



# Progress Report 5

## October 23 - March 24

**July 2024**



Scottish Government  
Riaghaltas na h-Alba  
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INSPIRING SCOTLAND

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# 1. OVERVIEW

This is the fifth progress report of the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights fund (E&HR). The fund covers a period of three and a half years from October 2021 to March 2025, and this report reviews the six-month period of October 2023-March 2024. It provides data on activities and impact, and highlights the key themes and challenges of the 48 E&HR funded organisations.

## Summary of activity

During the fourth reporting period, organisations continued to build on successful delivery. During the reporting period, a total of 32,754 individuals have been helped directly with the provision of support, information and advice. 3,782 organisations have also been supported via capacity building and information sharing.

Organisations continue to perform very well despite the challenging environment due to the cost-of-living and the strain this puts on resources. Many groups have reach across government and contribute to policy development in diverse areas such as health, education, and housing. Groups also report an interest in their work and approach from other parts of the UK. Contribution to the Scottish COVID-19 Inquiry has been a significant piece of work across all seven policy areas.

Common challenges across the portfolio include continued impact of the cost- of-living on service users. Groups report that individual cases are becoming increasingly complex, with service users often frustrated at the point of contact due to being let down previously by other services. The toxic operating environment in some policy areas continues to put pressure on organisations and the wellbeing of staff.

The organisations have shared the challenges they experience as a result of the current funding environment. Delays in confirmation of funding impacts on their ability to plan and develop their own programmes and risks the capacity of the staff and work. A reduction in budgets across the funding sector coupled with increased costs faced by the organisations increases their vulnerability and hinders their ability to be robustly equipped for the future.

The six months extension of E&HR funding to March 2025 was broadly welcomed and has enabled more security to plan. Many groups have told us that after nearly three years of continuous funding, they are reviewing and considering their wider strategic aims and direction for their work. This will of course be influenced by the content and timeline of any news about future funding. The E&HR fund team will continue to support the organisations in making and reporting on any future changes and adaptations that allow them to best support and represent their communities.



**A member of Age Scotland's LGBTQ+ Older People's Network presents at their Parliamentary Reception in May**

## **Background**

The E&HR fund's aim is to support civil society organisations and partners to develop, embed and mainstream equality and human rights within policy and practice in Scotland, in line with the ambitions of the National Performance Framework and relevant Scottish Government strategies. 48 organisations are supported through the E&HR fund, aligning to seven Scottish Government policy areas within the Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights Directorate - age equality, disability equality, British Sign Language (BSL), gender equality, LGBTQI+, race equality and human rights. Intersectionality is a priority for the fund, and many groups continue to demonstrate how they support and champion the rights of people facing disadvantage due to multiple and interconnected inequalities.

## 2. WHOLE FUND DATA

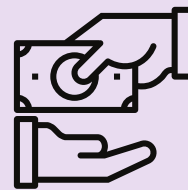
### Funds distributed

The total value of the E&HR fund for the period of October 2021-March 2025 is £28,772,678. Organisations are paid quarterly, following submission of finance forms showing expenditure for the payment period and forecast expenditure for project year. A breakdown of funds distributed over the funding period of October 2023 to March 2024 is shown in the diagram below:



**£4,146,038**

**Committed for this period**

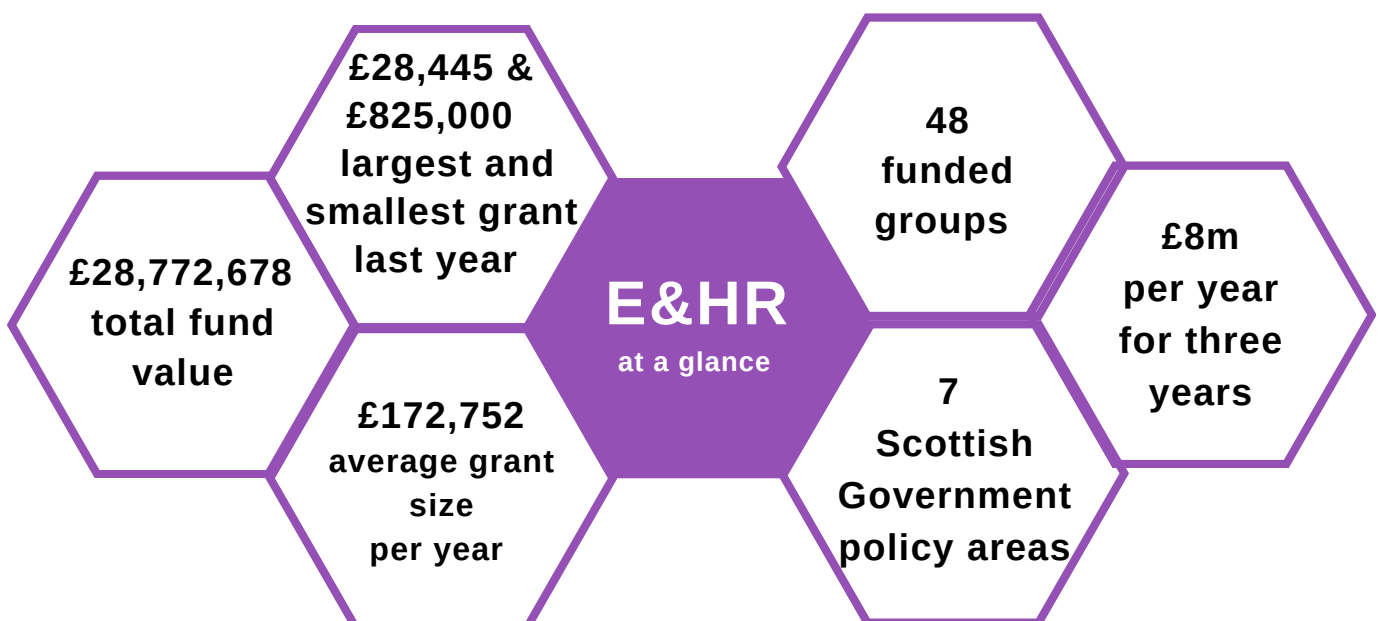


**£22,507,506**

**Total distributed from  
fund to date**

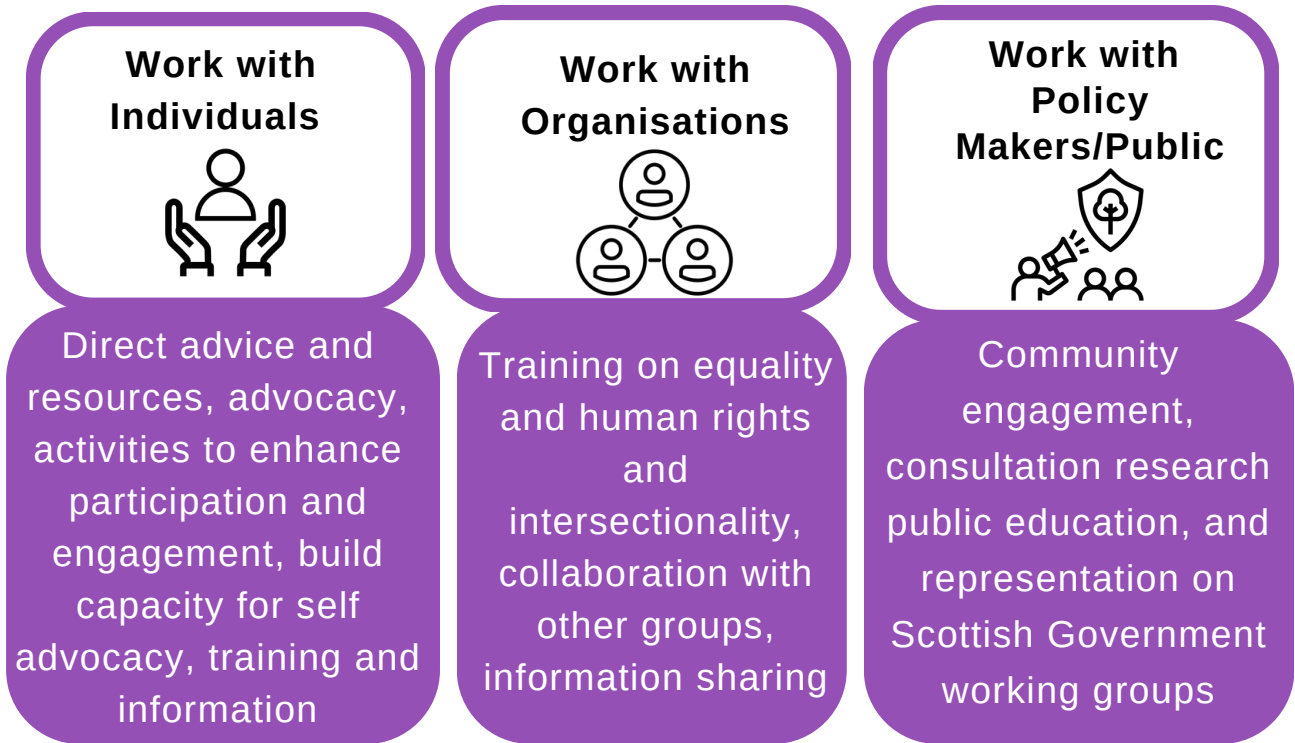
### Equality and Human Rights fund 'at a glance'

High level information about the the E&HR fund is presented in the image below:



