially increased risk of living in overcrowded circumstances for ME communities (Chart 8). Eight per cent of White:Scottish people were living in overcrowded houses compared with 32% of White:Polish, 28% of Bangladeshi and African; 26% of Arab; 25% of Pakistani; 24% of White:Gypsy/Traveller and 23% of Chinese people.

As shown earlier (in Chart 6) minority ethnic groups often have larger families, meaning that they require more rooms, but as a high proportion are in low income they may struggle to afford larger homes. Further analysis of housing circumstances and ethnicity may be useful to understand poverty before and after appropriate housing costs.



<sup>18</sup> Poverty and Ethnicity: Key Messages for Scotland <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/poverty-and-ethnicity-key-messages-scotland>

<sup>19</sup> An Anatomy of Economic Inequality in the UK <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/28344/1/CASereport60.pdf>



## **Refugees and Asylum Seekers**

The Institute for Research into Superdiversity (IRiS) Working Paper published in 2014<sup>20</sup> undertakes an evidence review of poverty among refugees and asylum seekers in the UK.

The paper looks at the experiences of poverty among refugees, asylum seekers and refused asylum seekers, including women, children, unaccompanied asylum seeking minors, families, elderly, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender (LGBT) people, disabled, and members of cultural and religious minorities, and how these change over time.

The paper notes that a JRF inquiry between 2006 and 2009 also found destitution to be a phenomenon that was experienced by many for prolonged periods and that many refused asylum seekers preferred to endure long periods of destitution in the UK rather than return to their country of origin – some for more than six months and others for two years or more.

Research by refugee community researchers for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation found that the combination of low levels of support, poor housing, stigmatisation by the state and racism left refugees and asylum seekers with a range of mental health problems (Phillimore et al) for which they received very limited support and also reduced their ability to develop their language skills thereby impacting upon their long-term integration potential<sup>21</sup>. Although this research is dated similar themes arose in our discussions with stakeholders .

### **Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to ethnicity and child poverty**

Alongside this, through engagement as part of child poverty work it was identified that for refugee/asylum seeker communities there are additional challenges. Many in this community are reliant on religious communities and buildings for food; there are serious issues with social isolation and mental ill health due to the stresses of being in a new country; language barriers; concerns about money; and fears about being victimized for being “strangers in another country”. Consultees felt that more advocacy was needed because many were coming from countries which didn’t have “benefits systems” so it was alien to have to engage with them, or go through Jobcentres to find work.

Specific issues were also noted with the cost of transport to take up opportunities – accessing services, education, leisure, culture, employment.

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<sup>20</sup> Poverty among refugees and asylum seekers in the UK: An Evidence and Policy Review  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/iris/2014/working-paper-series/IRIS-WP-1-2014.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> Empowering Birmingham’s migrant and refugee communities  
<https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/empowering-birminghams-migrant-and-refugee-community-organisations>

Engagement also suggested that colleges were struggling with demand for English language classes and language barriers were a particular challenge when official documents were sent out by post – such as council tax demands.

Engagement as part of the New Scots process raised issues relating to asylum seekers not being eligible to engage in paid employment, whilst waiting for a decision on their status, and the need for benefits to be put in place quickly once a decision has been made, and asylum seekers transition to refugee status. There was a feeling that support and advocacy should be provided during this transition period from asylum seeker to refugee, to help refugees understand their rights, and also what is expected of them.

## **Opportunities to address discrimination and advance equality on race**

There are many structural issues around race which are being tackled through the Race Equality Framework and the Race Equality Action Plan as well as the integration of asylum seekers in the New Scots 2 strategy. It should be noted that asylum matters are reserved to the UK Government, however many of the services essential to support integration, including health care and education are devolved to the Scottish Government. Child poverty actions can support change and provide an additional rationale for others to support change. Specific issues identified here include:

- Reduce discrimination in employment and show employers the positive impact of cultural diversity
- Increase range and type of skills available in the ME community
- Consideration of how to close the income gap within minority ethnic groups
- Further assistance to asylum seekers and refugees to help them settle and develop quality lives, in line with the key principle of integration from day one.
- Assistance including advocacy and translation to maximise income and to understand eligibility for a range of Social Security and benefits in-kind.

