

# **Best Start, Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-2026**

## **Annex 7: Equality Impact Assessment**

**March 2022**

## Annex 7: EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Title of Policy	Best Start, Bright Futures Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2022-26
Summary of aims and desired outcomes of policy	<p>This Delivery Plan will set out a package of policies to deliver on the government's, and Scotland's, national mission to tackle child poverty.</p> <p>Specifically, it aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduce child poverty in Scotland and meet the 4 statutory child poverty targets</li> <li>- relative, absolute and persistent poverty and combined low income and material deprivation - set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017</li> <li>- Set out the combination of policy interventions to be implemented during 2022-2026 to deliver the interim targets and contribute to the final targets</li> <li>- Whilst individual policies have specific aims and outcomes, in combination the desired outcome will be to impact on the three drivers of tackling child poverty - increasing income from work and earnings, reducing household costs and maximising incomes from social security and benefits in kind</li> </ul>
Directorate: Division: Team	Housing and Social Justice: Social Justice and Regeneration: Tackling Child Poverty Unit

## Executive Summary

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires the Scottish Government (SG) to pay due regard to the need to meet its obligations under the Equality Act 2010<sup>1</sup> by assessing the impact of applying a proposed new or revised policy or practice upon equality. Therefore, SG undertook an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) as part of the process to develop the second delivery plan (“the plan”) due under the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017<sup>2</sup> – Best Start, Bright Futures.

An EQIA aims to consider how a policy may impact, either positively or negatively, on different sectors of the population in different ways. Equality legislation covers the Protected Characteristics (PCs) of: age, disability, gender reassignment, sex, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion and belief, and sexual orientation.

The plan covers the period 2022 - 2026 and sets out a range of policies and proposals that will contribute to meeting the interim and final targets set out in the Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017.

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 PSED, discussions were held with a range of stakeholders to learn about their views on implementation and progress since the publication of the first delivery plan (what went well, what changes are required) and to obtain feedback on the known barriers faced by priority families<sup>3</sup> and families with protected characteristics, and how to overcome these.

The Plan contains a wide range of policies - the analysis presented in this EQIA is a summary consideration across these policies and proposals and is not intended to replace policy specific assessments. Some policies are already in implementation and have undergone an EQIA, other commitments within the Plan are still in early development. As these policies develop, they will require their own EQIA to ensure that the specific barriers for each protected characteristic are fully considered. This EQIA should be read, understood and used together with the Tackling Child Poverty Evidence Review ([Annex 6](#)) and other impact assessments ([Annexes 4, 5, 8, 9](#) and [10](#)) which collaboratively have been used to inform the contents of the Plan.

This EQIA has found that the principles and policies set out in the Plan will be mainly positive across many protected characteristics, in particular age, race, disability, pregnancy and maternity and sex. This is largely due to the overlap between these characteristics and the child poverty priority family types. For other characteristics, particularly gender reassignment and sexual orientation, we have limited data. Nevertheless as part of the ongoing and monitoring of this EQIA we will keep this under review. However, we have found no evidence of negative consequences for people with these characteristics at this time. For some particular characteristics, including age, race, disability and sex, higher levels of child poverty

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<sup>1</sup> Equality Act 2010 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))

<sup>2</sup> Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))

<sup>3</sup> The first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan identified the six family types most at risk of child poverty. These are – lone parent families, minority ethnic families, families with a disabled member, families with a child under one, families with a young mother (<25) and larger families (3+ children)

persist, therefore the targeted action for the priority family groups and wider action to reduce child poverty will be particularly beneficial for these groups.

Specifically, the EQIA considers impacts on equalities groups based on the three tests it is required to address:

- Does this policy eliminate discrimination for each of the 9 Protected Characteristics? If not is the discrimination justifiable? Can it be mitigated?
- Does this policy advance equality of opportunity for Protected Characteristic groups?
- Does this policy foster good community relations between people of PC groups?

## **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, the first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan [Every Child, and Every Chance: the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-2022](#)<sup>4</sup>, background for the second delivery plan and the scope of this EQIA.

The second chapter summarises what we know about child poverty related to the protected characteristics.

Finally, the third chapter takes a strategic look across the policies and proposals in the plan to identify impacts related to the protected characteristics, and set out where specific actions or mitigations are needed to enhance positive impacts or mitigate potential negative impacts.

### **Background**

The Child Poverty (Scotland) Act 2017 sets in statute four income based child poverty targets to be met by 2030/31, with interim targets to be met by 2023/24. The targets are largely focused on household income, while also taking into account wider costs of living through the material deprivation measure. The targets to be met are:

- Fewer than 18% of children living in families in relative poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 10% by 2030. This means fewer than one in ten children living in households on low incomes by 2030, compared to the average UK household.
- Fewer than 14% of children living in families in absolute poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030. This means fewer than one in twenty children living in low income households where living standards are not increasing by 2030.

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<sup>4</sup> Every child, every chance: tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

- Fewer than 8% of children living in families living in combined low income and material deprivation in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030. This means fewer than one in twenty children living in low income households who can't afford basic essential goods and services by 2030
- Fewer than 8% of children living in families in persistent poverty in 2023-24, reducing to fewer than 5% by 2030. This means fewer than one in twenty children living in households in poverty for three years out of four by 2030.

The Act also requires Scottish Ministers to publish child poverty delivery plans at regular intervals, with annual reports to measure progress<sup>567</sup>. Local Authorities and Health Boards must also jointly publish annual reports on what they are doing to reduce child poverty in the local area.

The first Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan [Every Child, Every Chance: the Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-2022](#) was published on 29 March 2018 and sets out the actions to be taken to progress towards the ambitious child poverty targets set out for 2030. Since then three annual progress reports have been published in [June 2019](#), [August 2020](#), and [June 2021](#), outlining the steps that have been taken since the plan was introduced.

Poverty affects a wide range of families with a variety of protected characteristics. However, almost 90% of all children in poverty in Scotland live within the six priority family types: lone parent families, minority ethnic families, families with a disabled member, families with a child under one, families with a young mother (<25) and larger families (3+ children).

These priority family types each relate to one or more protected characteristics. The most recent evidence ([Annex 6](#)) suggests that the priority groups identified in the first plan continue to experience poverty at a higher rate than the rest of the population. Therefore, each policy or proposal in the new Plan will continue to target action towards these priority groups and we will aim to enhance our monitoring and evaluations of the impacts each policy has against these groups.

It is important to note there is significant intersectionality within these groups, and whilst we will focus our efforts on those most at risk of experiencing child poverty, we will use the priority family types as lenses through which we address the key barriers experienced by different groups. For example, among children in relative poverty:

- 40% of children in lone parent families also have a disabled family member;
- Over half (54%) of children in a family with a younger mother are also in a lone parent family and
- Half (50%) of children in families with three or more children are also in a family in which someone is disabled.

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<sup>5</sup> Tackling child poverty: first year progress report (2018 to 2019) - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>6</sup> 1. Reporting on progress 2019-20 - Tackling child poverty: second year progress report (2019-2020) - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>7</sup> Tackling child poverty: third year progress report 2020-2021 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

Families with experience of multiple disadvantage are often among those deepest in poverty and experience most barriers and challenges to get out of poverty. Most of these families are also likely to fall into at least one of our priority groups. Therefore, it is important that policies are mindful of the intersectionality, specific support needs and multiple barriers people can face.

Since the publication of the first delivery plan, there have been significant changes and challenges which have impacted on the lives and experiences of children and families across Scotland, including EU Exit, Covid-19 and the current cost of living crisis.

Covid-19 has dramatically affected every area of life in Scotland<sup>8</sup>. However, we know the impact has not been felt evenly, with those who were already the most disadvantaged suffering disproportionately, including lower income households, minority ethnic communities and disabled people.

The impact of Covid-19 on child poverty levels is still largely unknown, particularly the long term effects on families, communities, society and our economy. However, we know that for many people, the disadvantages they face have been further exacerbated and they often have been the hardest hit by Covid-19, socially, educationally, economically and in terms of physical and mental wellbeing<sup>9</sup>. Covid-19 has also led to an increase in childhood adversity and trauma, which can have a lasting effect on people's life outcomes, further compounding poverty<sup>10</sup>. As a result of Covid-19, Scotland saw a 108% rise in the number of emergency food parcels distributed in July 2020 compared with July 2019<sup>11</sup>.

## **The Scope of the EQIA**

This EQIA sets out evidence of the impact of child poverty on groups with protected characteristics, and describes how measures have been arrived at to address negative impacts or promote positive impacts and advance equality or good relations.

The first delivery plan set out that poverty results from the inter-relationship between three key drivers:

- Income from employment;
- Income from social security and benefits in kind; and
- Costs of living

The evidence review has shown that this driver approach remains relevant and appropriate. Therefore, this approach has been maintained for the second delivery plan which includes a range of policies and proposals that will impact on all three drivers. Chapter 2 of the EQIA seeks to identify evidence of impact on groups with protected characteristics for the key drivers.

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<sup>8</sup> Scotland's Wellbeing: The Impact of Covid-19 | National Performance Framework

<sup>9</sup> Coronavirus (Covid-19): impact on equality (research) - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>10</sup> Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Trauma - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>11</sup> IFAN Scotland Independent Food Bank Food Parcel Distribution Report\_FEB\_JULY\_19\_20\_8.9.20.(1).pdf ([strikinglycdn.com](http://strikinglycdn.com))

## 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 evidence and the views of stakeholder organisations and people with lived experience of poverty, gathered through our consultation process.

Although the analysis below focuses on one protected characteristics at a time, it is important to note that a family might experience a combination of different protected characteristics which intersect and that child poverty can be experienced in many different ways in different families across Scotland. Where there is evidence to support intersectional experience of poverty related to the three drivers of tackling child poverty we have set that out, noting that there is a lack of intersectional data on outcomes in Scotland<sup>12</sup>.

### Sex

In 2017-20, the relative poverty rate after housing costs was higher for single women with children (38%) than for other single working-age adults, however, the gap between this group and single women without children (27%) and single men without children (34%) was smaller than it used to be<sup>13</sup>. Estimates for single fathers are not available due to small sample sizes.

The vast majority (92%) of lone parents are women. Therefore the actions targeted to this priority group will be particularly beneficial for this protected characteristic.

### Income from employment

We know that women earn less than men and are more likely to be in insecure, low-paid work and are overrepresented in sectors that have historically low pay, low progress and are often undervalued<sup>14</sup>.

In April 2020-March 2021, 1,274,400 women aged 16 years and over were estimated to be in employment in Scotland, 19,800 less than the number of women employed in April 2019-March 2020<sup>15</sup>. The employment rate (16-64 year olds) for women was estimated at 70.5 per cent, 1.0 percentage point lower than the year before (71.4 per cent)<sup>16</sup>. During the same period, 1,316,700 men aged 16 years and over were estimated to be in employment, 45,800 less compared with April 2019-March 2021.