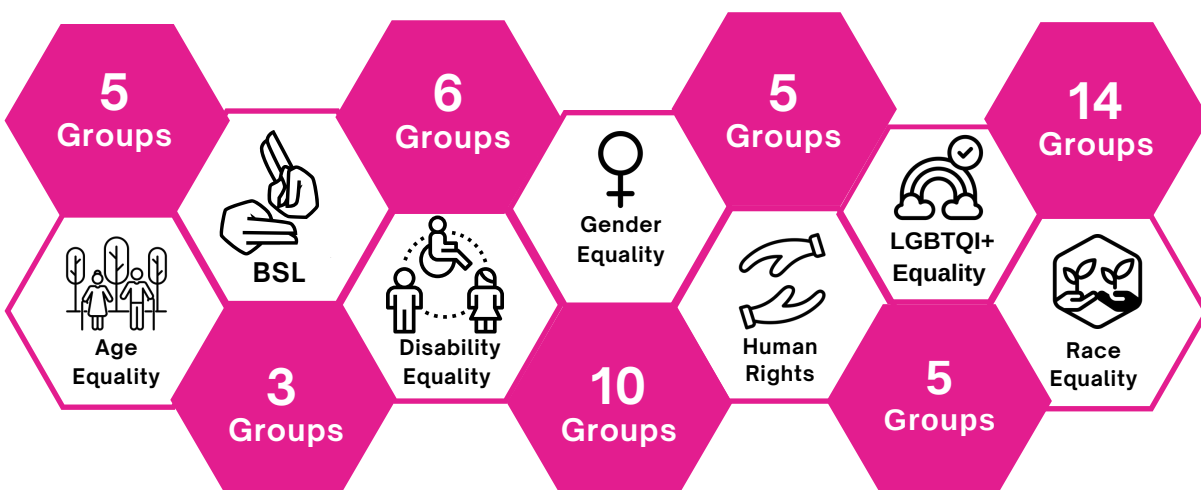
## Activity type

At an early stage in the fund, the Inspiring Scotland team undertook a mapping of all funded work. The 48 organisations deliver a range of activities that can be broadly categorised into three types: direct service delivery to individuals who share protected characteristics, building the capacity of other organisations, and strategic work with local and national policy makers. This report is structured according to these three activity types.



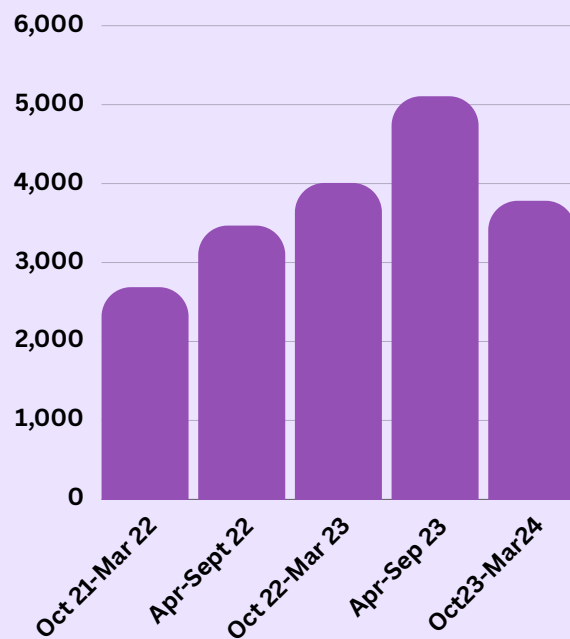
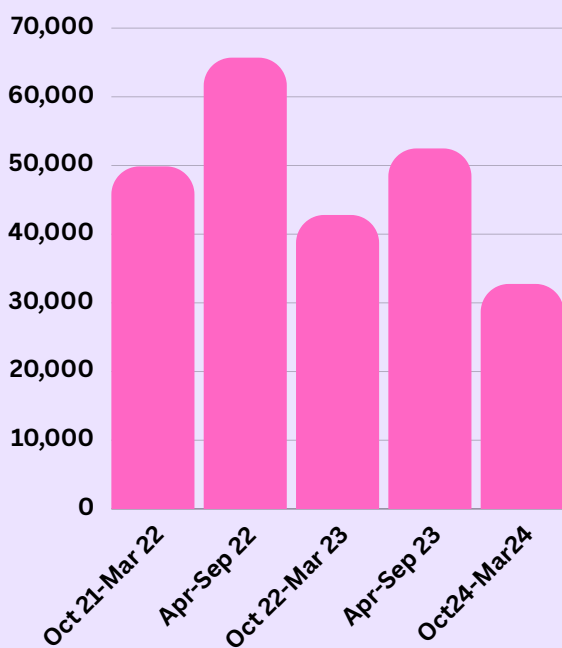
## Funded organisations by policy area

The 48 funded organisations are aligned to seven Scottish Government policy areas as illustrated in the following diagram. Detail on organisations' activities and impact by policy area is presented in Section 7 of this report.

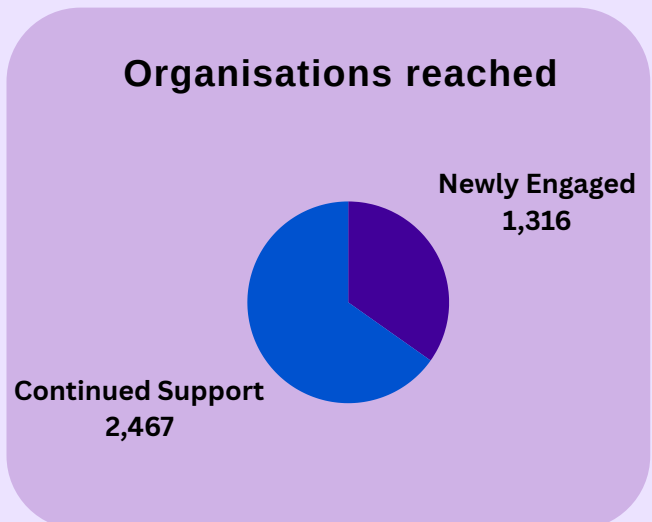
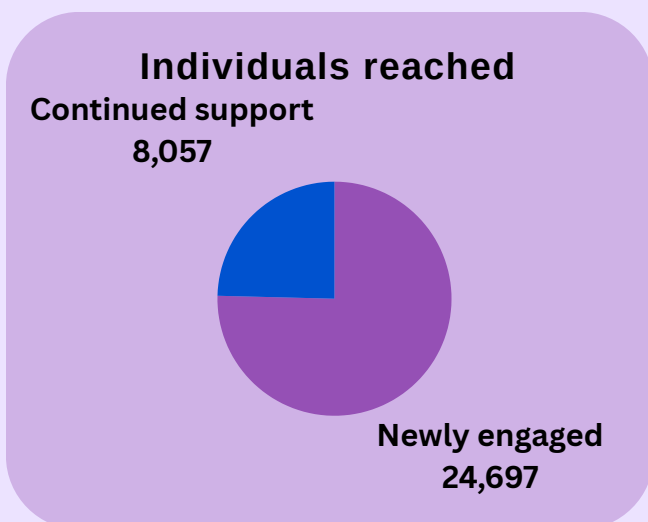


## Numbers reached through fund activity

The charts below illustrate the numbers reached since the establishment of the E&HR fund. In general, the number of individuals and organisations supported has remained stable, with some fluctuation between periods. During the October 2023 to March 2024 reporting period, funded groups provided support to 32,754 individuals and 3,782 organisations. These figures do not include 'information sharing,' which includes high-volume activity such as social media and website hits, leading to inflated numbers. Since the fund's inception, a total of 243,598 individuals and 19,052 organisations have received support.



Organisations also report on the net number of new individuals and groups reached, as well as the number of people they continued to support from a previous reporting period.



## E&HR activity by local authority

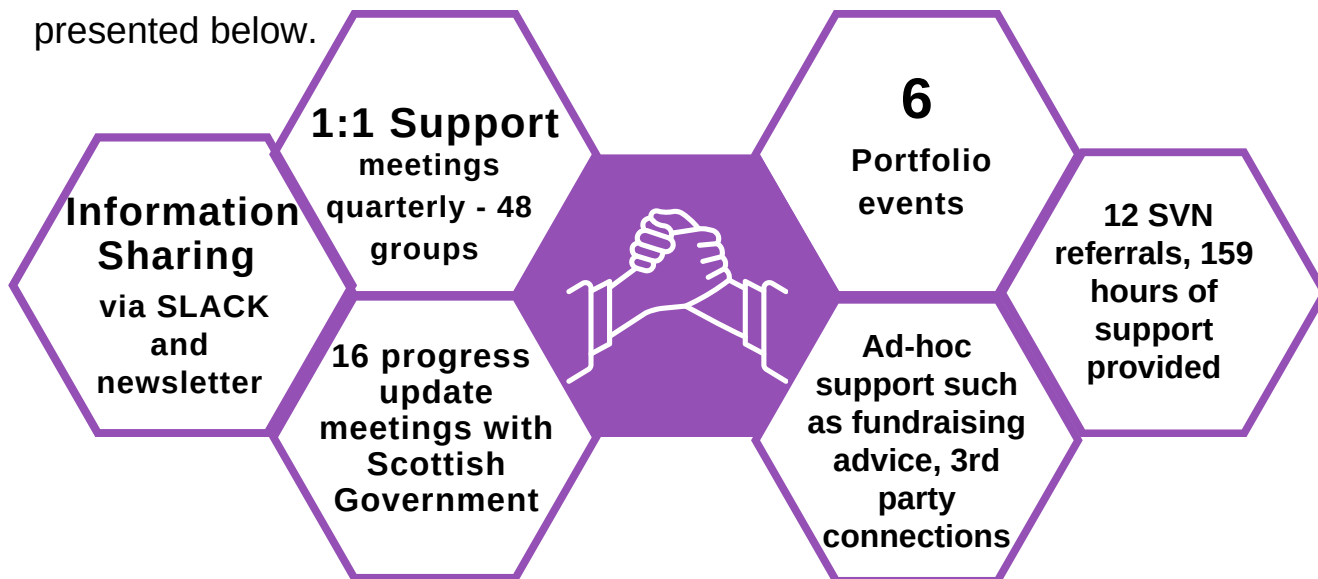
The majority of the E&HR funded groups are national organisations, and 34 delivered national activity over the last six months. In addition 20 organisations delivered geographically focused work. The image below shows the geographic spread of the funded work during the reporting period.





## Inspiring Scotland support summary

A summary of the range of support provided to funded organisations is presented below.



### 1:1 Support

The Inspiring Scotland team has developed strong working relationships with the 48 partner organisations. We work closely with groups to report on spend, develop self-evaluation systems, discuss progress on delivery, and provide ad-hoc support such as fundraising advice. We met with each organisation at least twice during the reporting period.