## **Religion or Belief**

### **Description of relationship between Child Poverty and Religion or Belief**

Limited statistical evidence is available with regard to poverty and religion or belief in Scotland due to small sample sizes. JRF published a collection of evidence reviews<sup>22</sup> in 2014, as part of their evidence package to support their subsequent report *'We Can Solve Poverty in the UK'*.

Within this report JRF outlined:

“In comparison with the relationship between ethnicity and poverty, there has

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<sup>22</sup> Reducing Poverty in the UK <https://www.jrf.org.uk/report/reducing-poverty-uk-collection-evidence-reviews>

been very little research focusing specifically on religion. However there have been a number of studies which compare the effects of religion and ethnicity on economic activity, unemployment and earnings, which are in turn major factors in poverty.”

JRF went on to note:

“In line with this, we find major differences in the prevalence of poverty between people of different religious affiliations. People of Jewish affiliation are least likely to be found in poverty (13%), in contrast to those from the Muslim community (50%). The second group most likely to be found poor are Sikhs (27%) followed by Hindus (22%). Christians are generally less likely than most other religious groups to suffer poverty, although there are significant differences between Anglicans (in England) (14%) and Catholics (19%). People with no religious affiliation, however, have a similar rate of poverty (18%) as the overall average.”

The Scottish Government is intending to consider various data sources in summer 2018 to see if what, if any, specific information can be derived around religion and poverty for Scotland.

Social attitudes data shows that faith-based discrimination still exists in Scotland, and that this might be a particular issue in relation to discrimination against Muslims. Findings from the Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2015 showed that one in five people (20%) would be unhappy/very unhappy if a close relative formed a long term relationship with/married someone who was Muslim, the figure for someone who is Jewish was 6% and less than 1% for someone who was Christian. Likewise, the veil was the only religious symbol that a majority of respondents (65%) felt an employer should be able to insist that an employee remove. Views about other religious symbols were quite similar with people saying that a bank should be able to insist a Muslim woman should take off her headscarf (20%), and that a Sikh man should take off his turban (20%). A slightly lower proportion (15%) said that the bank should be able to insist that a Christian woman take off her crucifix while at work.

### **Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to religion**

From consultees, the main issues raised related to the lack of suitable emergency food provision with food banks providing predominantly tinned food where individuals were not used to food in this form, or food that was not Halal for those with Muslim faith or Kosher for the Jewish population.

There were also felt to be a number of faith community “enclaves” within Glasgow which could prevent young people in these communities from achieving social mobility.

### **Opportunities to address discrimination and advance equality on religion**

There are many structural issues around religion, many of which are being tackled through the Race Equality Framework and the Race Equality Action Plan as well as

the integration of asylum seekers in the New Scots strategy. Child poverty actions can support change and specific issues identified here including:

- Increase range of emergency food provision available to meet varying religious requirements
- Further assistance to religious based communities to integrate into wider Scottish society
- Action to reduce faith-based discrimination and improve public attitudes towards faith groups in Scotland

## **Sexual orientation**

### **Description of relationship between Child Poverty and Sexual Orientation**

There is little evidence available about sexual orientation and poverty in Scotland. A compilation of evidence was produced in 2017 which includes some information around employment and skills and relationship to Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation but samples are too small to look at lower income households<sup>23</sup>.

However, the University of Essex Institute for Social and Economic Research published 'An examination of poverty and sexual orientation in the UK'<sup>24</sup> in 2013. The key findings from this paper included:

### **Sexuality of parent / adult family member**

"Little is known about the distribution of sexual minorities across family types or household structures in the UK. However, findings suggest that that lesbians and gay men are significantly less likely to live with children, though bisexuals are about as likely as heterosexuals to live with children."

### **Sexual orientation and youth homelessness**

"Research suggests that lesbian, gay and bisexual youth have a particularly high risk of confronting homelessness as a consequence of their sexuality"<sup>25</sup>. Homelessness can arise for voluntary or involuntary reasons. The report went on to note that there is no recent research considering sexual orientation and homelessness in the UK and that risk factors and consequences have never been quantified. For these reasons, they concluded that it was difficult to discern whether the link between sexuality and homelessness remains relevant in the UK or whether service provision, record keeping and other issues highlighted have been addressed. However, as noted below, stakeholders in 2017 definitely felt that this link was still strong.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://beta.gov.scot/publications/sexual-orientation-scotland-2017-summary-evidence-base/>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/iser/2014-02.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> A variety of references were given in the report including Coker, Austin, and Schuster 2010; Cull, Platzer, and Balloch 2006; Dunne, Prendergast, and Telford 2001; Dunne, Prendergast, and Telford 2002; Gattis 2009; Zerger, Strehlow, and Gundlapalli 2008

## **Gender reassignment**

The Scottish Government does not have sufficiently robust evidence to draw conclusions on gender reassignment in relation to income and poverty. Although they had fallen a little, discriminatory attitudes towards gender reassignment and cross-dressing remained high in the 2015 Social Attitudes Survey.