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<sup>12</sup> 1. Key Findings - Using intersectionality to understand structural inequality in Scotland: Evidence synthesis - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)).

<sup>13</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 ([data.gov.scot](http://data.gov.scot))

<sup>14</sup> 1. Background and Policy Aim - Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation: equality position statement - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>15</sup> Section 1: Employment - Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-labour-market-people-places-regions-statistics-annual-population-survey-2020-21/pages/4/>

The employment rate (16-64 year olds) for men was estimated to have decreased by 2.5 percentage points from 77.7 per cent in April 2019-March 2020 to 75.2 per cent in April 2020-March 2021<sup>17</sup>.

Over the past 10 years, the gender pay gap for full-time employees decreased from 6.6% in 2011 to 3.6% in 2021. However over the past year, for full-time employees (excluding overtime) the gender pay gap increased from 3% to 3.6% in 2021<sup>18</sup>. The gender pay gap for all employees' (including full and part time staff) median hourly earnings (excluding overtime) in Scotland has increased from 11.1 per cent in 2020 to 11.6 per cent in 2021, due to women dominating more part-time, lower paid roles<sup>19</sup>.

The proportion of women earning less than the real living wage in Scotland in 2020 was higher for women than men (16.4% compared to 13.8%)<sup>20</sup>. More women than men work in low-paid occupations (38.5% compared with 20.6%), and women were three times more likely to work in a sector shut down during Covid-19 than men, with single mothers with low qualifications being particularly overrepresented in these sectors<sup>21</sup>.

The employment rate gap between white<sup>22</sup> women and minority ethnic women (20.8 percentage points) in Scotland is significantly higher than the gap between white men and minority ethnic men (4.8 percentage points). The gap for women is driven by a much lower employment rate for minority ethnic women than white women (51.7% vs 72.5%)<sup>23</sup>.

Through our consultation, stakeholders have highlighted that women often face intersectional gender and racial barriers that hinder employment prospects and career progression<sup>24</sup>. These inequalities are further exacerbated for disabled ethnic minority women.

Women disproportionately carry out caring responsibilities in both formal and informal sectors and as either paid or unpaid carers and these responsibilities were exacerbated during Covid-19<sup>25</sup>. Caring can have a significant impact on those who provide it, including reducing the time and energy the individual has for paid work, limiting their choice in terms of career and work locations and can have a significant impact on their own wellbeing. Women are also more likely to have career breaks in order to accommodate unpaid caring roles. The economic impact of caring can have

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<sup>17</sup> Section 1: Employment - Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>18</sup> Key Points - Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>19</sup> Key Points - Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>20</sup> Coronavirus and key workers in the UK - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](https://ons.gov.uk))

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/not-now-social-renewal-advisory-board-report-january-2021/>

<sup>22</sup> Reference to white populations include non-visible/white minority ethnic populations throughout the document

<sup>23</sup> Key Points - Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.closesthegap.org.uk/content/resources/1---Women-work-and-poverty-what-you-need-to-know.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> Coronavirus (Covid-19): impact on equality (research) - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

an immediate impact on current household income but can also reduce their pension income in their future. Taking a career break can also create additional barriers when attempting to return into paid employment. There is also a direct correlation between the number of hours spent caring and living in areas of multiple deprivation<sup>26</sup>. These inequalities in caring responsibility can drive aspects of the gender pay gap, whilst hiding the true costs and value of care provision<sup>27</sup>.

These inequalities are further exacerbated for households with only one adult/lone parents, where caring responsibilities can be particularly difficult to manage. Lone parents are at greater risk of poverty, are more likely to live in areas of deprivation and spend more of their income on basic living costs.

### Income from social security

Women are twice as dependent on social security as men<sup>28</sup>. Lone parents, the majority of whom are woman, may experience higher levels of anxiety and uncertainty when looking to claim benefits and evidence suggests they can be disproportionately impacted by cuts, freezes, benefit caps and limits<sup>29,30</sup>. Before Covid-19, lone parents were also much more likely to be in debt and/or financially vulnerable<sup>31</sup>.

For Social Security Scotland<sup>32</sup>, the proportion of male clients was much lower(12%) than women (86%). This was particularly apparent in applications for Best Start Grant or Best Start Foods, and Scottish Child Payment, which more often tended to be filled out by women rather than men. The approval rate was higher for women (77%) in comparison to men (68%).

### Reducing costs of living

We know that there is a strong relationship between domestic abuse and poverty, particularly for women. In 2018-19, in 82% of all incidents of domestic abuse where gender information was recorded by the police, the victim was a woman and the accused was a man<sup>33</sup>.

Accessing secure housing is harder for women, particularly for those fleeing domestic abuse<sup>34</sup>. In 2020/21<sup>35</sup>, 21% of households assessed as homeless or threatened with homelessness were single women, while 49% were single male

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<sup>26</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-carers/>

<sup>27</sup> Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022: annex 3 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>28</sup> Chapter 7 Social Security - A fairer Scotland for women: gender pay gap action plan - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>29</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>30</sup> Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: Second year progress report 2019-20: Annex C – Child poverty among lone parent families (www.gov.scot)

<sup>31</sup> Coronavirus (Covid-19): impact on equality (research) - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>32</sup> Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis - December 2020 to May 2021

<sup>33</sup> Key Points - Domestic abuse: statistics recorded by the police in Scotland - 2018/19 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>34</sup> 3. Summary of main findings - Coronavirus (Covid-19): domestic abuse and other forms of violence against women and girls - 30/3/20-22/05/20 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>35</sup> Homelessness in Scotland: 2020 to 2021

households. The most common reason for single female parent households becoming homeless was violent household dispute. 16% of applications were female single parents, while 5% were male single parents. SG statistics show that there were 13,097 households in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2021. These statistics also show that there were 3,645 households with children or a pregnant woman in temporary accommodation, with a total of 7,130 children in temporary accommodation as at 31 March 2021<sup>36</sup>.

Stakeholder consultation further raised the relationship between domestic abuse and poverty, calling for greater consideration and action to recognise financial abuse and its relationship to child poverty.

Prevalence of food insecurity is equal between sexes, although there is some evidence that coping mechanisms adopted may vary. For example, some evidence suggests that men may be more likely to use food banks than women, and some women may be more likely to adopt other coping mechanisms<sup>37</sup>. Women also face specific transport issues around safety and discrimination, which are even more pronounced when bus stops or stations are in unsafe or isolated areas.

## **Age**

In 2017-20, after housing costs are accounted for, 28% of young people, 17% of 35-44 year olds and 15% of pensioners in Scotland were living in relative poverty<sup>38</sup>. In the same period, the youngest adults (16-24 year olds) and the youngest children (0-4 years old) have been consistently more likely to be in relative poverty compared to other age groups<sup>39</sup>.

## **Income from Employment**

In 2020-21, the employment rate for young people aged 16-24 was around 25 percentage points lower than the overall population<sup>40</sup>. Young people were adversely affected by Covid-19<sup>41</sup>, being less likely to be in contractually secure employment and more likely to work in sectors hardest-hit by Covid-19 such as retail, leisure and entertainment<sup>42,43</sup>. Young mothers are less likely to be in paid work and young people in general are also more likely to earn less than the real living wage<sup>44</sup>. Children from lower socioeconomic groups are also less likely to have access to parental networks in terms of employment opportunities.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Temporary Accommodation - Homelessness in Scotland: 2020 to 2021 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>37</sup> BP28\_food\_banks\_web.pdf ([gowellonline.com](http://gowellonline.com))

<sup>38</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/poverty-income-inequality-scotland-2016-19/>

<sup>39</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 ([data.gov.scot](http://data.gov.scot))

<sup>40</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>41</sup> NSET Evidence Paper <https://www.gov.scot/isbn/9781804351475>

<sup>42</sup> Sector shutdowns during the coronavirus crisis: which workers are most exposed? - Institute For Fiscal Studies - IFS

<sup>43</sup> EMP17: People in employment on zero hours contracts - Office for National Statistics ([ons.gov.uk](http://ons.gov.uk)); Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>44</sup> <https://www.gov.scot/publications/annual-survey-of-hours-and-earnings-2021/>

<sup>45</sup> Social Mobility Commission The childhood origins of social mobility: socio-economic inequalities and changing opportunities 2016

Care leavers and care experienced young people are more likely to face challenges in the labour market than other young people. They are three times more likely not to have a job by the age of 26 and earn incomes which are 27% lower on average than their non-care experienced peers.

The employment rate for people aged 50-64 fell by 2.6 percentage points, in the year to April 2020-March 2021. This is the largest decrease of any age group<sup>46</sup>. Parents aged over 50 face employment barriers including ageism, exclusion and lack of willingness to recognise the skills and experience they may have<sup>47</sup>. Older People in Employment<sup>48</sup> in Scotland reports that choices over later working life were highly constrained for those on lower incomes, those in low-skilled jobs and those with significant caring responsibilities. These circumstances most often interact to disadvantage older women in particular.

### Social Security

We know that young people are less likely to have experience navigating complex social security systems and can face barriers in accessing support services. These barriers and inequalities are more prevalent when a person belongs to more than one protected characteristic or priority family group<sup>49</sup>. For example, young disabled women from minority ethnic backgrounds. People under 25, including those who are lone parents, are entitled to a lower allowance of some benefits than people aged 25 and over<sup>50</sup>. Mothers under 20 are considerably more reliant on state benefits and tax credits than older mothers, making them disproportionately impacted by cuts or changes to eligibility criteria in benefits or support services<sup>51</sup>.

### Costs of living

Younger people experience a higher prevalence of poverty and food insecurity and spend a higher proportion of their income on housing and food than older people. Adults under 25 are less likely to have savings, which, combined with low paid jobs, make it harder to meet living costs<sup>52</sup>. Young people are also more likely to be financially vulnerable and more likely to be in unmanageable debt<sup>53</sup>.

Care experienced young people and care leavers are over one and a half times more likely to experience financial difficulties than their non-care experienced peers. We know that poverty and other social inequalities influence levels of childhood adversity and trauma along with people's ability to overcome such experiences.

Covid-19 has further exacerbated such inequalities and in some cases, leading to an increase in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and trauma. Children and younger people's mental health was significantly impacted during Covid-19, and this

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<sup>46</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>47</sup> A Fairer Scotland for Older People: A Framework for Action ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>48</sup> Older people and employment in Scotland: research - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>49</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>50</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>51</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>52</sup> Scotland's People Annual Report: Key findings - 2019 ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>53</sup> Wealth and assets: analysis 2006 to 2018 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

is likely to be further worsened by unemployment and missed education. For some children and young people this will impact directly on their ability to learn and thrive at school.