### Portfolio Events

We held six portfolio events during the reporting period. We facilitated two spotlight sessions, delivered by Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre (MWRC) on extended family abuse, attended by 20 participants. The second spotlight session was jointly delivered by Glasgow Disability Alliance and Scottish Women's Budget Group on a gender budgeting project, which highlighted the disproportionately negative impact of the cost-of-living on disabled women. The 30 attendees gave positive feedback, such as the comment below from Outside the Box.

*We shared some of the content (from GDA & SWBG Spotlight Session) through Consumer Scotland Advisory Committee on consumers in vulnerable circumstances and facilitated links with the development their report on Disabled people facing serious negative impacts from high energy bills.*

**Outside the Box**

## Portfolio Events (cont)

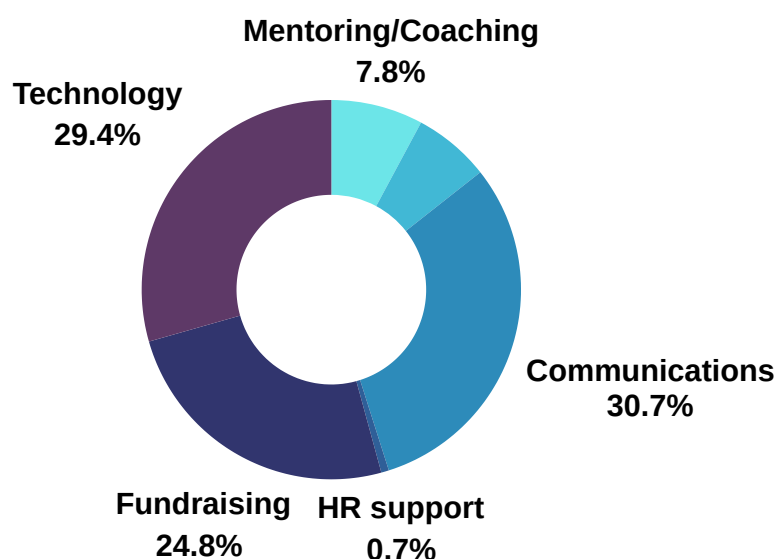
In response to the toxic environment experienced by some groups, Inspiring Scotland held a 'Crisis Communications Essentials' training session for the LGBTQI+ and Gender Portfolios. This session offered practical advice on preparing communication strategies to address crises effectively.

We also held networking sessions for policy-specific portfolios. The 10 Gender Equality organisations met in January with Scottish Government policy colleagues, to provide updates. The Race Equality Network Group (RENG) held its second meeting in January. Organisations discussed common issues, and agreed to invite Scottish Government's Strategic Anti-Racism team to an in-person meeting (held in April) to showcase their work, and get an update on race equality policy. Organisations provided positive feedback on the usefulness of these policy-specific portfolio meetings.

## The Specialist Volunteer Network (SVN)

SVN is a network of over 500 professional volunteers facilitated by Inspiring Scotland who offer customised development support. During the reporting period a total of 159 hours (valued at £30,500) of SVN support was provided to 12 groups. A breakdown of support hours is shown below.

### Hours provided per type of SVN Support



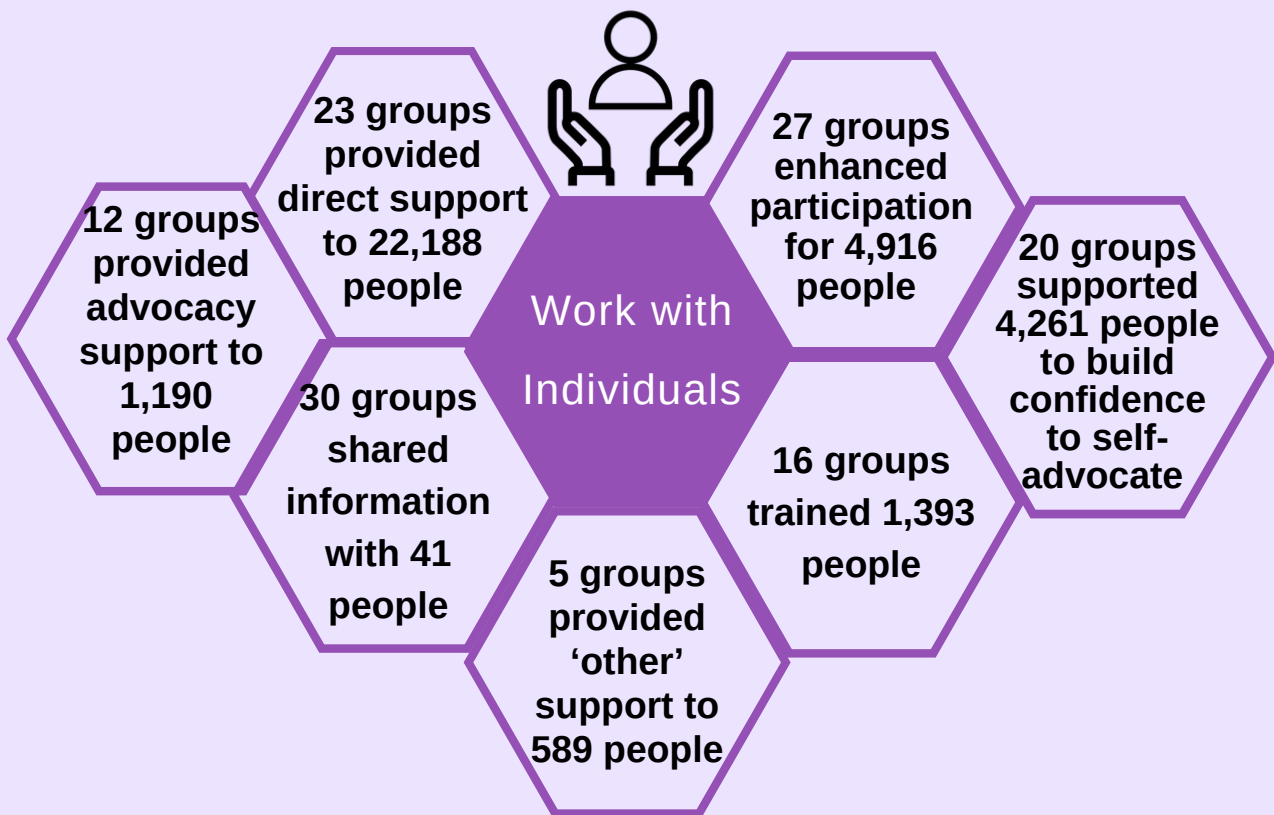
## Work with Scottish Government

The team regularly engaged with Scottish Government officials, updating them on progress, sharing findings, and providing information, data analyses, and support as required.

### 3. PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES

#### Work with individuals

The diagram below shows a summary of the support provided to individuals during the reporting period. The numbers supported under 'advice and support' includes eight helplines. 'Information sharing' includes high-volume activity, such as social media, newsletters and website hits. 'Other' activities include holding an International Women's Day event for the Roma community in Govanhill.



#### Just Right Scotland

JRS published a set of factsheets (including audio versions to increase accessibility) as part of their Access to Justice campaign. Topics include: Human Rights Act Claims; Direct & Indirect Discrimination; Equality Act Claims; Judicial Review; Initial Action; and, Legal Aid. There were 510 downloads of the factsheets during this reporting period.

(<https://www.justrightscotland.org.uk/2024/01/a-new-pro-bono-guide-in-scotland-we-welcome-contributions-from-the-sector/>)

## Work with individuals analysis

The provision of direct support to people is a major feature of the fund, and 32 of the 48 organisations undertook some kind of engagement with individuals during this reporting period. An analysis of the support highlights the following:

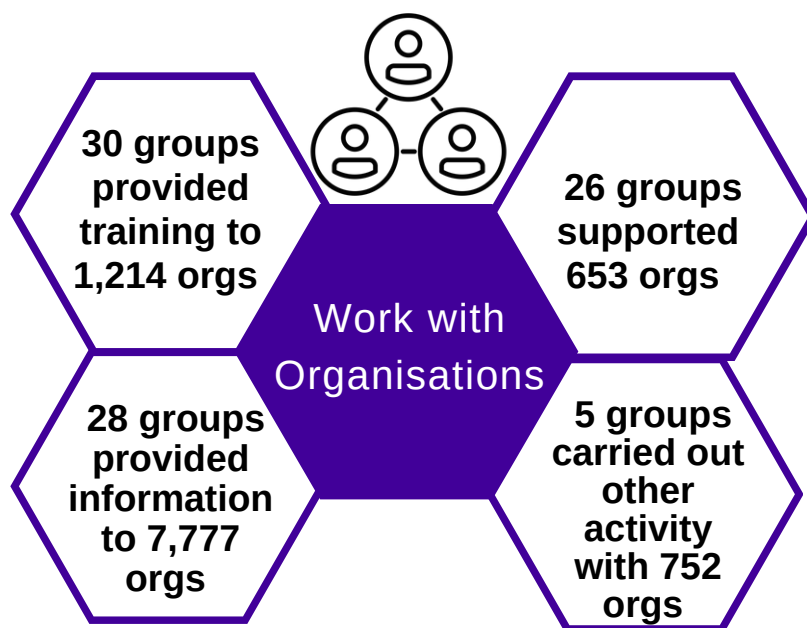
- Funded organisations are often the first point of contact for marginalised communities, with 44% of organisations reporting that their support enabled access to other services.
- 29% provided support to improved individual health and wellbeing.
- 27% of funded groups provided anti-poverty advice and support, with the highest proportion reported among disability and race equality organisations. This is in keeping with these groups reporting continued high levels of need in their communities.
- 25% of organisations across all policy areas report providing human rights support
- Other notable topics include support with people experiencing discrimination (20%), and support with immigration and asylum (10%).



**MECOPP Gypsy Traveller History Month event in Lochgilphead**

## Work with organisations

The graphic below shows the support provided to other organisations during the reporting period. 'Information sharing' includes high-volume activity such as social media work, and disseminating newsletters. 'Other' activities includes collaboration with universities to develop academic programmes.