## **Specific issues and barriers raised by stakeholders with regard to child poverty and sexual orientation**

The homelessness issue was raised during engagement with stakeholders, showing that it remains a key challenge for LGBTI communities. Specific points were made that family breakdowns could occur where parents did not accept their child coming out. It was felt that young people in this situation were particularly vulnerable to homelessness and could become the subject of child sexual exploitation.

Engagement also noted that many LGBTI young people had multiple and complex needs – they may have issues relating to coming from a family living in poverty, exacerbated by enduring LGBTI-based bullying at school affecting longer term outcomes<sup>26</sup>, and not receiving the support they needed from their families as they were under poverty-related stresses themselves.

In terms of gender reassignment, stakeholders raised issues for a parent who goes through transition, which could impact on their job. The feeling was that many people would lose their job, pushing the family into poverty and that in this situation they wondered whether individuals would be able to qualify for welfare support. They also thought there were additional challenges for low income individuals who cannot afford cosmetic and medical products and services to support transition.

## **Opportunities to tackle discrimination and advance equality on LGBTI issues**

Child poverty actions can support broader policy developments such as the new Gender Recognition Act. Specific issues identified here include:

- Assistance to support parents whose child identifies in the LGBTI community
- Recognition of the vulnerability of children leaving home and becoming homeless. Better data could help to identify this problem, for example by including a question on sexual orientation on housing and homelessness application forms
- Continued work to remove homophobic bullying in schools
- Need to enhance understanding of the impact of a member of the household being LGBTI on the experience of living in poverty

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<sup>26</sup> Respect for All: The National Approach to Anti-Bullying for Scotland's Children and Young People <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2017/11/6766/0>

## CHAPTER 3

### STRATEGIC EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF POLICIES AND PROPOSALS IN THE TACKLING CHILD POVERTY DELIVERY PLAN

The Delivery Plan sets out a range of policies seeking to address many of the issues raised in Section 2 for each protected characteristic. The policies are only discussed in summary here. Each policy will either have already or require its own detailed EQIA as it progresses.

This analysis is broken down into the equivalent chapters in the Delivery Plan responding to the three main drivers of poverty: Work and Earnings; Cost of Living and Social Security. The final sets of analysis relate to the chapters on Helping Families in Other Ways and Partnership approaches.

#### WORK AND EARNINGS

Despite increasing numbers of households in in-work poverty, we know that access to good quality paid employment is still the best route out of poverty. However, to improve both income and well-being, the work available needs to offer decent rates of pay, good training and support, opportunities to progress, a flexible work environment and enough hours to provide a pay packet that meets basic family needs. Within this, a range of policies are needed to remove specific barriers and to allow all working age parents to access suitable paid employment.

The policies and proposals in the Delivery Plan are:

- **New Employment Support for Parents** including Fair Start Scotland and intensive employment support.
- **Tackling Low Pay** through building a Living Wage Nation, tackling low pay in the public sector and a workforce development fund to support employers to upskill and progress their employees.
- **New support for Equality at Work** including a new approach on employment developed with disabled people, new action on gender pay gap, new action to end maternity and pregnancy discrimination, new action to increase flexible working and increased funding for the new Workplace Equality Fund.