Education remains one of the most effective means to improve the life chances of all of children and young people. However, children living in the most deprived communities are less likely to enter higher or further education than those in the least deprived areas<sup>54</sup>. In 2021, 87.1% of 16-19 year olds living in the most deprived SIMD quintile participated in education, employment or training compared to 96.4% of those in the least deprived quintile.<sup>55</sup> For young mothers under 20, 17% had a qualification at Higher Grade or above compared with 50% early twenties and 80% 25 or older. The evaluation of the [Scottish Attainment Challenge](#) (SG flagship policy to achieving equity in education) indicates that the poverty related attainment gap is closing, but it remains a complex and long term endeavour and there are also variations in the pace of that progress across the country, with Covid-19 likely to have placed further pressure on the gap.

## **Disability**

Around a third of all families in Scotland include at least one disabled member and we know that families with a disabled member are more likely to be in poverty<sup>56</sup>. Children in families with at least one disabled adult or child account for over two-fifths (42%) of all children in relative poverty, and just under three-fifths (58%) of those in combined low income and material deprivation<sup>57</sup>. Thirty percent of children in households with a disabled adult or child were also in a lone parent household, and 30% were in a household with 3 or more children (2011-18)<sup>58</sup>.

## Income from employment

Statistics from January 2022 show that approximately one fifth of Scotland's working-age population is disabled<sup>59</sup>. Disabled parents are less likely to be employed compared to non-disabled parents and those who are in employment tend to work fewer hours, particularly disabled mothers<sup>60</sup>.

From July–September 2021, the disability employment gap in Scotland narrowed from previous years, but remains large at an estimated 31.0 percentage points (in comparison to 33.8 in 2021)<sup>61</sup>. From April 2020-March 2021, the employment rate for

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<sup>54</sup> Closing the attainment gap in Scottish education

<sup>55</sup> annual-participation-measure-2021-report.pdf (skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk)

<sup>56</sup> Tackling child poverty - third year progress report : annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>57</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2016-19

<sup>58</sup> See 'Children in poverty after housing costs who are in more than one priority group', here: Additional child poverty analysis 2019 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>59</sup> Disabled people in the labour market in Scotland - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>60</sup> Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan: Third Year Progress Report (2020-21): Annex B: Child Poverty in Families with a Disabled Adult or Child (www.gov.scot)

<sup>61</sup> Labour+Market+Monthly+Briefing+-+January+2022.pdf (www.gov.scot)

disabled people was estimated at 47.4%, which is significantly lower than the employment rate for non-disabled people (80.2%)<sup>62</sup>.

Disabled people are more likely to work in lower paid occupations<sup>63</sup> and have less access to fair work<sup>64</sup>. It is expected that the economic impacts of Covid-19 will continue to have an adverse effect on access to employment and financial security of disabled people<sup>65</sup>.

Disabled people face a number of barriers to employment, including health needs and caring responsibilities, lack of affordable childcare, transport, inaccessible job adverts and application processes, workplace discrimination, lack of flexible working and inadequate support. While recognising these barriers mean that employment is not a realistic option for some, many disabled people would like to be in employment. Evidence suggests that dedicated and tailored employment support is required to not only find, but also to remain and progress in employment and there is a need for a greater availability of flexible and remote working<sup>66</sup>.

### Social Security

Disabled people experience a range of difficulties with benefits currently delivered by the UK social security system, including a lack of advice and support, lack of trust in the system, and a complex, inflexible or unsuitable application process. Disabled people are also disproportionately impacted by cuts, freezes and or changes to eligibility criteria, partly because of a higher reliance on benefits<sup>67</sup>.

Disabled people face higher living costs than non-disabled people<sup>68</sup> and the benefits disabled people are entitled are not always sufficient to cover the extra costs disabled families face.

### Cost of living

We know that disabled people face higher costs of living than non-disabled people<sup>69</sup>. These additional costs may include, for example, specialist equipment and home adaptations, specialist therapies, extra transport costs, specialist toys and play equipment, paid-for care and increased energy costs, either as a result of increased

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<sup>62</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>63</sup> Fairer Scotland for disabled people - employment action plan: progress report - year 2 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>64</sup> Fairer Scotland for disabled people - employment action plan: progress report - year 2 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>65</sup> <https://www.leonardcheshire.org/sites/default/files/2020-10/Locked-out-of-labour-market.pdf>

<sup>66</sup> How flexible hiring could improve business performance and living standards | JRF; If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>67</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>68</sup> Scotland's Wellbeing: national outcomes for disabled people - gov.scot (www.gov.scot) ; Disabled people's costs of living | JRF ; Income and conversion handicaps: estimating the impact of child chronic illness/disability on family income and the extra cost of child chronic illness/child disability in Ireland using a standard of living approach - PubMed (nih.gov) ; Extra costs of living with a disability: A review and agenda for research - ScienceDirect

<sup>69</sup> Disabled people's costs of living | JRF; Scotland's Wellbeing: national outcomes for disabled people - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

heating for those with limited mobility or the cost of running specialist electrical equipment<sup>70</sup>. There are also reports that costs have risen for many disabled people during Covid-19<sup>71</sup>.

Disabled people are more likely than non-disabled people to live in social rented housing<sup>72</sup>. Satisfaction with their housing arrangements was lower (85%) than amongst non-disabled people (93%) in 2019. Difficulties in accessing housing that meets their needs can result in some families with a disabled member spending more on housing and/or having a lower quality of life<sup>73</sup>.

In February 2021, disabled women were more likely to believe they will be in more debt at the end of Covid-19 (38%) than nondisabled women (32%), disabled men (30%) and non-disabled men (15%)<sup>74</sup>. Disabled people also face a number of challenges with the transport system<sup>75</sup>. Many of these are likely to be even more difficult when travelling with young children, and can also be exacerbated in rural areas.<sup>77</sup> Families with long term conditions also face additional barriers accessing childcare that meets their child's needs, including costs<sup>78</sup>.

In 2020-21<sup>79</sup>, of the total number of applicants assessed as homeless (27,571), 14,106 households were identified with at least one support need (which include a learning disability, physical disability and a medical condition).

## **Race and Ethnicity**

Minority ethnic families<sup>80</sup> are most at risk of child poverty (38% of children in minority ethnic families were in relative poverty in 2017-20 compared to 24% of all children in Scotland) and families from some minority ethnic groups are more likely to have three or more children, putting them at higher risk of child poverty<sup>81</sup>.

## **Income from Employment**

Minority ethnic workers are more likely to earn low incomes<sup>82</sup> compared to the white population. Minority ethnic people are more likely to work in some of the sectors

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<sup>70</sup> Tackling child poverty - third year progress report : annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>71</sup> MS Society External template ([wordpress.com](http://wordpress.com))

<sup>72</sup> Scottish household survey 2019: key findings - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>73</sup> Disability Research on Independent Living & Learning ([drilluk.org.uk](http://drilluk.org.uk))

<sup>74</sup> Close-the-Gap-and-Engender-Joint-briefing-on-the-impact-of-Covid-19-on-womens-wellbeing-mental-health-and-financial-security.pdf

<sup>75</sup> Covid recovery strategy - for a fairer future: equality impact assessment - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>76</sup> Tackling child poverty - third year progress report : annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)) ; Transport and Child Poverty

<sup>77</sup> Managing work and daily travel for Swedish parents with a disabled child ([trb.org](http://trb.org))

<sup>78</sup> Tackling child poverty - third year progress report : annex B - child poverty in families with a disabled adult or child - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>79</sup> Homelessness in Scotland: 2020 to 2021 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>80</sup> Minority ethnic statistics include white minority ethnic populations

<sup>81</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 ([data.gov.scot](http://data.gov.scot))

<sup>82</sup> If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

most impacted by Covid-19<sup>83</sup> and are over-represented in jobs with increased exposure risks to Covid-19<sup>84</sup>.

People with multiple protected characteristics (e.g. someone from a minority ethnic group who is disabled) can face heightened barriers to employment. In 2019, data shows that a non-disabled white person is more than twice as likely to be in employment than a disabled minority ethnic person<sup>85</sup>.

The employment rate for people from minority ethnic groups in Scotland is consistently lower than the employment rate for white people. During the period April 2020-March 2021<sup>86</sup>, the minority ethnic employment rate gap was 8.2 percentage points, with the employment rate for the minority ethnic population aged 16 to 64 was estimated at 65.1% in comparison to 73.2% for the white population. The minority ethnic employment gap is much larger for women than men (approximately 13.2 percentage points for women and at 2.2 percentage points for men during the period April 2020 - March 2021<sup>87</sup>). The much larger gap for women than men may be partly attributed to cultural factors for particular ethnic groups.

We also know that minority ethnic people face heightened barriers (including racism and discrimination, language and cultural barriers) both in terms of access to the labour market and progression opportunities during employment. Despite better attainment levels amongst minority ethnic people, evidence suggests this does not translate into better job prospects<sup>88</sup>.

### Social security

Some minority ethnic groups have a lower acceptance rate for social security applications in Scotland than white applicants. Overall, the proportion of clients approved was highest for 'Mixed or multiple ethnic groups' (78%), followed by 'African' (77%), 'White' (76%) and 'Prefer not to say' (76%). Approval rate was lowest for clients identifying as 'Other ethnic group' (69%), followed by 'Asian' (71%) and 'Caribbean or Black' (74%)<sup>89</sup>.

Evidence suggests there are particular barriers faced by minority ethnic communities, such as lack of awareness regarding the benefits available to them, difficulty accessing services or interacting with them – for example due to cultural or language barriers, where English might not be spoken or well understood, but also due to continued structural barriers that are compounded by discrimination and racism faced by minority ethnic people, which can cause trust issues.

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<sup>83</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): economic impact of labour market effects - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>84</sup> Gender pay gap action plan: annual report - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>85</sup> Fairer Scotland for disabled people - employment action plan: progress report - year 2 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>86</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>87</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions - Statistics from the Annual Population Survey 2020/21 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>88</sup> First year Progress Report 2018-19 : Annex C ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>89</sup> Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis - December 2020 to May 2021

As minority ethnic families tend to be larger, they may be disproportionately penalised by the two-child limit that applies to UK Governments Universal Credit and Child Tax Credit. Such policies enable and embed inequalities experienced by these communities.

### Costs of living

Following Covid-19, evidence shows that minority ethnic Scots have faced poor health, economic and social outcomes which has exacerbated existing inequalities. We know that minority ethnic families are around twice as likely to experience child poverty compared to their white/Scottish background counterparts.<sup>90</sup> Minority ethnic families are less likely to have savings compared to the white population and also tend to experience a higher prevalence of food insecurity than white households.<sup>91</sup>.