45% of groups supported third sector, 42% supported public sector, and 12% supported private sector organisations.

### Intercultural Youth Scotland (IYS)

IYS provided six schools with long-term support towards developing a safer and more anti-racist school environment, including anti-racist classes, lunch clubs, teacher guidance, lesson plan review, and policy change. Staff and learners were also involved in championing anti-racist change in each school by holding staff reading groups, working groups or training where possible.

## Work with policy makers and general public

The image below highlights the range of activity by funded organisations to inform policy. Five organisations also described 'other' policy influence work, such as partnering with public sector organisations to develop guidance material.



### Outside the Box

Outside the Box was engaged by East Renfrewshire Council to set up a new Equalities Forum. They approached this task with an intersectional lens, actively involving individuals with protected characteristics from the area, including older adults with disabilities and members of minority ethnic communities. To gather input, they organized two open days where community members and professionals could discuss their expectations for the Forum and review other equality forum models. An online meeting followed to establish the Terms of Reference and prioritise key values. The new Forum, which will be led by the community, aims to link equality groups with local decision-makers and public bodies. Although this initiative was funded separately, it aligns with the E&HR funded work in terms of the groups engaged, the approach taken, the topics discussed, and the provision of human rights training.

## Strategic reach

We analysed the policy influence work undertaken across the portfolio. The results of this analysis are represented below. This includes policy influence work and work at strategic levels, such as government working groups, steering groups and programme boards.

- The most common area of policy influence work was around the Human Rights Bill development. 38% of groups responded to the Human Rights Bill consultation, with the majority engaging with their service users and communities to inform their response.
- 60% of funded groups reported responding to consultations during the reporting period.
- At least 69% are regular members of a Scottish Government strategy or working group.
- The most common policy areas include anti-poverty work, COVID Inquiry, hate crime, human rights and mental health.



**Deafblind Scotland and its members attend an MSP 'Members Debate' to discuss the need to adopt a definition of Deafblindness as a distinct disability in Scotland.**

## 4. FUND IMPACT

### Progress towards E&HR fund outcomes

We continue to see a tangible improvement in demonstrating impact of the funded work. This corresponds to improved monitoring and evaluation systems, and improved reporting.

The table below shows the percentage of the 48 organisations contributing to each of the eight fund outcomes, compared to the previous reporting period. Overall, the percentages meeting the outcomes has reduced compared to last period. This could be because we continue to work with groups to focus down the number of outcomes they measure, but to use robust monitoring methods to demonstrate impact.

Outcome	% of orgs meeting Apr-Sept 23	% of orgs meeting Oct 23-Mar 24
1. People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them	69%	50%
2. People with protected characteristics have increased remedy where their rights have not been upheld	52%	35%
3. People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life	77%	54%
4. People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them	42%	33%
5. Scottish Government has better access to data and depth of information about experiences of people with protected characteristics	35%	44%
6. Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality and human rights framework to influence and affect change	15%	21%
7. The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice of public bodies	63%	54%
8. Public services increasingly embed equality and human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions	52%	27%



## 5. PARTNERSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

Collaboration is an important aspect of the E&HR fund. Organisations reported working with public, third, and private sector bodies at national and local levels, to enhance services through referral processes, collaboration on policy influence work, and to reach out to new service users.

Collaboration among funded organisations continues to grow, and networking is a priority. To help facilitate networking opportunities, we organise regular 'spotlight' sessions of funded projects for the portfolio and Scottish Government colleagues. Increasingly we're using these sessions to highlight portfolio collaboration. We also facilitate quarterly meetings of the Gender Equality portfolio and of the Race Equality portfolio, and are planning the third annual portfolio networking session in September. Portfolio collaboration examples are provided below.

### Coalition for Race Equality and Rights (CRER)

As members of the Ending Child Poverty coalition (ECP), alongside Engender, Close the Gap and Poverty Alliance, CRER offer valuable expertise on BME children and households. CRER advocates for policies aimed at addressing the factors leading to nearly double the relative poverty rates for children from BME households.



**Young Women's Movement Cost-of-Living Steering Group workshop, held in partnership with the Scottish Women's Budget Group**

## 6. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Common themes and challenges reported from across the portfolio are as follows:

### Themes

- The multi-year Equality and Human Rights Funding has been an advantage as it is often used as 'leverage' to secure other funding for new activities that add value to existing work.
- Many organisations report being at a point where three years of continued E&HR funding has enabled a significant pattern of research and development. As a result, organisations report being at a pivotal stage in their planning cycles, and are reviewing their theories of change in light of impact and learning.
- The impact of funded activity often extends beyond Scotland, with organisations being contacted to help replicate and adopt models elsewhere. STEP's Starter Sack programme mentioned on page 45 is an example of this.

### Challenges

- Many organisations continue to be affected by the hostile external operating environment in the wake of public policy activity, such as the recent Hate Crime legislation. This is leading to an increase in 'bad faith' queries, groups avoiding organising in-person events because of the risk of disruption, or not engaging in social media.
- Some groups have reported instances of difficult or aggressive service users, who often present as frustrated at their lack of success in seeking support through previous avenues.
- Groups continue to report the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on service users (booking community venues), and on the costs of running their own organisations. This has exacerbated feelings of loneliness or isolation among marginalised communities.
- Organisations continue to report the challenges around longer term funding, and public sector funding cuts. Funding uncertainty has led to higher staff turnover.
- COVID continues to affect the more vulnerable within communities.

## 7. ACTIVITY AND IMPACT BY POLICY AREA

This section provides more detail on the progress of the E&HR funded organisations by the Scottish Government policy area to which they align. The following pages provide a breakdown of activity and numbers reached, progress towards fund outcomes, and information on organisations' contributions to Scottish Government strategies and action plans. The activity examples and case studies help to illustrate progress throughout.

### Human Rights

1. Civil Rights First
2. Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland
3. Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector
4. Just Right Scotland
5. The Poverty Alliance

### Age Equality

1. Age Scotland
2. Generations Working Together
3. Outside the Box
4. STUC Scottish Pensioners Forum
5. Scottish Older People's Assembly

### Disability Equality

1. Disability Equality Scotland
2. Disability Information Scotland
3. Glasgow Disability Alliance
4. Inclusion Scotland
5. Legal Services Agency
6. Neighbourhood Networks

### BSL

1. British Deaf Association
2. Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity
3. Deafblind Scotland

### Race Equality

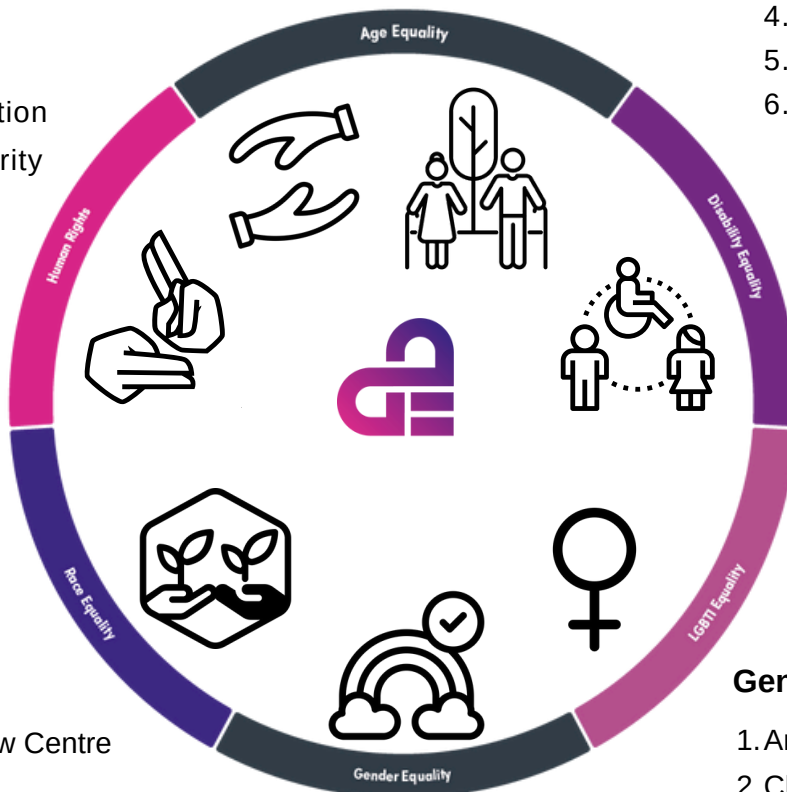
1. BEMIS Scotland
2. Boots and Beards
3. CEMVO Scotland
4. CSREC
5. CRER
6. Ethnic Minorities Law Centre
7. Feniks
8. Friends of Romano Lav
9. GREC
10. Intercultural Youth Scotland
11. MECOPP
12. Multi Cultural Family Base
13. STEP
14. WSREC

### LGBTQI+ Equality

1. Equality Network Ltd
2. LEAP Sports Scotland
3. LGBT Healthy Living Centre
4. LGBT Youth Scotland
5. Stonewall Equality Ltd

### Gender Equality

1. Amina
2. Close the Gap
3. Equate Scotland
4. Elect Her
5. Engender
6. Glasgow Women's Library
7. Kairos Women+
8. Scottish Women's Budget Group
9. Scottish Women's Convention
10. YWCA Scotland





# Age Equality

The Age Portfolio continues to be a well-connected group of organisation with links to Scottish Government via a range of other policy platforms. They report on many achievements despite the challenging environment they, and their service users, currently face. During the reporting period, a total of 17,350 individuals have been helped directly with the provision of support information and advice. 1,039 organisations have also been supported via capacity building and information sharing.