	<b>OVERVIEW OF IMPACT</b>	<b>SPECIFIC ACTION OR MITIGATION</b>
GENDER	<p>Women are disadvantaged in the formal labour market by a combination of employment in low pay, low profile, low progression industries and the impact of caring on time and availability for paid work. These issues are large scale and generational.</p> <p>The employment policies suggested, particularly the new employment support for priority families will be beneficial for women. The focus in Fair Start Scotland on lone parents will be beneficial in helping a key priority group – the vast majority of whom are women. The intensive employment support policy is still being developed but commitment has been made to consider impact on priority groups.</p> <p>Policies to tackle low pay through the Living Wage are important but the specific focus on retail and hospitality and public sector is likely to be of specific advantage to women given the numbers employed in these sectors.</p> <p>New action to improve equality at work will also be important particularly the action to reduce the gender pay gap, the Flexible Workplace Development Fund to support productivity and skills, the Workplace Equality Fund to overcome systemic issues in recruitment and progression and the promotion of flexible working. In addition, for disabled women the commitment to seek to reduce by more than half the disability employment gap should lead to beneficial action.</p>	<p>Monitor to ensure that women on the lowest wages are not disadvantaged by the development of living wage in terms of work intensity. If women are disadvantaged develop a strategy to tackle the underlying issues.</p> <p>Monitor employability policies to ensure that access to assistance is equal for both women and men. If women are found to be disadvantaged then develop specific policy responses.</p> <p>Workplace equality and gender pay gap actions seek to make large structural changes which should benefit women. However, the next stage will require more specific action and budget to take this policy area forward.</p>

AGE	<p>There is an expectation that as people age they accumulate wealth and income through job progression etc. For many low income households, this is not the case. Young parents, in particular, have a greater risk of poverty than older parents, especially those with low skill levels who are concentrated in low pay sectors. The new employment support can be targeted at young mothers and the Living Wage Nation and support for progression could help young parents, however these are not specifically targeted at young parents.</p>	<p>Monitor policies to ensure that assistance does reach young parents. Ensure that current policies in Skills Development and Career progression are reaching this group by encouraging organisations to collect the right data, understand barriers and then develop appropriate targeting policies.</p>
DISABILITY	<p>The employment rate for parents with a disability is lower than for parents without a disability. Poverty is higher amongst households with a disabled parent. The new policies including the approach to employment developed with disabled people, seek to identify the key barriers to accessing quality work for disabled people and to put in actions to overcome those barriers. Fair Start Scotland also specifically targets disabled parents to help them into work and actions on the Workplace Equality Fund and Gender Pay Gap should help disabled people and disabled women in particular.</p>	<p>The new Disability Employment Action Plan will set out a range action that moving forward will need new policies and funding to ensure change.</p>
RACE	<p>Although evidence is limited around minority ethnic groups, we do know that the employment rate for minority ethnic parents is lower and that poverty prevalence is higher. Specific issues around language, skills and the impacts of discrimination have been mentioned by stakeholders as barriers to employment. The Fair Start programme specifically targets ME groups and the Workplace Equality fund should help to impact on areas such as unconscious bias.</p>	<p>Through evaluation work, ensure that assistance does reach ME parents and that employment rates increase and quality of work improves. Ideally monitor that this is spread across different ethnic groups although data may be sparse. Ensure that current policies on workforce development and progression are reaching this group through influencing data development and commit to mitigating action as required.</p>



RELIGION	Evidence is limited around religion, employment and poverty.	Think about development of data and work with stakeholders to improve understanding of the role of work in relation to poverty amongst faith communities.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	<p>Nearly half of mothers in a report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission reported a negative impact of motherhood on opportunity, status or job security. None of the policies should have a negative impact on pregnancy and maternity, but the Equality Fund and increased emphasis on flexible working could be beneficial. A Ministerial Working Group on Pregnancy and Maternity Group has been established to look at further policies that could be changed in Scotland. The working group has not yet reported.</p>	Future policies, when articulated, may assist to reduce discrimination. There will be a need to monitor medium term and longer term trends through attitude survey work and the views of stakeholders.
LGBTI	<p>Although evidence is limited around LGBTI parents, some evidence has suggested that people who identify as LGBTI often tend to be in professional or managerial jobs and have slightly higher incomes. This might suggest that poverty is lower for people who self-identify as LGBTI – however this is not fully evidenced particularly because we do not understand the situation for people who prefer not to self-identify but may or may not be in poverty, and we do not have good evidence on LGBTI parents. It also may be that poverty for the LGBTI community varies by occupational sector and that bias still remains in some areas.</p> <p>In consultation stakeholders noted specific issues where a transgender parent goes through transition and that this may impact on their ability to remain in their job, thus pushing the family into poverty. No specific actions have been identified to help LGBTI parents into employment.</p>	Monitor situation to improve understanding of poverty amongst LGBTI community.