Research by Joseph Rowntree Foundation<sup>92</sup> suggests that minority ethnic households are less likely to be managing well financially due to lower incomes and higher costs. For example the report highlighted that minority ethnic households were over-represented within the private rented sector and are less likely to own their own home than white households. In 2019<sup>93</sup>, Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British made up 6% of adults in private rented households, 2% of adults in socially rented households and 2% of adults in owner occupied households. In the same year, African, Caribbean or Black Minority made up 4% of adults in socially rented households, 1% in private rented households, 1% in other tenures and 0% in owner occupied households.

Travel-to-work patterns have showed that people from minority ethnic groups are less mobile and were more reliant on public transport, suggesting transport poverty could be more likely.<sup>94</sup> Travel-to-work data from the 2011 Census showed that people from the African group were the least likely to drive to work and the most likely to take the bus.<sup>95</sup> According to the combined results of the Scottish Household Survey between 2001 and 2005, adults from ethnic minority groups are markedly less likely to hold a driving license - 48% compared to 66% for White ethnic groups.<sup>96</sup> In line with this, analysis from the 2011 Census showed that all minority ethnic groups with the exception of the Pakistani group had lower than average levels of car ownership.<sup>97</sup> The African group had the lowest level of car or van access, with the majority (53%) having no access to a car or van.

The 2011 Census data showed that Gypsy/Traveller communities were more likely to be from a priority family group – (larger families, minority ethnic, with a lone parent)<sup>98</sup>. Gypsy/Travellers are more likely to be in irregular work, economically inactive and be unbanked.

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<sup>90</sup> New research from CRER: Ethnicity and Poverty in Scotland 2020

<sup>91</sup> If not now, when? - Social Renewal Advisory Board report: January 2021 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>92</sup> Ethnicity, poverty, and the data in Scotland | JRF

<sup>93</sup> Scottish Household Survey 2019

<sup>94</sup> EHRC (2018) Is Scotland Fairer?

<sup>95</sup> Scottish Government (2015) Census 2011 equality results: analysis, part two

<sup>96</sup> 80 Scottish Government (no date) Ethnicity

<sup>97</sup> Scottish Government (2015) Census 2011 equality results: analysis, part tw

<sup>98</sup> Introduction - Gypsy/Travellers in Scotland - A Comprehensive Analysis of the 2011 Census - gov.scot (www.gov.scot))

## Marriage and Civil Partnership

Although there is relatively limited evidence available for this group, the available evidence tells us that there are links between poverty and income inequality based on marital status. In 2017-20<sup>99</sup>, the relative poverty rate after housing costs was highest for single adults (27%) and divorced (or separated) adults (27%). Married adults were the least likely to be in poverty (13%), with widowed and cohabiting adults at 19% each.

The poverty rate among widowed and divorced/separated adults largely decreased over the long term, whereas for single, cohabiting and married adults the trend was broadly flat over time. Following divorce, men are more likely to re-enter home ownership in comparison to women. Divorced women are more likely to suffer prolonged financial hardship in the long term than men and in the event of separation or the loss of a partner, women can be especially vulnerable to entering poverty<sup>100</sup>.

The Growing Up in Scotland longitudinal study found that 9% of children were born into a lone parent household, and a further 11% experienced parental separation in the first five years of their lives<sup>101</sup>. Lone parents are more likely to be in poverty (38% of children in lone parent families were in relative poverty in 2017-20 vs 24% of all children). In addition, 40% of children in lone parent families in relative poverty also have a disabled family member, which amplifies barriers to overcome poverty<sup>102</sup>.

Lone parent households have higher fuel costs than all households with children in Scotland and spend more of their household income on food. Lone parents are the household type that is most likely to be financial vulnerable and in unmanageable debt and are less likely to have savings in comparison to all households with children<sup>103</sup>. For some lone parents, financial pressures are made worse as they can struggle to receive the Child Maintenance that they are entitled to from the non-resident parent<sup>104</sup>. Although research shows that child maintenance does help reduce poverty, it has been estimated that less than half of lone parents in the UK receive it. Research shows child maintenance currently decreases poverty among single mother families more than it increases poverty among fathers paying support.

## Pregnancy and Maternity

Pregnancy brings a period of sudden increased financial pressure and sustained money worries have been reported following a birth of a baby, increasing a risk of child poverty<sup>105</sup>. This includes additional heating costs, buying formula and food, nappies, clothes and providing for the needs of older children. We know that families

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<sup>99</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 (data.gov.scot)

<sup>100</sup> 7. NSET and the Protected Characteristics - Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation: equality position statement - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>101</sup> Demographics - Tackling child poverty: second year progress report - annex C - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>102</sup> Tackling child poverty priority families overview - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>103</sup> Costs of living - Tackling child poverty: second year progress report - annex C - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

<sup>104</sup> One in four: a profile of single parents in the UK - Gingerbread

<sup>105</sup> Project Title (gcph.co.uk)

with a new child are more likely to enter poverty and the birth of a new baby can result in those who are close to the poverty line falling below it. Households with children aged 0-4 are at high risk of poverty and the risk, is much higher when the youngest child is aged less than one year old<sup>106</sup>.

Motherhood can have a significant impact on the number of hours that some mothers can work, which then affects their pay and income relative to non-mothers and men<sup>107</sup>. Mothers spend less time in paid work and more time on household responsibilities in comparison to fathers and the differences in work patterns between mothers and fathers have grown since before beginning of Covid-19<sup>108</sup>. Mothers suffer a long-term pay penalty from part-time working, on average earning about 30% less per hour than similarly educated fathers<sup>109</sup>. This wage gap can partly be attributed to mothers being more likely to work part-time, or taking time out of employment altogether.

There is a strong correlation between deprivation and teenage pregnancy. In the most deprived areas in 2019, the rate of teenage pregnancy in the under 16 age group was four times higher than those in the least deprived areas (52.6 compared to 11.8 per 1,000)<sup>110</sup>. Young mothers and their children are more likely to experience social adversity, stigmatisation and disengagement with education or employment<sup>111</sup>. Young mothers are less likely to be in work when their first child is 10 months old and tend to have lower educational levels than older mothers when their first child is born, which can impact on their career prospects<sup>112</sup>. Education can be a key predictor of later employment, with research showing providing support to further education is likely to improve job prospects<sup>113</sup>. We know that when young mothers are in work, they are more likely to earn a low income and more likely to receive social security entitlements<sup>114</sup>.

Young mothers and their babies are at greater risk of experiencing negative health and social outcomes compared with older mothers, including poorer mental health (increased rates of stress, anxiety, and depression)<sup>115</sup>. Estimates suggest that up to 1 in 7 mothers will experience a mental health problem in the antenatal or postnatal

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<sup>106</sup> Tackling child poverty delivery plan 2018-2022: annex 3 - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>107</sup> Mothers suffer big long-term pay penalty from part-time working - Institute For Fiscal Studies - IFS

<sup>108</sup> Coronavirus (COVID-19): impact on equality (research) - gov.scot

([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)); Covid+and+Inequalities+Final+Report+For+Publication+--+PDF.pdf ([scotland.gov.uk](http://scotland.gov.uk))

<sup>109</sup> BN223.pdf ([ifs.org.uk](http://ifs.org.uk))

<sup>110</sup> Teenage Pregnancy ([publichealthscotland.scot](http://publichealthscotland.scot))

<sup>111</sup> 1. Introduction - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Family Nurse Partnership insights: evaluation report - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot)); Wiggins, M., Rosato, M., Austerberry, H., Sawtell, M. and Oliver, S., 2005. Sure start plus national evaluation. *London: Social Science Research Unit*.

<sup>112</sup> Every Child, Every Chance: The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22: Annex 3 – Equality Impact Assessment ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>113</sup> Research Findings No. 126/2014 The experiences of mothers aged under 20: analysis of Growing Up in Scotland data ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>114</sup> Every Child, Every Chance: The Tackling Child Poverty Delivery Plan 2018-22: Annex 3 – Equality Impact Assessment ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>115</sup> References - Coronavirus (COVID-19) Family Nurse Partnership insights: evaluation report - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot));

period<sup>116</sup>. In 2019/20<sup>117</sup> deprivation and poverty continued to influence the health of pregnant women and babies across Scotland. Women from deprived areas were more likely to be overweight or obese, smoke, book later for antenatal care, have a low birthweight baby and to deliver their babies early compared to those from less deprived areas.

## **Religion or Belief**

Faith and worship is highly important for a significant proportion of the Scottish population and can bring benefits to spiritual and wider wellbeing. Although there is relatively limited evidence around religion, employment and poverty, the available data for this group tells us that in 2015-20<sup>118</sup> relative poverty rates were considerably higher for Muslim adults (52%) compared to adults overall (18%). Of adults belonging to the Church of Scotland, 15% were in relative poverty after housing costs compared to 19% of Roman Catholic adults and 19% of adults of other Christian denominations.

Since 2004, the employment rate of Muslims in Scotland has been consistently lower than the employment rate for the wider population (58.1% vs 73.4% in 2020)<sup>119</sup>. Estimates are less precise for other religions due to small sample sizes. However, the data does suggest that the employment outcomes for those who are Jewish, Sikh or Buddhist in Scotland are less than the overall population<sup>120</sup>.

Research by Sikh Sanjog<sup>121</sup> suggests that Sikh women face a number of barriers both in seeking work and within the workplace. This includes low self-esteem, cultural and family barriers, language and literacy barriers and structural barriers including employers not understanding cultural nuances, such as women wearing dastars or traditional clothing in the workplace.

Approval rate for devolved benefits varies among religions, but among the most represented groups there was less variation in December 2020 to May 2021 than in the previous reporting period<sup>122</sup>. Among the most well represented groups, approval rate was highest for those with no religion (77%), followed by Roman Catholic (75%), Muslim (75%), Church of Scotland (74%), and Other Christian (74%). Overall approval rates remained particularly low for Hindu clients (51%), with Jewish clients (61%), Sikh clients (68%) and Buddhist clients (70%) also having relatively low approval rates.

## Cost of living

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<sup>116</sup> Perinatal and infant mental health: equalities impact assessment - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>117</sup> Teenage pregnancies - Year of conception, ending 31 December 2018 - Teenage pregnancies - Publications - Public Health Scotland

<sup>118</sup> Poverty and Income Inequality in Scotland 2017-20 ([data.gov.scot](http://data.gov.scot))

<sup>119</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions – background tables and charts - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>120</sup> Scotland's Labour Market: People, Places and Regions – background tables and charts - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>121</sup> Layout 1 ([sikhsanjog.com](http://sikhsanjog.com))

<sup>122</sup> Social Security Scotland client diversity and equalities analysis - December 2020 to May 2021

There is no known evidence of prevalence of food insecurity for religious groups, but we note that many faith-based organisations are involved in food aid activities.