## Age Equality Portfolio



**Age Scotland**  
**Generations Working Together**  
**Outside the Box**  
**STUC Scottish Pensioners Forum**  
**Scottish Older People's Assembly**


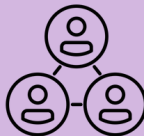


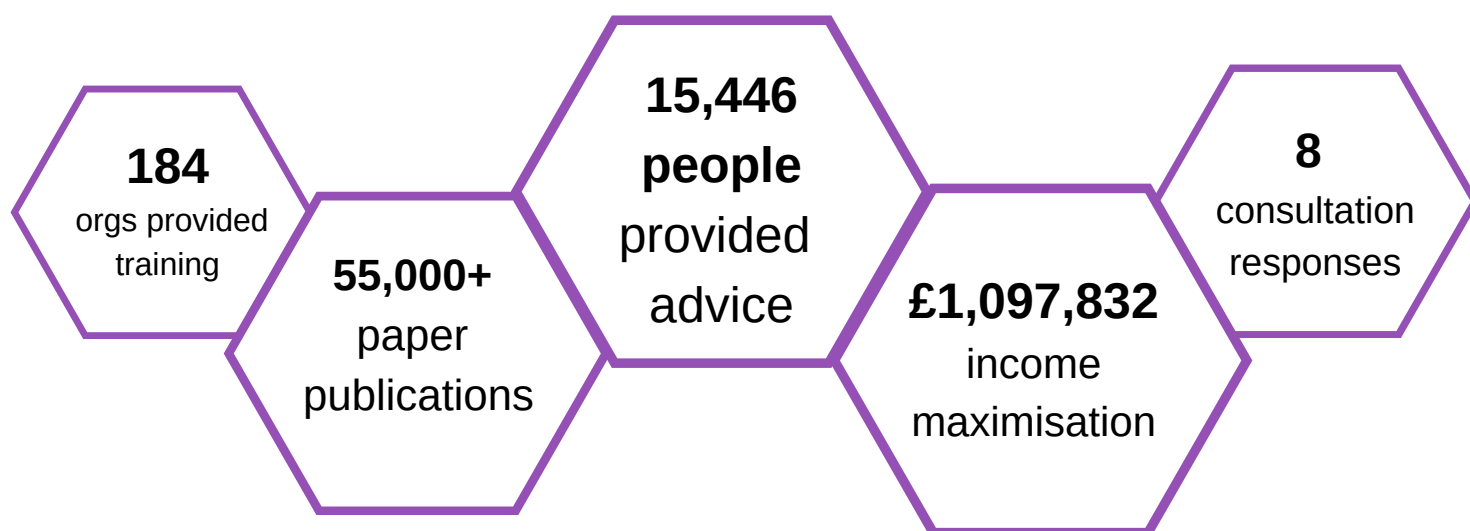
**Generations  
Working  
Together**



## Activity Summary

The Age Equality organisations continue to undertake a wide range of activities that both support older people and ensure the collective voice of older people shapes the policy that most affects them.

Activity type	Activity	Orgs delivering	People
 <b>work with individuals</b>	Providing advice	1	15,446
	Enhancing participation	3	1,321
	Building confidence	1	519
	Providing training	1	64
	Information sharing	2	99,239
 <b>work with organisations</b>	Training to organisations	3	184
	Organisational support	4	303
	Shared knowledge/information	3	5,549
	Other work with organisations	2	552



### Key policy contributions include:

Covid Inquiry - Let's Be Heard  
 Commissioner for Older People  
 Fuel Poverty - Ofgem  
 Human Rights Bill  
 National Care Service

Overall, the Age Equality organisations are working towards six of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

### Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life  
2 orgs

Age Scotland supported the Indian Cultural and Festival Committee to celebrate their Diwali festival with complimentary tickets, removing the barrier of cost to participation. The impact of this was that older people within the group could come together and celebrate an event of importance to them. This had a positive impact on mental wellbeing, mitigating loneliness and isolation, improving self-esteem and simply, enjoyment. "The older people felt less isolated and more connected after the event".

**Age Scotland**

### Outcome 5

The Scottish Government has better access to data and depth of information about people with protected characteristics  
2 orgs

SOPA members benefitted from the chance to collaborate and share their views. "The chance to hear different voices and opinions. Group discussions did this better". These views are collated by SOPA and contribute to their policy input.

**The Scottish Older People's Assembly**

### Outcome 6

Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality & human rights framework to influence and effect change  
1 org

Of participants taking part in GWT's training, 30% say that they have embedded intergenerational principles into their work as a result, and 24% say they are planning to. "...at the moment we are working on a volunteering policy which will include younger and older members of the public".  
(Librarian, East Dunbartonshire Leisure and Culture Trust Libraries).

**Generations Working Together**

## Case Study Outside the Box

This case study provides a good example of the achievement of Outcomes 3; *people are more involved in things that are important to them*. It shows that part of the work involves finding out what people feel is important and being flexible in responding to this, rather than making assumptions.

New Beginnings Club (NBC) are a member led organisation in East Lothian for adults with physical and learning disabilities. Many of the older members live in either supported accommodation or have their own tenancy with support in place. During a session on Rights and Responsibilities, a conversation about the Right to a Healthy Environment led to the topic of climate change and how they felt that nobody ever discussed climate change or what they could do, both as a group and individually.

Following on from this, in collaboration with Zero Waste Scotland, Outside the Box ran a Reduce Reuse Recycle session for the members where they found out about the importance of this and what simple steps they could take in their everyday lives. It got very competitive during a team recycling sorting game! Everyone left feeling energised to make changes in their lives with, members sharing that they are now using the local authority recycling bins more, reusing items such as yoghurt pots to start seeds in their allotment and have a Swap Shop planned where they plan to bring along items such as books, jigsaws etc. that they no longer need and swap them with something someone else has brought along.

One member said, "This is right up my street, but no one has ever explained it to me before or supported me to make changes so I can do more for the environment".

## COLLABORATION

We analysed Age portfolio collaboration with other organisations - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally.



The five organisations worked in partnership with a range of organisations across different fields. They also continue to work closely together as part of the Older People's Strategic Action Forum and more widely.

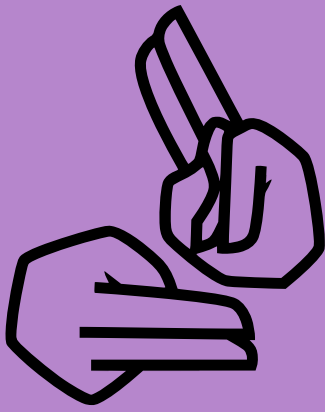
**Outside the Box** have worked with THRE to write and publish a briefing on Age and Ageing as part of a series of new resources on protected characteristics.

**Scottish Older People's Assembly** have started working with the University of Strathclyde on a research project; 'Strategy training to support healthy cognitive ageing: behavioural, neuroimaging and real-world investigations'.

**Age Scotland** have a range of formal referral arrangements in place to support Helpline callers, including with Support in Mind, Alliance Scotland, and Fire Scotland.

There is an ongoing partnership with SGN which enhances support around energy use and cost. It also led to a donation this period which enables direct crisis grants to individuals.





# British Sign Language

The BSL Portfolio continues to provide specialist support to a range of Deaf communities as well as ensuring these communities are represented at policy level. During the reporting period, a total of 1,586 individuals have been helped directly with the provision of support, information and advice. 106 organisations have also been supported via capacity building and information sharing.




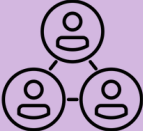
DEAFBLIND  
SCOTLAND

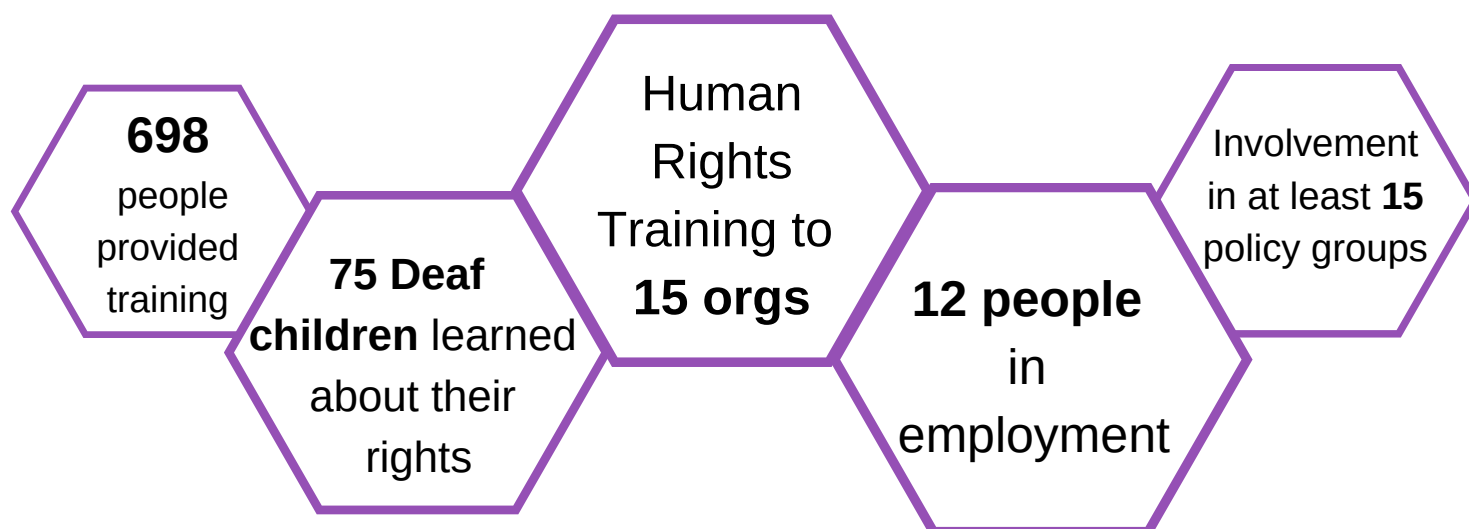
## BSL Portfolio

**British Deaf Association**  
**Deafblind Scotland**  
**Scottish Ethnic Minority Charity**



# Activity Summary

Activity type	Activity	Orgs delivering	People
 <b>work with individuals</b>	Providing advice	3	64
	Enhancing participation	2	727
	Building confidence	1	71
	Providing training	1	608
	Other	-	-
			<b>Orgs</b>
 <b>work with organisations</b>	Training to organisations	1	15
	Organisational support	2	91
	Shared knowledge/information	2	208



## Key policy contributions include:

- National Care Service
- A legal definition of Deafblindness
- BSL Plans - Local and National
- See Hear Strategy

## Outcomes and Impact

Between them, the BSL organisations are working towards Fund Outcomes 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7. Below are some examples of how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

### Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life.