## **COST OF LIVING**

We know that for families on low incomes, costs of living can be high whether in terms of family sized housing, food, heat, clothes, school and sport equipment, childcare and travel costs. For disabled people there are a range of additional costs.

All of these add up and we also know that parents on low income can pay even more due to the poverty premium - for example, using a pre-payment meter for fuel, having to resort to pay-day lenders or being unable to afford special offers.

The Delivery Plan makes clear that action is already being taken, by building more affordable housing, providing free school meals, investing in a council tax reduction scheme for low income households - as well as free prescriptions, providing a baby box and free tuition in higher and further education.

The Delivery Plan then sets out a range of policies seeking to further address costs of living to reduce child poverty. The policies are only discussed in summary here. Each policy will either have already or require its own detailed EQIA as it progresses.

The policies and proposals in the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan include:

- Expansion of **early learning and childcare**
- **A new priority for after school and holiday child care**
- **New help with costs of the school day** including a minimum level of school uniform grant and reducing food insecurity in holidays and further action related to reducing costs and/or providing discounts for children, for example through Young Scot cards.
- **New help with fuel poverty and housing costs**, including increased access to energy efficiency programmes, working to keep rents affordable and evaluating impact of new tenancy regulations on children.
- **New help on income maximisation and the poverty premium**, including a new financial health check, campaign on benefit uptake, support for affordable credit.
- **New support for the basic essentials** including access to sanitary products

	OVERVIEW OF IMPACT	SPECIFIC ACTION OR MITIGATION
GENDER	<p>Women are usually the main carer and the main recipient of benefits in kind for children. Free childcare will impact on cost of living for those who currently use childcare and can transfer to free provision. It may also be advantageous to women wishing to enter paid work or to continue in work.</p> <p>Development of after school care is likely to also be beneficial allowing women to work. The extent of impact will depend how the policy is developed and rolled out.</p> <p>Help with food, sanitary products and uniform costs will be beneficial because there is anecdotal evidence that women will go without to ensure that children's needs are met. New support for affordable credit will be a benefit to both women and men as will action to keep housing and fuel costs down.</p> <p>Assistance to maximise income will benefit women and men but given the prevalence of lone parent poverty and the fact that 90% of lone parents are women this assistance will be particularly beneficial to women.</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p> <p>Because women disproportionately take on unpaid caring responsibilities, they are likely to benefit the most from these care policies. Reduction of costs will also be beneficial although whether they are moved out of poverty will depend on the overall relationship between costs and income.</p>

AGE	<p>Younger parents have a higher prevalence of poverty and policies to help them maximise their income as well as to support provision of food, clothing, heat, sanitary products, and family trips will all be beneficial. Expansion of early learning and childcare and out of school care will be advantageous to help young parents work provided that it is affordable. The current plan is for free child-care for 30 hours per week.</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified.</p>
DISABILITY	<p>Poverty is higher amongst households with a disabled parent and/or a disabled child. Having a disability usually means that a person has additional costs on top of all the normal essential items. Some of these are covered through disability benefits but additional costs will exist, for example, a tricycle for a disabled child will cost many times more than one for an able bodied child. The range of policies should still be beneficial because by reducing costs for everyday items there is more money to cover costs for specific items. Fuel poverty is a particularly critical issue for disabled people so further action here is positive.</p> <p>After school care provision could be beneficial but it depends whether specialist provision for disabled children is included.</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified. However there may be opportunity to further promote equality in the roll-out of access to specialist childcare and out of school care. It is not clear whether this will be targeted in the expansion but it will be assessed as part of EQIA processes.</p>