## Sexual Orientation

In 2019, 95% of adults self-identified as straight or heterosexual and around 3% of adults self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other<sup>123</sup>. Lesbian, gay and bisexual people (LGB) continue to face a range of inequalities and disadvantage across a number of areas and settings including employment, healthcare and education<sup>124</sup>. LGBT people are more likely to live in deprived areas in Scotland (27% lived in the most deprived quintile compared with 19% of heterosexual adults)<sup>125</sup>. Compared to heterosexual adults, lesbian, gay, bisexual or other adults were more likely to be younger, live in deprived areas, report bad general health, be unemployed and have a degree<sup>126</sup>.

While there is no firm pay data for LGBT people, the high level of discrimination faced suggests some possible impact on earnings. LGBT people continue to experience discrimination, harassment and abuse in the workplace and in education<sup>127</sup>.

Despite some studies showing equal or better pay for LGB people, UK data highlights that lesbian women are more advantaged in the labour market and bisexual people tend to have lower incomes. UK research<sup>128</sup> on LGB employee's experience of discrimination, bullying and harassment at work showed that LGB employees were more than twice as likely to experience bullying at work than heterosexual employees, but many do not report this.

A 2021 research report<sup>129</sup> highlighted that LGBT employees experience lower levels of psychological safety, wellbeing, job satisfaction and poorer working relationships compared to their heterosexual colleagues. LGBT employees were also more likely to report that work has a negative impact on their health. Stonewall Scotland's research<sup>130</sup> on LGBT experiences at work showed that more than a third of LGBT employees (36%) hid or disguised that they are LGBT at work because they were afraid of discrimination.

In 2018<sup>131</sup>, people who identified as 'LGB and other' were twice as likely to be unemployed compared to those who identified as 'heterosexual' (4% versus 2%). It is important to note that a higher proportion of those identifying as 'LGB and other' were in the age groups 16-24 and 25-34, which were also the age groups where unemployment was higher.

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<sup>123</sup> Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019

<sup>124</sup> 7. NSET and the Protected Characteristics - Scotland's National Strategy for Economic Transformation: equality position statement - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>125</sup> Sexual Orientation in Scotland 2017: A Summary of the Evidence Base

<sup>126</sup> Sexual Orientation in Scotland 2017: A Summary of the Evidence Base

<sup>127</sup> Sexual Orientation in Scotland 2017: A Summary of the Evidence Base

<sup>128</sup> Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual employees' experience of discrimination, bullying and harassment at work - ReShare ([ukdataservice.ac.uk](http://ukdataservice.ac.uk))

<sup>129</sup> Inclusion at work: Perspectives on LGBT+ working lives ([cipd.co.uk](http://cipd.co.uk))

<sup>130</sup> Stonewall Scotland, Work Report - final.cdr

<sup>131</sup> Scottish Surveys Core Questions 2019

## Gender Reassignment

The latest available evidence tells us that Trans people face a range of disadvantages and vulnerabilities in their everyday life and in employment<sup>132</sup>.

There is evidence that transgender people may suffer poorer outcomes in relation to the wider population, including in relation to homelessness, health and employment. This includes lower self-esteem and higher rates of mental health difficulties than the general population. Young LGBT people may also be at particular risk of homelessness, often due to parental rejection, familial physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and familial aggression and violence

Trans and non-binary workers are particularly under-represented in the workforce overall<sup>133</sup>. At every stage of employment, many trans people face discrimination, bullying, harassment, prejudiced views and stereotyping, including during recruitment processes<sup>134</sup>. This has a negative impact on their employment prospects<sup>135</sup>. Stonewall Scotland's report<sup>136</sup> highlighted that more than half of trans people (58%) have deliberately hidden or disguised their identity at work for fear of discrimination and one in fifteen trans employees (6%) has been physically attacked by a colleague or customer.

Barriers and challenges to the inclusion of trans employees include lack of knowledge by employers and fellow employees, insufficient line manager confidence, stigma, practical considerations (e.g. toilet facilities, uniforms), lack of support and flexible policies<sup>137</sup>. Barriers to accessing employment include feeling unable to apply to jobs because of fears of prejudice, application forms excluding non-binary identities, difficulties obtaining references and proof of qualification matching gender and new name, lack of awareness and transphobia from interview panels and feeling unable to be open about trans identity when applying for jobs<sup>138</sup>. Research<sup>139</sup> carried out in Scotland showed 82% of transgender young people had experienced bullying in school on the grounds of being LGB or T and 68% stated this has negatively affected their educational attainment. 27% of trans young people left education as a result of homophobia, biphobia or transphobia in the learning environment. This can negatively impact their future career plans and skills.

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<sup>132</sup> Stonewall | LGBT in Britain - Trans Report (2017) (stonewallscotland.org.uk); Trans People and Work in Scotland (lgbthealth.org.uk)

<sup>133</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308365054\\_Listen\\_carefully\\_transgender\\_voices\\_in\\_the\\_workplace](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308365054_Listen_carefully_transgender_voices_in_the_workplace)

<sup>134</sup> Inclusion at work: Perspectives on LGBT+ working lives (cipd.co.uk); National LGBT Survey: Summary report - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk); Stonewall | LGBT in Britain - Trans Report (2017) (stonewallscotland.org.uk); trans\_mh\_study.pdf (scottishtrans.org); Trans-People-and-Work-Executive-Summary-LGBT-Health-Aug-2021-FINAL.pdf (lgbthealth.org.uk)

<sup>135</sup> <https://www.lgbthealth.org.uk/resource/trans-people-scotland-work/>

<sup>136</sup> Stonewall Scotland, Work Report - final.cdr

<sup>137</sup> . Supporting trans employees in the workplace | Acas; Trans People and Work in Scotland (lgbthealth.org.uk)

<sup>138</sup> <https://www.lgbthealth.org.uk/resource/trans-people-scotland-work/>

<sup>139</sup> Dr.Lough Dennell, B.L, Anderson, G. and McDonnell, D. (2018) *Life in Scotland LGBT Young People*. LGBT Youth Scotland.

We know that LGBT young people are at higher risk of experiencing mental health problems than other young people<sup>140</sup>. The study above found that 63% of transgender young people experienced suicidal thoughts or behaviours, 59% self-harmed and 84% of transgender young people who had experienced mental health problems had been bullied<sup>141</sup>.

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<sup>140</sup> Introduction - Supporting transgender young people in schools: guidance for Scottish schools - gov.scot ([www.gov.scot](http://www.gov.scot))

<sup>141</sup> Dr.Lough Dennell, B.L, Anderson, G. and McDonnell, D. (2018) *Life in Scotland LGBT Young People*. LGBT Youth Scotland

### **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.

As set out in the plan, continued engagement with stakeholders and those with experience of life on low income will allow us to develop a deeper understanding of the needs and the impact of intersection of protected characteristics and those in priority families. This engagement will be important throughout the design, implementation and monitoring of the actions and policies to ensure delivery of approaches which are person-centred and effectively meet the needs and rights of protected characteristic groups, and will form action in maximising the positive impacts set out below, and mitigating the risks identified.

This analysis is broken down into the equivalent chapters in the Delivery Plan:

- **Providing the opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work**
- **Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs**
- **Supporting the next generation to thrive**

## Providing opportunities and integrated support parents need to enter, sustain and progress in work

Protected Characteristic	Overview of Impact	Specific Action or Mitigation
Sex, Race, Disability	<p>A number of actions in the delivery plan are specifically targeted to priority families, and therefore we expect these to have a direct positive impact on the corresponding protected characteristics.</p> <p>The employment policies suggested, particularly the new employment support for priority families, the pathfinders work and the new parental offer all propose a holistic approach to support, linking employability with wider support such as improved, accessible and affordable childcare and transport. The further enhancement of the holistic key worker to provide an integrated package of support will be particularly beneficial for these groups, as support can be tailored to each parent's needs and circumstances. This is likely to be beneficial for the priority groups – particularly women, minority ethnic parents, disabled parents or parents caring for a disabled child - and responds to issues raised during stakeholder consultation that generic employability and skills policies may not deliver optimal outcomes for these groups.</p> <p>The expansion of Connecting Scotland will target priority groups. The increased access to digital devices and connectivity will enable priority groups to access online employability support, training opportunities and education, access online services and information and will help maximize earnings by ensuring people have the essential digital skills required. This is likely to particularly benefit women, minority ethnic parents, disabled parents or parents caring for a disabled child and parents with a baby under one.</p> <p>Policies focused on overcoming systemic barriers faced by priority groups, including the Workplace Equality Fund, which aims to support employers to reduce labour market barriers and address inequalities, are targeted and therefore will be particularly beneficial to disabled workers, women and minority ethnic workers. Similarly, the Parental Transition Fund which aims to tackle the financial barriers parents face in entering the labour market, will be beneficial to groups who face additional costs in (re) entering paid employment.</p>	<p>Monitoring participation and outcomes of employability support programmes to ensure these priority groups are not only accessing support services, but progressing to access and sustain employment, and taking remedial action if data suggests this is not the case.</p> <p>Stakeholders have highlighted that place based approaches have traditionally not included or delivered on gender and race priorities, and may be less suited to delivering better outcomes for disabled people. Stakeholders identified the risk that these approaches might build on or replicate existing power imbalance and discriminatory practices in those areas. To mitigate this, representatives of priority family groups and equality stakeholders should be embedded in the scoping, design and delivery of pathfinder activities. Close monitoring will be required to ensure pathfinder activities do deliver for women, minority ethnic and disabled people, and remedial action should be taken if required.</p>