SEMDC is seeing an increase in confidence and motivation amongst its members. They are also noticing developing friendships and peer support being provided.

*"I'd like to say thank you to SEMDC and Rosie for helping me to find work, accessing college and being a part of the men's group creative workshops. As a result, my confidence, which was exceptionally low has increased. I feel more confident making friends, communicating with others and this is all thanks to the SEMDC. Thank you".*

**Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity**

### Outcome 7

The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice.

Following BDA's support and facilitation of events, at which members of the Deaf Community were brought together with their local public bodies, at least nine followed up by creating their own events to engage with local residents in the development of their local BSP Plan.

**British Deaf Association**

DbS supports those with lived experience to lead on policy influencing. A particular area of focus through the Cross Party Group on Visual Impairment has contributed to the introduction of a pilot scheme which extends free rail travel to the companions of Blind Persons Concessionary Travel cardholders.

**Deafblind Scotland**

## Case Study

### Deafblind Scotland

This case study highlights the interaction between the rights and experiences of individuals and high level policy influencing. The individual highlighted in the case was supported to ensure a positive personal outcome, which will in turn lead to the sharing of lived experience to shape a wider solution to the issues faced by deaf blind people.

Right to Dream (R2D) Ambassadors are supported by Deafblind Scotland to work together to directly influence the areas of policy and public life that are important to them through the sharing of their lived experience. R2D highlights the significance of individuals expressing their concerns and being equipped with the tools to self-advocate should they find their human rights are not upheld. Alongside this, a peer-to-peer support structure has been developed in order to enhance confidence and self-assurance.

During some recent work, a deafblind individual shared experiences of being denied service by four taxi drivers due to the presence of their guide dog. In this instance, the taxi drivers had no certification of exemption. Following this incident, the individual pursued legal action, resulting in sanctions for two drivers following a court case. This is a situation that requires knowledge of rights and the confidence and capacity to assert them; both things that are a key outcomes of R2D.



# Disability Equality

The Disability Equality Portfolio combine extensive policy influencing work with the provision of a range of specialist services that support disabled people to access the services they need and participate in public life. During the reporting period, a total of 43,642 individuals have been helped directly with the provision of support, information and advice. 102 organisations have also been supported via capacity building and information sharing.




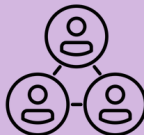
## Disability Portfolio

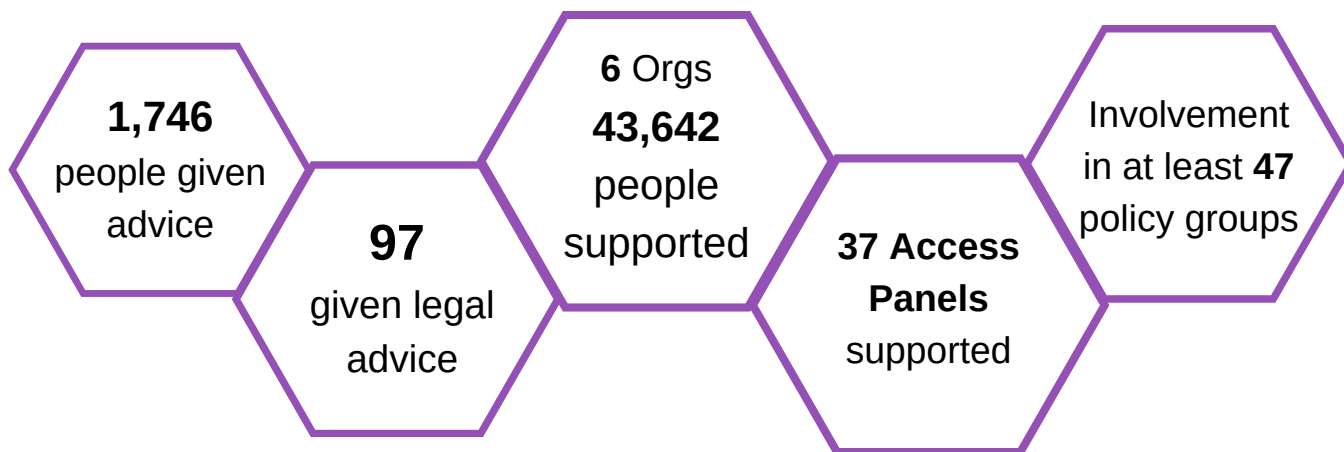
Disability Equality Scotland  
Disability Information Scotland  
Glasgow Disability Alliance  
Inclusion Scotland  
Legal Services Agency  
Neighbourhood Networks



## Activity Summary

The Disability Equality portfolio organisations continue to undertake a wide range of activities that both support disabled individuals and ensure the collective voice of disabled people shape the policy that most affects them.

Activity type	Activity	Orgs delivering	People
 <b>work with individuals</b>	Providing advice	5	1,746
	Enhancing participation	3	97
	Building confidence	2	305
	Providing training	3	30
	Info sharing	5	29,981
 <b>work with organisations</b>	<b>Orgs</b>		
	Training to organisations	5	72
	Organisational support	3	30
	Shared knowledge/information	5	460



### Key policy contributions include:

- Work Capability Assessment Consultation
- Disability Commissioner Bill
- Transport and Parking
- Energy Price Cap
- Social Security Amendment Bill
- UK COVID Inquiry
- Scotland COVID Inquiry

## Fund Outcomes

Across the Portfolio, the Disability Equality organisations are contributing to all eight of the Equality and Human Rights Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples.

### Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life.  
(4 organisations)

The independent network members have continued to grow in confidence and the range and type of activities that they are getting involved in has increased significantly.

The members are no longer looking for permission to engage in activities of their choosing, the support required of the staff member has decreased significantly. "It is great that we can just do what we want, we are adults and don't need as much help as we used to".

**Neighbourhood Networks**

### Outcome 7

The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy & practice of public bodies.

DES and other DPOs have directly influenced the way that disabled people were prioritised in the most recent Programme for Government. They also were influential in the reintroduction of the Independent Living Fund. Overall they can see that the information they gather and share has a wide reach amongst Ministers and policy colleagues and is shaping policy in a way that improves the lives of disabled people.

**Disability Equality Scotland**

### Outcome 8

Public services increasingly embed equality & human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions.

Evidence provided to the Criminal Justice Bill Committee was quoted five times in its report, and influenced two recommendations on trauma-informed practice and vulnerable victims. The Committee recommended embedding trauma-informed practice in the criminal justice system; asked the SG to respond to concerns about special measures not being available to disabled people (and others) and that they also had concerns about how "Vulnerable witnesses" were identified and supported.

Additionally, SG indicated that they are considering amendments to the Bill in line with several points we'd made in oral evidence.

**Inclusion Scotland**

## Case Study

### Legal Services Agency Ltd and Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity

The E&HR fund team connected Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity (SEMDC) with Legal Services Agency Ltd (LSA) after the previous round of reporting to Inspiring Scotland revealed a systemic issue that was causing problems for SEMDC members. SEMDC had reported that ethnic minority deaf people were experiencing barriers to accessing their driving theory test; in particular, access to appropriate communications support was being prohibited.

LSA and SEMDC collaborated to influence a policy change in the provision of reasonable adjustments and obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty, highlighting the difficulties SEMDC members were having with driving theory tests in the absence of arrangements to deaf relay interpreters to work alongside BSL interpreters.

In undertaking research, LSA also noted an additional challenge which had not been raised, in relation to driving tests and the onus being put on disabled people to pay for interpreters and submit a reimbursement which would be processed if the criteria was met. The financial disadvantage in which this puts disabled people and lack of clarity on the deciding criteria was highlighted. The public sector equality duties have been highlighted to DVSA and a change in policies requested.

A willingness to address these issues has been communicated to LSA and SEMDC have been invited to participate in a steering group to contribute to more structural change. Addressing these changes will ensure ethnic minority deaf people have better access to a driving license and therefore the chance for greater independence and the range of opportunity this affords. As well as this practical change, the collaboration between the two organisations has meant that learning and expertise has been exchanged, enhancing the capacity of each organisation.



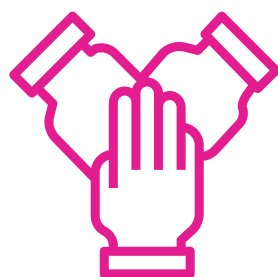
## Collaboration

Disability Equality organisations were asked to tell us about collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR fund portfolio and externally. They are continuing to build on existing partnerships and develop new ones. Below are some examples of successful partnership working.

DES, IS and GDA continued to work closely together and with other disability organisations to influence a range of policy, with particular emphasis on responding to Scottish Government's request for involvement in the development of the Disability Equality Plan. They have also worked together to generally raise the profile of the needs of disabled people in Scotland and to gain political priority through relationship building at a strategic level.

Neighbourhood Networks has used links with local providers with an inclusion focus (CLD, Advisory group and Plus Forth Valley) to enhance provision for members, bringing creative solutions to problems often involving stigma. For example, a clothes giveaway was organised instead of referrals to clothes banks.

GDA have worked with Professor Angela O'Hagan of GCU to support disabled women's understanding of fiscal spending and budgetary processes. GDA supported some disabled women, along with women from Fa'side Women and Girls Group (another SWBG project) and WiMLPE (Women in Multiple Low-Paid Employment, a University of Glasgow project) to attend several workshops to gain a deeper understanding of how the Scottish Government and Parliament make budget decisions.





# Gender Equality

The gender portfolio continues to perform very well despite the challenging environment due to the cost-of-living and the strain this puts on the organisations resources. The organisations have focused their policy work on the Human Rights Bill, the cost-of-living crisis and women’s physical and mental health, to name a few. After almost three years of developing their programmes of work, some of the organisations are considering their wider strategic aims and direction of their work going forward, which is proving to be an exciting time for them.