RACE	Although evidence is limited around minority ethnic groups, we do know that poverty is higher. Given that there is anecdotal evidence that take-up of benefits can be lower for ME communities, the specific action to tailor the financial health check to minority ethnic communities is positive. We also know that many minority ethnic families have 3 or more children and hence reductions in costs of the school day, support through uniform grants, food insecurity and sanitary products could all be helpful.	Monitor take-up of offers by ethnicity where this is possible.  It may be necessary to use various stakeholder groups to ensure that communities are fully aware and maximise take-up of the help available.
RELIGION	Although evidence is limited, issues such as the range of food available for emergency food provision and potential provision outside school term time will be an important consideration.	Policies on food provision need to consider the range of religious requirements such as Halal and Kosher.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	Expansion of childcare may help young mothers but only if it is available from a young age. The current full expansion is for children from the age of 3 but there is a priority expansion for vulnerable mothers from when the child is aged 2. Many of the other policies in the Plan relate to school costs and will not be available until the child is of school age. However access to fuel poverty schemes and affordable credit might be helpful to get through the additional costs of this period as well as existing offers eg. Baby Box.	The current offer is from age 3 but age 2 for vulnerable mothers. Low income households who wish to return to work earlier and may need affordable cover from an earlier age.
LGBTI	No specific actions are identified on LGBTI but all of the above cost reducing measures should be helpful.	No negative impacts identified. Beneficial to monitor situation to improve understanding of poverty amongst LGBTI community.

## **SOCIAL SECURITY**

Previous experience at UK and international level has shown that social security is an important part of the solution. 85% of the benefits received by Scottish households derive from UK Government. Some benefits have been devolved primarily around disability with the safe and secure transition of these benefits being a priority for the short term.

The Delivery Plan sets out some action and some proposal for action on social security

- A new Income supplement
- A new Best Start Grant
- New support for Carers with a particular focus on young carers
- A new Job Grant to help young parents starting a new job

	OVERVIEW OF IMPACT	SPECIFIC ACTION OR MITIGATION
GENDER	A greater proportion of women's income comes from social security, therefore policies to assist low income households through income supplements are positive. The remaining policies will be of benefit to women or men.	All of these policies are likely to be beneficial although they are being introduced against a backdrop of reductions in social security spend by the UK Government.
AGE	Younger parents have a higher prevalence of poverty and policies to help them increase their incomes are beneficial. The new Job Grant will be particularly helpful for unemployed young parents and carers allowance could help younger carers.	Monitor policies to ensure that assistance and eligibility rules mean that assistance does reach young parents in terms of take-up and affordability.
DISABILITY	Poverty is higher amongst households with a disabled parent and/or a disabled child. The range of policies will be beneficial in maximising income. The carers allowance could be particularly helpful although only a small number of claimants are parents with children.	All of these policies are likely to be beneficial to disabled people but it will depend on the overall relationship between costs and income.
RACE	Although evidence is limited around minority ethnic groups we do know that poverty is higher. There is also some anecdotal evidence that take-up of social security is lower due to lack of knowledge around eligibility.	Monitor take-up of offers by ethnicity where this is possible.  It may be necessary to use various stakeholder groups to ensure that communities are aware of the help available. Financial Health Check approach should help here.

RELIGION	Limited evidence but action above should be beneficial.	No negative impacts identified.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	As with other protected characteristics, these income boosting measures will be beneficial to new mothers. The Best Start Grant is particularly positive for this group. Issues around child maintenance remain reserved and are not tackled in this Delivery Plan.	No negative impacts identified although it would be beneficial to monitor the situation to check whether poverty remains very high in this group.  Child maintenance, which is a reserved policy, is likely to remain a problem.
LGBTI	No specific actions are identified on LGBTI but all of the above income increasing measures should be helpful.	No negative impacts identified. Beneficial to monitor situation to improve understanding of poverty amongst LGBTI community.



## HELPING FAMILIES IN OTHER WAYS

The Delivery Plan aims to meet the targets set for 2023 and 2030 and sets out the three main drivers to enable this: work and earnings, cost of living and social security.

The final sections of the Delivery Plan set out actions to help children living in poverty now -either to improve their immediate situation or to improve their future prospects. As a JRF report<sup>27</sup> notes, “there is abundant evidence that children growing up in lower income households do less well than their peers on a range of wider outcomes, including measures of health and education”.