<p>Sex</p>	<p>The further development of high quality affordable and accessible childcare, before and after school and during holidays for those on low income, will be particularly beneficial to women, who carry out the majority of caring responsibilities. This will allow greater opportunity to access training, employment, learning and potential expansion of the hours they work.</p> <p>As those on low incomes are more reliant on public transport, the actions set out in the plan to enhance access and affordability of public transport, will be beneficial to priority families, including young mothers. More affordable and accessible public transport will reduce household living costs and will allow more priority families to access essential services, employment centers, schools and training opportunities.</p> <p>The availability of good quality, well paid jobs on a flexible basis can support women to enter and progress in the workplace. Through the Fair Work First approach, the application of fair work criteria to public sector grants, other funding and contracts will drive fair work practices across the labour market. Fair Work First criteria has recently been expanded to support flexible working from day one of employment.</p> <p>Women, and other protected characteristics will also benefit from the enhanced and refocused action to improve equality at work, such as expanding the number of employers paying the real Living Wage and continued promotion of Fair Work principles in sectors such as retail, Early Learning and Childcare as well as the National Care Service. This will be particularly beneficial for women who are more likely to work in sectors with historically low pay, low progress and are often undervalued. This includes cashiering (retail), care, and catering, cleaning and clerical sectors.</p> <p>The Women Returners programme, will be particularly beneficial in supporting women who have taken a break from paid work to return to employment that matches their skills and experience.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and target action to address the gender pay gap. The publication of the refreshed Fair Work Action Plan will include commitments on the Gender Pay Gap and aims to improve pay gap reporting and equalities data management more broadly. This, along with monitoring of other policies, should be used to help to inform and further develop specific actions required to address the unfair disparities faced, including the undervaluation of women's work, revaluation of the care role in society, increase of hours on childcare, increases in social security benefits amongst others.</p> <p>To support the adoption of the new Fair Work First criteria, on 24 September 2021, Fair Work First guidance was published which provides good practice examples to guide employers' approaches and, importantly, explains the benefits of Fair Work for workers and organisations.</p> <p>Stakeholders have highlighted that place based approaches have traditionally not included or delivered on gender priorities and the possibility that these approaches might build on or replicate existing power imbalance and discriminatory practices in those areas. To mitigate this, representatives of priority family groups and equality stakeholders should be embedded in the scoping, design and delivery of pathfinder activities. Close monitoring will be required to ensure pathfinder activities do deliver for women and remedial action should be taken if required.</p>
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<p>Age</p>	<p>A separate Children’s Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment is provided at <a href="#">Annex 8</a></p> <p>Most of the policies in the plan focus on parents, however some action is likely to be beneficial to young people and older workers.</p> <p>In addition, the increase of provision of formal, flexible and affordable care will allow more priority groups, including young mothers to enter paid employment, training and skill development opportunities. The plan highlights that the future system of school age childcare, will take a person-centred approach and care provision will meet the needs of both children and their carers.</p> <p>The policies focused on provision of affordable and accessible public transport are expected to reduce household costs and make it more affordable for young people to access education, training and employment. Maintaining and improving the bus network benefits people who are too young to drive, or otherwise do not have access to a car and are more likely to rely on buses and public transport to get around. The National Bus Travel Concessions Scheme for Young Persons will be beneficial for young people in terms of creating more opportunities to take the bus to work, to access education, and social opportunities which may improve their financial and overall wellbeing.</p> <p>The proposed free bikes programme will be targeted at school age children between 4 and 18. Although the policy is still in development, it aims to support a just transition away from single occupancy carbon intensive modes of transport, to Active Travel based sustainable solutions. The policy will impact significantly on transport poverty figures and contribute to the Scottish Government commitment to reduce car kilometres travelled by 20% by 2030.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor policies around Early Learning and Childcare, transport, and digital connectivity to ensure that support does reach those most at risk, including young people and young single parents and take remedial action if required.</p> <p>Through the publications of the Pay Gap Strategies and through the Demand Responsive Travel review, encourage and support organisations to collect data to understand the barriers different age groups and protected characteristics experience and then improve or adapt appropriate action.</p>
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<p>Race</p>	<p>Policies in the plan, including those that aim to reduce the minority ethnic pay gap, tackle the structural inequality in employment and services and increasing income from employment and supporting minority ethnic people to enter, return and sustain employment through targeted, employability and skills policies that promote flexible and fair work principles, will be particularly beneficial to minority ethnic families.</p> <p>The Fair Start programme specifically targets minority groups, and employers must demonstrate how they will engage positively to support sustained employment, whilst recognising the barriers and cultural issues minority communities face.</p> <p>Minority ethnic families are more likely to use buses than their white counterparts. Providing affordable and accessible public transport which connects minority ethnic people to essential services, employment centers and schools will therefore be beneficial to ME families.</p>	<p>Following publication of the ethnicity pay gap strategy ensure employers can use the strategy to collect, analyse and apply data to inform actions to address barriers experienced by minority ethnic people.</p> <p>Stakeholders have highlighted that place based approaches have traditionally not included or delivered for minority ethnic communities and the possibility that these approaches might build on or replicate existing power imbalance and discriminatory practices in those areas. To mitigate this, representatives of priority family groups and equality stakeholders, including for ME communities should be embedded in the scoping, design and delivery of pathfinder activities. Close monitoring will be required to ensure pathfinder activities do deliver for ME communities and remedial action should be taken if required.</p>
<p>Religion</p>	<p>No specific action has been identified to address this, however policies in the plan that target minority ethnic communities and address structural barriers for priority families may be beneficial for some religious groups.</p>	<p>Consider the development of data and work with stakeholders to improve understanding of the role of work and barriers faced, in relation to poverty amongst faith groups</p>
<p>Pregnancy and Maternity</p>	<p>The policies that target priority groups, including young mothers should have a positive impact. For example, the Women Returners programme, will be particularly beneficial in supporting mothers who have taken a break from paid work to return to employment that matches their skills and experience.</p> <p>Many mothers face the 'motherhood penalty' in that they can struggle to return to work following maternity leave if working patterns do not support their care commitments. The Women Returners programme, will be particularly beneficial in supporting women who have taken a break from paid work to return to employment that matches their skills and experience. The employability support services, which will provide peer and relational support, will be beneficial with supporting mothers to build their confidence and potentially increase engagement and improve their wellbeing.</p>	<p>Further development of data to monitor policy impacts for pregnancy and maternity should be considered</p>

Sexual Orientation	No specific actions have been identified to help LGBT parents into employment. However, given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible.	Monitor situation to improve understanding of poverty amongst LGBT people.
Disability	<p>In addition to the employability and fair work actions set out above, strengthened Supported Businesses will also be beneficial to disabled people, by raising the profile and strengthening their commercial viability, potentially leading to more meaningful employment and training opportunities for disabled people.</p> <p>The policies in the plan, particularly those focused on increasing awareness of flexible employment opportunities, training and skills and financial wellbeing support, could help address the barriers disabled people face.</p> <p>The publication of the Disability Employment Action Plan, will support employers to better understand the issues driving labour market disparities for disabled people and will lead to improved pay gap reporting and equalities data management more broadly. This will help to inform and further develop actions required to address the unfair disparities faced.</p> <p>The further development of high quality affordable and accessible childcare, before and after school and during holidays for those on low income, will take a person-centered approach to ensure care provision meets the needs of disabled parents and the needs of disabled children attending.</p> <p>The policies focused on provision of affordable and accessible public transport, including concessionary fares for disabled people will be beneficial allowing more for more disabled people to access education, training and employment opportunities as well as support services. Maintaining and improving the bus network may benefit people who do not have access to a car, including some disabled people who are more likely to rely on buses and public transport to get around.</p> <p>The proposed free bikes programme will be targeted at school age children between 4 and 18. Although the policy is still in development, particular consideration will be given to ensure suitable provision for those with additional support needs.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and target action to address the disability pay gap. The publication of the refreshed Fair Work Action Plan will include commitments on the Disability Pay Gap and will lead to improved pay gap reporting and equalities data management more broadly. This, along with monitoring of other policies, should be used to help to inform and further develop specific actions required to address the unfair disparities faced by disabled people.</p> <p>Monitor existing Early Learning and Childcare offer and design of school age childcare to ensure it is accessible and meets the needs of disabled children who attend and disabled parents.</p> <p>The Fair Fares Review aims to ensure a sustainable and integrated approach to transport fares, including for disabled people. The review will take into account the cost and availability for services, including for disabled people. Following this review, remedial action should be taken if required.</p>

## Maximising the support available for families to live dignified lives and meet their basic needs

Protected Characteristic	Overview of Impact	Specific Action or Mitigation
Sex, Race, Disability	<p>A number of actions in the delivery plan are specifically targeted to priority families, and therefore we expect these to have a direct positive impact on the corresponding protected characteristics.</p> <p>The integrated policies and services outlined in the plan, particularly providing holistic and whole family support through the Whole Family Wellbeing Funding, will target priority groups. The Getting it Right Together and No Wrong Door approach will ensure families are supported to access the right support at the right time, and will help to navigate the complex systems of support services available through trusted professionals, without stigma or discrimination, which will likely benefit priority groups and people with the associated protected characteristics.</p> <p>The Social Innovation Partnership (SIP) targets priority groups, including specific projects aimed at different protected groups. SIP partners focus on better wellbeing, financial inclusion, social connectedness and routes to employment, and will potentially impact on each of the three drivers of child poverty for these groups.</p> <p>Enhancement of accessible financial advice services will likely impact cost of living for all priority groups, through increasing awareness and uptake of social security as well as general money management advice.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching those at greater risk of poverty, particular priority families and the related protected characteristics.</p> <p>SIP learning partners will continue to track the impact of the SIP approach at the delivery and systems level. The next phase of the learning programme will focus in particular on understanding impact and change at the system level. Separate evaluation will be commissioned for the Scottish Mentoring &amp; Leadership programme. This should be reviewed to ensure support is reaching those most at risk of poverty and to identify any remedial action required.</p>
Sex	<p>The SIP programme includes a specific project aimed at supporting women and girls' mental health and wellbeing. Other beneficial supports include financial inclusion work, befriending, advice and advocacy, flexible working and flexible childcare. The Scottish Mentoring and Leadership's programme school-based mentoring and leadership support will also benefit girls.</p> <p>As a greater proportion of women's income comes from social security, the policies to assist low income households through income supplements will have a positive impact. For example, the Scottish Carer's Assistance and Carer's Additional Person Payment will disproportionately benefit women, who make up the majority of unpaid carers and 69% of the recipients of the current Carer's Allowance benefit which Scottish Carer's Assistance will replace. Discretionary housing payments (DHPs) directly support households with the cost of housing where their benefits have been capped. This policy could help all priority groups, though mainly lone parents who accounted for 68% of eligibility.</p>	<p>A risk to achieving social security policy objectives is that eligible families will not be aware of the schemes so will not apply. Social Security Scotland takes a proactive approach to promoting benefits and maximising uptake. However, to increase uptake of targeted support, there is a need to work with local authorities, DWP and HMRC to improve data sharing. There will need to be work with local authorities on their processes of identifying eligible households and getting payment to them and consideration should also be given to the feasibility of improving data reporting.</p> <p>To enable better targeting of support locally and to improve the reach of engagement of services, there is a</p>