The organisations have shared the difficulties they are having with the funding environment. Other organisational concerns include the sheer volume of work and the limited capacity of organisations to meet every level of need given the resources they have. Overall, the last six months of work delivered by the organisations has been terrific, covering a large spread of policy areas, engagement with women over Scotland and advice and casework to individuals.

## Gender Equality Portfolio



Amina  
Close the Gap  
Equate Scotland  
Elect Her  
Engender



Glasgow Women's Library  
Kairos Women+  
Scottish Women's Budget Group  
Scottish Women's Convention  
YWCA Scotland



# ACTIVITY SUMMARY

## Activity summary April-September 2022

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 Work with individuals	Providing advice	3	2,767
	Enhancing participation	8	2,301
	Building confidence	4	2,119
	Providing training	6	410
	Information sharing	9	150,810
 Work with organisations	Training to organisations	7	69
	Organisational Support	6	100
	Shared knowledge/information	8	667
 Work with policy makers/ the public	Facilitated public engagement	4	1,433
	Participation in consultations	6	N/A
	Research	8	
	Representation at strategic levels	6	
	Public Education / Campaigning	6	

### Activity examples

**Kairos** created human rights puppet show films in collaboration with Media Coop. 12 different women were involved in the creation of the puppet show, and over 50 women within Kairos events have watched the film this period. It picked up Bronze in the People's Choice category at a red-carpet event at the Odeon in London's Leicester Square.

**Close the Gap** have promoted their online employer tools, with a particular focus on enabling gender pay gap reporting. They have developed three new animations for their Close Your Pay Gap tool, each focused on the role of key people in addressing the pay gap including senior leaders, HR and line managers. These animations can be seen via Close the Gaps YouTube channel.

## OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Between them, the Gender Equality organisations are working towards all eight of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

### Outcome 1

People have greater awareness and understanding of their human rights, and how to access them

Young Women Lead launched Embody to Empower, a programme focusing on women's health and access to health services. The resources contain information about knowing your body, accessing healthcare, preparing for your appointment, and what a positive experience of accessing healthcare can be like. It also includes guidance about how to push for the healthcare you deserve when you are still not feeling right, support information, plus further reading, resources, and signposting.

### Outcome 7

The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy & practice of public bodies

Close the Gap create briefings on policy issues relating to women and they also monitor parliamentary debate reports to identify if their briefings are being used by MSPs. Close the Gap found that a cross-party range of MSPs have used their briefings in debates on Scotland's skills system (3 MSPs), artificial intelligence (1 MSP), addressing child poverty through parental employment (2 MSPs), investing in the green economy (1 MSP), fair work in a wellbeing economy (1 MSP) and 16 Days (1 MSP). As a result, the evidence of women's experiences are used in parliamentary debates and parliamentarians are better informed about causes of, and solutions to women's labour market inequality.

### Outcome 4

People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them

Scottish Women's Conventions Roadshow events connect women with elected representatives so they can hear about their experiences in their communities. They highlight issues women may be having and allows discussions to take place to find solutions. A local councillor attended their Dumfries roadshow and a women that attended asked how she could get involved with the levelling up fund that had been designated to the area to improve it. The councillor advised there was a working group and the women asked to join it to ensure lived experience was part of the working group. The councillor took her details and said she would pass them on to the group.

## Case Study

### Young Women's Movement

RC is a young Romanian mother of three that lives within the Roma Community in Glasgow.

RC joined the Empowering Pathways for Women (EPW) outreach programme in partnership with Romano Lav in January 2024. During the programme, RC took part in Bridging The Gap Social Enterprise Entrepreneur Workshop delivered by Empower Women for Change, our partnership with Empower Women for Change, that gave an insight into running a business and the support they could get. After the EPW, RC plans to continue working with Empower Women for Change.

RC told us that she has grown in confidence, her self-esteem has improved:

*“I’ve really enjoyed every moment being here. It was something that I looked forward to in a week, coming here and meeting so many lovely kind women. It was such a joy learning more about important women who are role models, like Malala Yousafzai. I learned more about her and how what an amazing woman she is and how she stood up for herself, and about other more powerful women, and also women that marked Glasgow today. I have more confidence and so much information that I didn’t know I would get out of this course. And I’m really happy to have engaged with all these women from different backgrounds as well, and not only like Roma women. So, I’m so happy to have done this course and to have been here and had so much fun being in this course. Thank you”*



**Katie McFarlane from Fa'Side Women and Girls Group, East Lothian. The Scottish Women's Budget Group (SWBG) worked with Making Rights Real and members of F'aside Women and Girls Group (FWGG) to use gender budgeting tools to look at how the current cost of living crisis is impacting women and girls in the East Lothian area.**



# Human Rights

This reporting period saw the Human Rights organisations working hard to continue the momentum of the Scottish Human Rights Bill consultation to drive forward awareness and human rights approaches in practice. There was also a continuation of legal support.

During the period the funded organisations worked with a total of 1,082 individuals and 237 organisations.

## Human Rights Portfolio



**Civil Rights First**  
**Environmental Rights Centre for**  
**Scotland**  
**Glasgow Council for the Voluntary**  
**Sector**  
**Just Right Scotland**  
**The Poverty Alliance**



### Spotlight on awareness raising

E&HR Fund Outcome 1- 'People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them'. Funded organisations have a public information element covering different aspects of human rights. Examples of how organisations raise awareness along with the reach of their activities is given below.

**Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland** raise awareness of the right to a healthy environment through news and blog posts, guides and FAQs published on their website and briefings and press releases. There were 7,137 unique visits to the website and 1,123 unique downloads of materials. Press releases received national media coverage and included articles on Environmental Governance Review, Investigation into Protective Expenses Orders in environmental cases and campaigners' criticism towards the Scottish Civil Justice Council for its lack of transparency in undertaking a review of legal expenses.

**THRE** raises awareness training aimed at increasing basic knowledge of human rights and PANEL principles as well as sessions specifically tailored to the third sector covering; volunteering, governance and fund raising. THRE produce newsletters, explainer docs and blog posts highlighting current developments. There are 1,202 subscribers to the newsletters. The website has received 14,753 unique visits with a total of 55,484 page views. Across social media channels' Instagram, Eventbrite, LinkedIn, YouTube and Facebook they have 2,464 followers.



**JustRight Scotland** have produced a series of factsheets covering; Human Rights Act Claims; Direct & Indirect Discrimination; Equality Act Claims; Judicial Review; Initial Action; and Legal Aid. Along with the factsheet easy read and audio versions were also published to ensure maximum access to rights information. The Access to Justice webpage has received 1,098 views and 510 downloads. JustRight Scotland also produced a series of podcasts covering access to justice and the Scottish Human Rights Bill, these have been downloaded a total of 208 times.

**The Poverty Alliance** work on a smaller scale delivering in person workshops with the aim of raising awareness about rights and starting the conversation about rights based approaches in organisations. In this period they have worked with 35 people from 20 different organisations.

**Civil Rights First** provide direct case work in a holistic way which while delivering remedy for rights infringements also raises awareness of rights and builds capacity for self advocacy in the future. The Learning Disabilities, Autism and Neurodivergence Bill has led to an increase in referrals in relation to young people detained in state hospital environments. This has necessitated rights based knowledge building for families of those detained as well as building internal awareness of using human rights as a tool in a new framework.

As highlighted by the outcome for this fund awareness is the first step in the ability to claim rights a seek remedy where they are not upheld.



### Outcomes Case Study The Poverty Alliance

This case study shows how throughout the life of a project multiple outcomes can be achieved. The 'know your rights' project can track its outcomes from initial awareness, through participation to use of the human rights framework within organisations and output providing evidence to decision makers. **Outcomes 1,3,5,6**

The first action learning set (ALS1) began in June 2022. Know Your Rights training input was delivered after which the set developed concrete actions and continued to meet as a community of practice. The recently published final report from ALS1 report Learning Together For Change: community organisations advancing human rights in Scotland, shares five case studies from the first action learning set with anti-poverty community organisations. The report shares a range of impacts for participating organisations leading to sustainable change in practice.

One of the community organisations works with people who experience multiple forms of inequality and discrimination in the community. They identified and took actions to build lived experience within their organisation. Through peer support and shared learning through the action learning process, the organisation took a range of actions; for example, supporting lived-experience workers with additional training based on their needs. In terms of impacts, this organisation identified that there had been a step change in the way that they work and that there is a consistent and conscious focus on the upskilling of lived experience staff. The participating set member said that being part of the process had been deeply impactful for them as an individual and had far reaching impacts on their organisation.

The full report can be found here [https://www.povertyalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/TPA\\_Rights\\_in\\_Action\\_report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.povertyalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/TPA_Rights_in_Action_report_FINAL.pdf)

## Outcomes Case Study

### Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland

This case study also highlights how awareness raising and support to participate as well as knowledgeable use of the Scotland's existing Human Rights framework results in public bodies listening to the voice of people with protected characteristics and taking action to remedy infringements. **Outcomes 1,2,4,6,7**

ERCS and MECOPPS's (Minority Ethnic Carers of People) developed and delivered a participatory action research project with the Gypsy/Traveller Community.

Following a site investigation and a meeting with residents from a publicly owned static traveller site a number of concerns about the state of their immediate environment and the health and wellbeing implications were highlighted. The playground at the site was fenced off and has not been operational for many years and development at the site that was meant to improve conditions caused further issues with coal dust being produced. Construction refuse was left on-site and residents faced stigma from workers on-site.

The site investigation identified even more potentially hazardous environmental conditions including gas vents around the site and historical refuse.

A letter to the local council was sent and together with MECOPP, ERCS attended a meeting and a site walkover with council staff. A few issues were able to be resolved, much of the construction waste was removed, a new playpark is currently being constructed and a promise for improved communications between the council, residents and the MECOPP staff supporting them.