A number of policies and proposals are included to help families

- New help for children’s neighbourhoods
- Support for students and communities from further and higher education
- Addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences including increased funding for mental health and action on parental imprisonment
- New action on transitions
- National transport strategy review
- Tailored learning support for Gypsy/Traveller families
- A range of support for anti-bullying work, including race and LGBTI youth focuses
- A new resource for disabled children, young people and their families
- Facilitating access to music education

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<sup>27</sup> Does Money Affect Children’s Outcomes <http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/cr/casereport80.pdf>

	OVERVIEW OF IMPACT	SPECIFIC ACTION OR MITIGATION
GENDER	Most of these policies will have beneficial impact irrespective of gender. However the additional funding for mental health may be particularly beneficial for women and girls given the higher prevalence of mental ill-health in young women and girls; and the development of new parent programmes in prisons will be helpful when specifically targeted at parents and pregnant women.	No negative impacts identified. In most cases, impact will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.
AGE	The aim of policies in this section is to improve current circumstances for children living in poverty and to improve future prospects. They should therefore all have positive impacts.	No negative impacts identified. In most cases it will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.
DISABILITY	The aim of policies in this section is to improve current circumstances for children living in poverty and to improve future prospects. They should therefore all have positive impacts. The new resource for families with disabled children or adults should be particularly helpful.	All of these policies could be beneficial to disabled people but it will depend whether the detail policy development ensures that needs of disabled children are considered, for example in terms of access to music and the new transport strategy.

RACE	The aim of policies in this section is to improve current circumstances for children living in poverty and to improve future prospects. They should therefore all have positive impacts. The new learning support for Gypsy Traveller families will be particularly positive for that community as will the range of support to reduce race related bullying.	All of these policies could be beneficial but it will depend whether the detailed policy development ensures that needs of minority ethnic communities are considered. It may be necessary to use various stakeholder groups to ensure that communities are aware of the range of help available.
RELIGION	Limited evidence but action above should be beneficial.	No negative impacts identified. In most cases, impact will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	Limited evidence but action above should be beneficial.	No negative impacts identified. In most cases, impact will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.
LGBTI	Limited evidence but action above should be beneficial. Support to reduce homophobic bullying will be beneficial to school-age LGBTI community.	No negative impacts identified. In most cases, impact will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.

## PARTNERSHIP WORKING

The Child Poverty targets are very ambitious and challenging and the Plan is clear that action will be needed across Scottish society to meet them. This section of the Delivery Plan sets out some partnership approaches and commitments that we will take forward with organisations in the public, private and third sector in order to reduce child poverty. Given that these approaches are at an early stage no specific assessment has been done at this time. ***Impact will depend how the policy is designed and implemented.*** Each policy will require an EQIA as it is further scoped and developed.

Policies and proposals included in this section are:

- New funding for a new innovation fund with the Hunter Foundation and the STV Children's Appeal
- Child poverty as a new priority within the £20 million Empowering Communities Fund.
- Stronger links to ensure child poverty and inclusive growth is given greater prominence in City Growth Deals.
- Strong partnerships in local areas with a funded National Co-ordinator post to help gather best practice; a new academic partnership to help identify poverty and appropriate solutions; new funding to build on the Healthier Wealthier Children work which is advice referral support, via healthcare settings, aimed at maximising incomes for pregnant women and new mothers; new funding to the Poverty Alliance to ensure that the voices of people with lived experience of poverty are heard; and new partnerships to keep rent levels affordable and targeted opportunities for cultural participation.

## CONCLUSION

The EQIA has shown that the broad principles and policies of the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan will be positive across protected characteristics. Several protected characteristics; disability, race and gender have evidenced higher levels of poverty and hence any action to reduce poverty through impacting on the drivers of child poverty should be beneficial.

The Delivery Plan itself was based on analysis which considered different equality groups and was enhanced by consultation with partners to ensure that views of smaller populations were heard. The Plan established a number of priority groups, which relate to protected characteristics (lone parents, young parents, minority ethnic families, families with a disabled adult or child, large families and families with a young child). Each policy is specifically assessed against the priority groups in Chapter 7 of the Plan, while analysis of barriers faced by the groups is presented in **ANNEX 2**.

In some cases, policies and proposals are currently only partially defined. It will be the detailed development of the policy and its implementation and co-ordination with other policies and schemes in the local area that will really determine how much difference each will make in reducing discrimination and enhancing opportunity. Each policy will require its own EQIA as it is developed to ensure that the specific barriers for each protected characteristic are fully considered.

The Delivery Plan sets out an approach to assessing the impact of policies through evaluating individual policies and monitoring drivers and targets. The Plan states that wherever possible this impact assessment will include impacts by protected characteristic. This type of analysis will be important in moving forward our understanding of the specific barriers faced by people with certain protected characteristics, as well as the potential solutions.



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