	<p>Enhanced and continued policies to help with the cost of living such as free school meal provision, free access to period products, help with school uniforms, fuel and housing costs will also be beneficial.</p> <p>The strengthened support from Health Visitors to ensure all families receive the financial advice they need will be particularly beneficial to women and will help with maximising income and reducing household costs. The expansion of the Family Nurse Partnership local pathways to support all young first time mothers aged 21 and under, and where capacity allows will target first time mothers under the age of 25 who are care experienced or from the most deprived communities, will also be beneficial by increasing access to money advice, income maximisation and community support for some women. The Best Start programme, providing care closer to home and more relational midwifery will support women during pregnancy. The Best Start Food policy will have a direct impact through increasing income from social security and thus reducing cost of living for pregnant women and families with a child under three years old who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.</p> <p>The 1000 additional staff commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing Primary Care Services will help to support positive mental wellbeing in local communities through provision of a range of services including accessible drug and alcohol services, community mental health services, exercise coaches, peer networks and family support wrapped around GP practices linked to employability support. This service will be available to anyone in need of mental, health, wellbeing or distress support and therefore will likely benefit both men and women.</p> <p>The implementation of The Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 will strengthen immediate protections for the victims of abuse and any children to remain in the family home or social housing. This will better protect many parents, particularly women, reducing the risk that they will experience homelessness as a result of domestic abuse. The continued investment in the Ending Homelessness Together Fund will also be beneficial for supporting positive housing outcomes for victims of domestic abuse.</p>	<p>need to work with local partners and grassroots, community-led organisations to reach those most excluded groups.</p> <p>Consideration should be given to the further development of homelessness data to better understand the links between protected characteristics and priority families and their experience/risk of homelessness and action required to address this.</p>
Age	<p>Most of the policies in the plan focus on parents from priority groups, however the action is also likely to benefit their children.</p> <p>The Scottish Mentoring and Leadership programme also takes a preventative approach to equip young people so they do not themselves become parents/carers in poverty in the future</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching those at greater risk of poverty, including young people. Reduction of costs and efforts to maximise income will be beneficial although there is a need to continue to monitor the overall relationship between costs and income and take remedial action if required.</p>

	<p>There is evidence that households headed by younger people (16-24), by women, and where a member has a long-term health condition are more at risk of fuel poverty, so mothers under 25 and disabled people may experience greater relative benefit from the plan's actions on fuel poverty. Low Income Winter Heating Assistance is targeted at low income households who require extra help towards increased heat costs, including young people who meet the eligibility criteria. This will provide them with greater consistency and certainty, as they will be guaranteed a payment each winter.</p> <p>The Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan sets out actions to offset inequalities for both specific populations who may be disproportionately affected, such as young people, as well as improving mental health outcomes at a population level. The 1000 additional staff commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing Primary Care Services will help to support positive mental wellbeing in local communities through provision of a range of services including accessible drug and alcohol services, community mental health service, exercise coaches, peer networks and family support wrapped around GP practices linked to employability support. This service will be available to anyone in need of mental, health, wellbeing or distress support, including both children and adults.</p>	<p>A risk to the success of tackling fuel poverty is that powers relating to energy markets are outwith the control of the Scottish Government. <a href="#">Lived experience research</a> also found that people's awareness of energy advice services is low. The Fuel Poverty Strategy will be supported by a detailed monitoring and evaluation framework, which should be used to ensure actions are reaching those most at risk, including young mothers and consider mitigating action to address the lack of awareness</p>
Disability	<p>The range of policies should be beneficial to disabled people because by providing accessible support to maximise income and reducing costs for everyday items, there will be more money to cover costs for specific items they require.</p> <p>SIP partners engage and support disabled people and people with long standing mental health issues. Activities promote greater social inclusion, financial wellbeing and routes to employment and learning opportunities</p> <p>As a result of higher poverty levels, disabled people are more likely to benefit from the range of devolved benefits available, such as the Scottish Child Payment, Child Disability Payment and Child Winter Heating Assistance and the Adult Disability Payment when in force. It is estimated that around 90% of those who receive the current Carer's Allowance benefit live in a household with a disabled person. Improvements to Scottish Carer's Assistance will therefore benefit these households in particular, including through the Carer's Additional Person Payment, providing extra financial support to those caring for more than one person getting a disability benefit. Child Winter Heating Assistance will help mitigate the additional heating costs that the households of the most severely disabled children and young people face in the winter months.</p> <p>Social Security Scotland and the financial advice services will continue to help disabled people to be supported with any accessibility barriers when applying for assistance. In particular, the Social Security Advocacy Service will bring free support to disabled people</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching and meeting the needs of those at greater risk of poverty, including disabled people. Reduction of costs and efforts to maximise income will be beneficial although there is a need to mitigate against the barriers disabled people face and provide specialist support and input to meet their needs.</p> <p>Existing data on disability are not comprehensive enough to allow for robust estimates of the number of people who would be eligible but do not apply for a qualifying benefit. However ongoing work through the <a href="#">Benefit Take-up Strategy</a> should be helpful</p> <p>A monitoring and evaluation process for LIWHA will be in place prior to its launch. Once payments have commenced, on-going engagement with key stakeholders through a Stakeholder Reference Group will provide opportunities to monitor the impact of the policy. This should include disabled people.</p>

	<p>to help them access devolved benefits, to better understand and communicate their needs and concerns, and to participate in the processes and decisions which affect them.</p> <p>The updated Housing for Varying Needs design guide will improve the living standards for disabled people of all ages, by improving accessibility and inclusive design standards to new homes delivered with the aid of grant support through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme. This update will then inform the future development of a new Scottish Accessible Homes Standard which all new homes must achieve.</p>	
Race	<p>Action to reduce costs for families in the private sector will be beneficial to minority ethnic families, who research show are overrepresented in this sector. Also as minority ethnic families tend to have larger families, they are likely to benefit from the expansion of more affordable homes and the plans to strengthen housing planning process to ensure that larger family homes are delivered where they are required. This can help decrease the amount of income spent on housing.</p> <p>The Gypsy/Traveller Accommodation Fund and Site Design Guide aims to improve living condition for Gypsy/Traveller communities by providing more and better public accommodation. For existing residents, we anticipate that the improved standard of accommodation will contribute to reduced household costs through greater energy efficiency and therefore lower heating bills. Provision of broadband on sites will improve access to work and services, including social security rights which may in turn make benefits more accessible. Provision of a community facility allows for outreach services. Additional accommodation will make public pitches available where people may have been living on roadside encampments, giving access to sanitation, heating and basic services such as education. The target group for these policies are Gypsy/Traveller children, therefore the above policies will likely have a positive impact. In addition, the Site Design Guide focuses on the needs of children, disabled people and older people who are not well served by existing accommodation, and therefore likely to improve quality of life for these residents.</p> <p>Policies in the plan which support families to maximise their income and help with the cost of living, such as free school meal provision, free access to period products, help with school uniforms, fuel and housing costs will also be beneficial to priority families, including minority ethnic households. For example Low Income Winter Heating Assistance is targeted at low income households who require extra help towards increased heat costs, including minority ethnic people who meet the eligibility criteria. This will provide them with greater consistency and certainty, as they will be guaranteed a payment each winter.</p>	<p>Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching those at greater risk of poverty, including minority ethnic communities. Further data collection should be considered to understand the diverse needs of minority ethnic communities.</p> <p>Policies should be mindful of the barriers minority ethnic families face and take action to mitigate against these. For example, minority ethnic people are less likely to identify and apply for carers support, therefore the development of Scottish Carer's Assistance should take this into account and take targeted action to address this. To address the structural barriers and gain a better understanding of cultural barriers, continued work with ethnic minority people themselves will be vitally important, such as through Experience Panels as part of our Benefit Take-up Strategy.</p> <p>Development of Private Rented Sector Reforms should consider mitigation action for households who receive housing benefit or the housing element of universal credit (who constitute between a quarter and a third of all households in the PRS), as the benefit of lower rents may be offset by lower benefit income. They will still benefit to some extent from lower rents unless all of their private rents had been covered by their housing entitlement. Consideration should also be given to location of provision of affordable homes, as ME families may face discrimination and harassment which might make them avoid certain areas.</p>

	<p>Some minority ethnic families, with children under the age of three with British citizenship and whose parent or guardian meets the financial eligibility criteria but do not have a qualifying benefit due to having no recourse to public funds, will be eligible for the Best Start Food support. This will have a direct impact through increasing income from social security and thus reducing cost of living.</p>	<p>To address the structural barriers and gain a better understanding of cultural barriers, continued work with ethnic minorities people themselves, such as Experience Panels as part of our Benefit Take-up Strategy, is vitally important to monitor and adapt action required.</p>
Religion	<p>Although there are no specific actions identified on religious groups, given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible.</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified. However it will be beneficial to monitor the situation and engage with stakeholder groups to improve understanding of poverty and the relationship between household costs and income amongst different religious groups.</p>
Pregnancy and Maternity	<p>Actions set out in the plan that target priority families, including young mothers, will be beneficial. For example the Family Nurse Partnership provides support to younger, first time mothers, providing advice and guidance to improve sensitive, responsive care-giving, and increase the economic stability of the family. The expansion of this policy will be particularly beneficial to support to all young mothers under the age of 21 and to young mothers under the age of 25 who are care experienced or from the most deprived communities.</p> <p>The commitment to work with Health Visitors to build their confidence and competency in discussing financial circumstances with all families and understanding the individual barriers to accessing support they are entitled to, targets pregnant women and families with young children who are on the Universal health visitor pathway. This increased access to financial advice will impact upon income from social security and general money management advice could impact on cost of living.</p> <p>The Best Start Food policy will have a direct impact through increasing income from social security and thus reducing cost of living for pregnant women and families with a child under three years old who are in receipt of a qualifying benefit.</p> <p>Best Start Grant targets low income families with a pregnant woman or a young child in receipt of a qualifying benefit. Under 18s (including asylum seekers), and 18 and 19 year olds who are still dependent on someone are automatically entitled, without the need for a qualifying benefit. The efforts to increase awareness of entitlement of devolved benefits for new mothers and support with the application process, along with the combining of the SCP application form with the Best Start Grant and Best Start Foods will also be beneficial. Access to fuel poverty schemes, affordable credit and additional</p>	<p>No negative impacts identified. Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching those at greater risk of poverty, including women and young mothers in particular.</p> <p>Further monitoring of the Health Visitor quality improvement programme is planned, and this will look to test policy into practice through adding questions to local evaluations, on whether families with young children feel more supported.</p>

	<p>supports such as the baby box and access to free period products, might also be helpful to get through the additional costs during the pregnancy and maternity period.</p> <p>Pregnant young women and the youngest mothers (under 21) make up about 1 in 25 of all applications for homeless assessments in Scotland. Some of them will likely be domestic abuse survivors with very limited support networks. The targeting of policies that support safe housing for young mothers in particular will be beneficial.</p>	
Sexual Orientation	<p>There are no policies in the plan that have a particular focus on individuals' sexual orientation. However, given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible and it is unlikely there will be any differential impacts on the basis of sexual orientation.</p>	<p>The Population Census in 2022 will include voluntary questions on sexual orientation and transgender status/history. This will allow for increased measurement of sexual orientation which will be beneficial to monitor and be used to inform specific actions if required.</p>
Gender Reassignment	<p>There are no policies in the plan that have a particular focus on individuals who have or are undergoing gender reassignment, but given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible</p> <p>The Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan sets out actions to offset inequalities for specific populations who may be disproportionately affected (including trans people), as well as improving mental health outcomes at a population level. In general the Scottish Government's budget invests in a range of measures to prevent crime, including hate crime, and to promote trans-inclusive policy.</p>	<p>The Population Census in 2022 will include voluntary questions on transgender status/history. This will allow for development of baseline data on gender identity, which will be beneficial to monitor.</p> <p>Social Security Scotland's continued collection and analysis of equality data on applicants and clients, will be beneficial in order to assess social security outcomes for transgender people compared to other groups. This will help develop a better understanding of the difficulties transgender people experience and will help inform actions required to mitigate these. Consideration should also be given to emerging evidence that suggests LGBT people experience barriers in accessing social security systems as they are designed around heteronormative structures.</p>

## Supporting the Next Generation to Thrive

Protected Characteristic	Overview of Impact	Specific Mitigation/ Action
Age, Disability, Race	<p>The refreshed programme for the Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) and further implementation of GIRFEC will benefit young people, including disabled children and children from minority ethnic families, by providing additional help and support to mitigate against the impacts of child poverty and by empowering schools and local councils to drive education recovery and accelerate progress in tackling the poverty related attainment gap. The holistic, rights-based, family centred approach will be particularly beneficial to disabled and minority ethnic children who can face additional barriers and who often have complex needs. This is expected to have a long term impact on the readiness of children and young people impacted by poverty to enter and sustain positive destinations – contributing to efforts to break the cycle of poverty.</p> <p>The Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will continue to benefit 16 to 19 year olds from low income-households, including disabled children. The programme provides financial support to support young people to participate in the senior phase of secondary school and further education. This in turn will likely have a positive impact, by increasing the number of young people with qualifications, skills development, which in turn can improve employment choices.</p> <p>The further investment in Young Person’s Guarantee will provide new and enhanced education, skills, employability and employment opportunities as well as relationship based support to young people (16-24) who are at risk of not participating in opportunities and face significant barriers in entering the labour market, including disabled children. This will be particularly beneficial to children from minority ethnic families as they face additional barriers with accessing the labour market and to teenage mothers who are 20% likely to have no qualifications than older mothers.</p>	<p>Success of the SAC and EMA will depend on various factors, including the engagement of children and parents. Ongoing monitoring will be required to seek to identify risks, to ensure the policies are reaching those most at risk and remedial action should be taken to address challenges.</p> <p>GIRFEC is delivered through services and people who work with children, young people and families. A personalised child’s plan should be put in place when support across multiple services is needed. This relies on the effective implementation of GIRFEC, which includes assessment of wellbeing and needs, supported by effective multi-agency working. Local authorities, health, and other service providers may create their own local guidelines within the overall GIRFEC approach; there is a risk of inconsistency. However, the development of the Outcomes Framework for Children, Young People and Families will provide a consistent approach to demonstrate progress in improving outcomes at local and national levels, which will help to enhance our understanding of the collective impact from a wide range of policies, services and frontline practice, and will help demonstrate the interconnections between GIRFEC and child poverty.</p>
Age	<p>The policies in this section aim to improve the wellbeing and future prospects for all children living in poverty. Therefore they should all have positive impacts for children</p> <p>The provision of 1,140 fully funded Early Learning and Childcare for every three and four year old child and children experiencing the most disadvantage able to access this offer from age 2 will continue to have a positive impact. All preschool children attending a registered childcare provider can receive a funded portion of milk (or specified non-</p>	<p>A mapping exercise will be carried out on current provision of free breakfast policy. This will enable target groups to be better identified and will help develop plans for future breakfast offer to ensure it best meet the needs of children and families in Scotland.</p>

	<p>dairy alternative) and a healthy snack each day they spend 2 hours or more in childcare and all children receive four free packs of books through the Bookbug book gifting programme, helping children to read with their families from an early age.</p> <p>The delivery of free breakfast provision, alongside free school meals, will improve children's access to nutritious food while reducing living costs to families. Similarly the expansion of free school meals to include all primary and special school children will ensure more children have access to high-quality and nutritious food in the school. By making provision universal it can help to remove perceived stigmas sometimes associated with free school meals and potentially promote increased uptake among previously reluctant families who were eligible under low income qualifying criteria.</p>	
Disability	<p>The provision of 1,140 fully funded Early Learning and Childcare for every three and four year old child and children experiencing the most disadvantage able to access this offer from age 2 will continue to have a positive impact, including for disabled children and their families. The further expansion of Early Learning and Childcare to provide childcare before and after school and in holidays will target and therefore be beneficial to children with additional support needs and their families.</p>	<p>It is important to ensure appropriate staffing and understanding of specialist needs and barriers to enable participation of disabled children or those with additional support needs. It is also important that action is taken to ensure any transport barriers are considered and addressed during policy development.</p>
Sex	<p>The policies in this section aim to improve the wellbeing and future prospects for all children living in poverty. There are no specific policies in this section that have a particular focus on individuals' sex. However, given the inclusive, person-centred approach to many policies, including Scottish Attainment Challenge, Young Person's Guarantee and Early Learning and Childcare, positive impacts may be possible.</p>	<p>No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. However, we know that existing barriers such as gender stereotyping and cultural attitudes can shape outcomes for girls, boys, men and women. The First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls focused on these issues in their first report and made a series of challenging recommendations that the Scottish Government accepted and is working towards implementing. These included: the Gender Equality Taskforce in Education and Learning to implement policies to ensure that gender equality is further embedded in all aspects of education and learning and establishing a What Works? Institute to develop and test robust, evidence-led inclusive and representative approaches to changing public attitudes in Scotland to girls and women's equality and rights. During policy development, consideration should be given to this. There is a need to continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support does reach those most at risk of poverty. Consideration should also be given to the needs of children identifying as non-binary.</p>

Gender Reassignment	The policies in this section aim to improve the wellbeing and future prospects for all children living in poverty. There are no policies in the plan that have a particular focus on individuals who have or are undergoing gender reassignment, but given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible	No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. In most cases it will depend how the policy is designed and implemented. Particular consideration should be given to ensure the policies in this section meet the needs of trans children.
Sexual Orientation	The policies in this section aim to improve the wellbeing and future prospects for all children living in poverty. There are no policies that have a particular focus on sexual orientation, but given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, positive impacts may be possible.	No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. Particular consideration should be given to the needs of children who identify as LGBT+
Race	There are no specific policies in this section that have a particular focus on individuals race. However, the inclusive, person-centred approach to policies, particularly those noted above, will likely have a positive impact for minority ethnic children.	No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. Continue to monitor and evaluate policies to ensure support is reaching minority ethnic children. Policy development should be mindful of the cultural and structural barriers faced by minority ethnic people and specific action should be considered to address this.
Religion or belief	The policies in this section aim to improve the wellbeing and future prospects for all children living in poverty. There are no policies in this section of the plan that have a particular focus on individuals' religion. However, policies in the plan that target minority ethnic communities and address structural barriers for priority families may be beneficial for some religious groups and given the inclusive approach to many policies and services included, further positive impacts may be possible.	No negative impacts have been identified at this stage.
Pregnancy and maternity	<p>The Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) will continue to benefit 16 to 19 year olds from low income-households. The programme provides financial support to support young people to participate in the senior phase of secondary school and further education. This in turn will likely have a positive impact, by increasing the number of young people with qualifications and skills development, which in turn can improve employment choices. As there is a strong correlation between low income households, priority family groups and teenage pregnancy, there is an increased likelihood that pregnant young people will be eligible and benefit from the EMA.</p> <p>Access to a health visitor who delivers the Universal Health Visiting Pathway, which provides tailored support to the child and parents and routes into other services will be beneficial. Younger, first time mothers will also benefit from the Family Nurse Partnership, which provides advice and guidance to improve sensitive, responsive care-giving, and increase the economic stability of the family.</p> <p>Scotland's Baby Box aims to provide essential items to all families with newborns to give all children in Scotland an equal start in life. This will directly impact on cost of</p>	No negative impacts have been identified at this stage. Consideration should be given to data monitoring to further develop understanding of the needs of pregnant young people and to ensure support is reaching these groups.

	<p>living and will help to inform and support positive parenting behaviours, supporting child development. Independent evaluation of the scheme found that parents on lower incomes were more likely to report that receiving a baby box had a positive financial impact, saving them money on things they would otherwise have needed to buy themselves. It is expected that the majority of children born in the most deprived areas would continue to benefit from the Baby Box.</p>	
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## Conclusion

The EQIA has shown that the broad principles and policies set out in *Best Start, Bright Futures*, will be positive across many protected characteristics, in particular race, disability and sex. Actions are grounded in evidence of who is most at risk of child poverty, and the six priority family types identified within the plan are strongly correlated to protected characteristics. For some particular characteristics, including race, disability and sex, higher levels of poverty persist. Therefore, the targeted action for the priority family groups and wider action to reduce poverty through impacting on the drivers of child poverty, will be beneficial to these protected characteristics in particular, resulting in a strong potential for the plan to contribute to reducing discrimination and enhancing equality of opportunity. Whilst the plan has limited focus on fostering better relations between people of protected characteristics, the focus throughout the plan on addressing stigma and discrimination should, if implemented successfully, support this objective.

For other characteristics, we have limited data. We have found no evidence of negative consequences at this time, however, in line with best practice we will keep this under review as part of the monitoring of this EQIA.

Some policies and proposals included in the plan are only partially defined. As these policies develop, they will require their own EQIA to ensure that the specific barriers for each protected characteristic are fully considered. Once these policies are implemented, we will gain a better understanding of the difference each policy will make in reducing discrimination and enhancing opportunity.

[Annex 2](#) of 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 making progress to further understand and address the specific barriers faced by people with certain protected characteristics.

Summary of recommendations:

- For some elements of the delivery plan, evidence on the intended or actual impact for people with protected characteristics is limited, particularly in relation to minority ethnic families. This EQIA recommends that, as part of overall monitoring and governance for the delivery plan, greater focus is placed on gathering, analysing and using this data to inform policy and programme modification, and future policy design and delivery.
- Recognising the limitations of quantitative data, particularly given the relatively small population of people in poverty with certain protected characteristics, this EQIA recommends maintaining and further strengthening collection and use of qualitative data, particularly the experience of people with protected characteristics living on a low income.
- Where some aspects of proposed delivery have potentially negative equality impacts, including the place based approach to delivery, specific, proactive measures should be taken from the outset to include equality stakeholders in policy development, design and monitoring, with as close to real-time

monitoring as possible to identify any unintended consequences and remedy these as soon as practicable

- The new approaches to delivering holistic, person-centred, place-based approaches present an opportunity to integrate more intersectional analysis of the policy cycle, and this should be explored with stakeholders and embedded throughout the life of the delivery plan
- Policy specific EQIAs of pre-development policy should be carried out as early as possible, to inform the delivery of new commitments within the plan



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