The work is ongoing. ERCS are awaiting further details on the identified gas vents around the site and historical refuse. A meeting to review whether communications have improved and if this has prevented further issues with coal dust being produced and any stigma faced from construction workers is yet to be agreed.

We asked the human rights organisations to tell us about collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. The Human Rights portfolio in particular have take the the opportunity to partner with others within the E&HR portfolio to deliver meaningful co-produced work.

**THRE** produced a resource - Beyond Protected Characteristics: The Equality Act (2010) in Practice. This includes spotlight pieces produced in collaboration with expert organisations on: Religion and Belief (Interfaith Scotland), Race (CEMVO) and Older Age (Outside the Box Scotland). It also includes case studies on putting policy into practice and thinking beyond protected characteristics provided by LGBT Youth Scotland, Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity and the Poverty Alliance.

The resource is available here <https://thre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/BPCs-Whole-Doc-Web-Version.pdf>

**Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland, JustRight Scotland, and Poverty Alliance**, along with Shelter and Clan Childlaw have developed and promoted an access to justice campaign.

**Civil Rights First** have worked with SHRC on a report to propose further remedies and changes to the Complaints Procedure process with public bodies, including Health and Social Care Partnerships and Local Authorities as a collective whole.





# LGBTQI+ Equality

The organisations continue to highlight the difficult operating environment in their reporting. This is impacting delivery at all levels. More intensive support is needed for community members with a rise in poor mental health and recruiting volunteers and supporting policy engagement has become more challenging. Reports also show that it has become more difficult to work with mainstream organisations due to the fear of negative media and social media impacts for those organisations of standing in allyship.

Despite these challenges the organisations continue to provide valuable support for the LGBTQI+ community, other organisations and decision makers at grass roots and strategic levels.

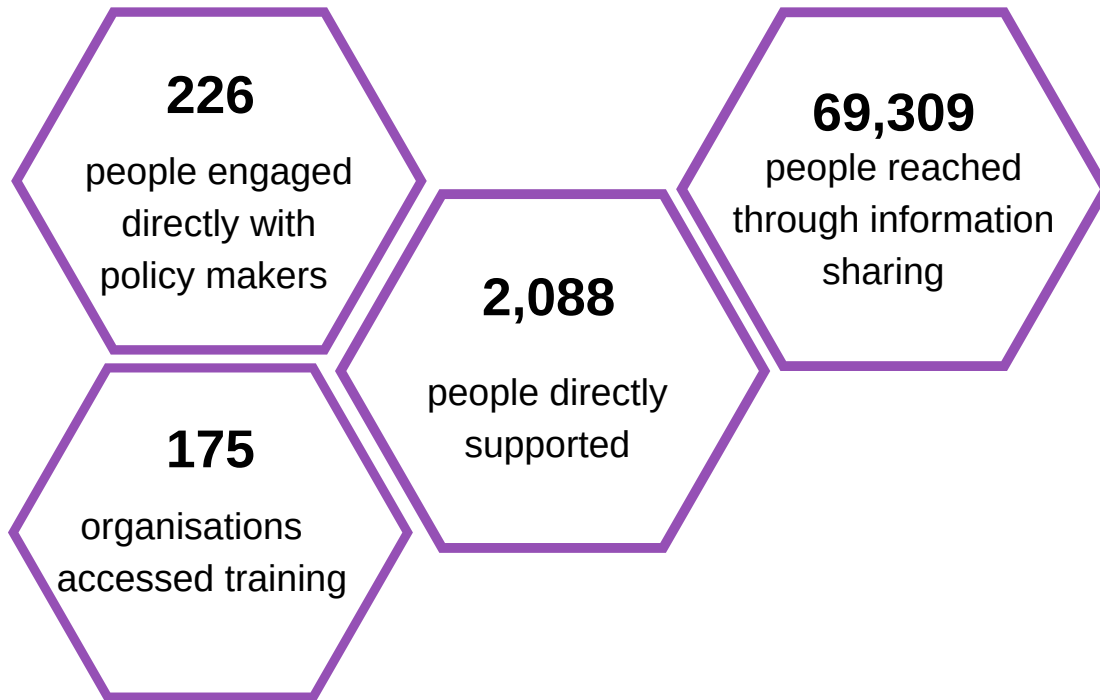


## LGBTQI+ Equality Portfolio

Equality Network Ltd  
LEAP Sports Scotland  
LGBT Healthy Living Centre  
LGBT Youth Scotland  
Stonewall Equality Ltd



## ACTIVITY SUMMARY



### Stonewall

Developed an inclusive leaders programme designed to enable participants to identify achievable ways to step up as an inclusive leader to create a more inclusive workplace for all LGBTQ+ people.

### LGBT Youth Scotland

114 new young people joined the server. New channels have been created for young people who live with disability and chronic illness. All chats are supervised by a team of youth workers to ensure that peer support is appropriate, and any information provided is accurate. Asynchronous activity was used to promote discussion.

### LEAP Sports

worked with Hannah Bardell MP for Livingston to showcase Scotland and the areas of good practice within equality and inclusion in sport. This was a celebration as well as an opportunity for community members to engage with elected members.

# OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Below are a selection of examples showing how LGBTQI+ organisations are contributing to the outcomes of this fund.

## 1. People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them

**LGBT youth Scotland's** annual youth work survey showed that 79% of respondents felt more able to use their voice and make a difference, and 83% of young people had increased awareness of their rights as a result of accessing services

## 3. People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

**Equality Network** have seen 47 new organisations in rural areas register for the Rainbow Mark. This is a large increase and significant for the visibility of LGBTI+ people in rural areas. Student unions, universities, bars, coffee shops and more are some of the spaces that promote that they are inclusive and safe spaces for LGBTI+ People in rural Scotland. People highlighted that they had seen the Rainbow Mark and felt it was a great incentive as it put their mind at ease when thinking about going into spaces

**LGBT Health & Wellbeing** report that of 52 older people who access the LGBT Age project 75% feel less lonely. Of 109 people who accessed the helpline 80% feel able to speak out about things that affect them

## 4. People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them

**Equality Network** supported 14 trans people to share their lived experiences at sessions with Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership on support for adult trans people in order to better services

## 5. Scottish Government has better access to data and depth of information about experiences of people with protected characteristics

**LGBT Youth Scotland's** Life in Scotland reports have been shared with MSPs and Scottish Government, and have been quoted in news articles and in questions in the Scottish Parliament, for example S6W-26840 asked by Monica Lennon: "To ask the Scottish Government what its response is to the findings and recommendations of LGBT Youth Scotland's Life in Scotland for LGBT Young People: Trans Report 2024".

## 7. The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice of public bodies

**Stonewall** ran an inclusive service delivery programme with the Scottish Ambulance Service. Before the programme 60% expressed a lack of confidence around their understanding of the common barriers LGBTQ+ people face when accessing services. Following the programme, most delegates said that the programme had developed their understanding 52% strongly agree and 43% agree. The programme engaged participants from 11 local authorities.



## CONTRIBUTION TO POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

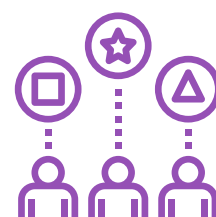
Examples of contributions to Scottish Government policies and strategies during the reporting period are provided below.

**Equality Network** supported work to end conversions practices by bringing together faith leaders and LGBTIA+ people to discuss the implications of a conversion practices ban, facilitating meetings between survivors of Conversion Practices and the Minister for Equalities and the Bill team and supporting people to respond to the consultation on ending conversion practices.

**LGBT Health & Wellbeing** hosted a community consultation with eight people from their LGBT+ Autism group in relation to the LDAN Bill, highlighting the nuanced experiences of neurodivergent LGBT+ people.

**LEAP Sports** supported delivery of 'A Connected Scotland' by facilitating a practitioners group for those working in Highlands, Moray, Tayside and Ayrshire. The group develop and share strategies and practices to decrease social isolation of LGBTIQ+ people in rural areas

**LGBT Youth Scotland** met with Cabinet Secretary for Education to discuss contributions to the National Approach for LGBTI Inclusive Education. Have taken a lead role in the CLD consultation for Education attending many meetings and group sessions to contribute to the response.





## COLLABORATION

We analysed LGBTQI+ portfolio collaboration with other organisations - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally.



The five organisations worked in partnership with 26 organisations in a wide spectrum of fields. The organisations have worked closely together as well as with five other organisations from the E&HR portfolio.

**Stonewall** developed and delivered an inclusive service delivery programme with the Scottish Ambulance Service. This allowed the programme to be tailored and meant the impact for the organisation could be maximised.

**Equality Network** worked alongside Elect Her and Engender on the Equal Representation Coalition's toolkit

**LGBT Health & Wellbeing** worked closely with Glasgow Centre for Population Health on first of its kind research. The report, highlighting the health inequalities experienced by LGBT+ people in Scotland, will be shared with MSPs, health boards and presented at conferences. “The support and guidance from Rebecca has been amazing, so valued at each juncture.” – Glasgow Centre for Population Health Public Health Programme Manager.



# Race Equality

The 14 Race Equality organisations continued to deliver a range of activity. Several organisations find themselves at a pivotal stage in their planning cycles where they are reflecting on the insights gained from the last three years of E&HR funding and updating their theories of change.

Uncertainty about future funding, coupled with static funding levels in recent years, has led to high staff turnover and decreased capacity to address growingly complex needs.

The high cost-of-living and deprivation levels within Minority Ethnic (ME) communities remain significant concerns. Many organisations highlight the impact of housing costs, particularly in the private rental sector where ME households are prominent, contributing to increased demand for advice and support. Some organisations have expressed concern about the broader political climate and the rise in anti-immigration sentiments, leading to fears of hate crimes in local communities. In total, race equality organisations have assisted 4,168 individuals and 747 organisations.

## Race Equality Portfolio



**BEMIS Scotland  
Boots & Beards**

**CEMVO  
CRER  
CSREC**



**Ethnic Minorities Law Centre**

**Feniks**

**Friends of Romano Lav**

**GREC**

**Intercultural Youth Scotland**

**MECOPP**

**Multi-Cultural Family Base**

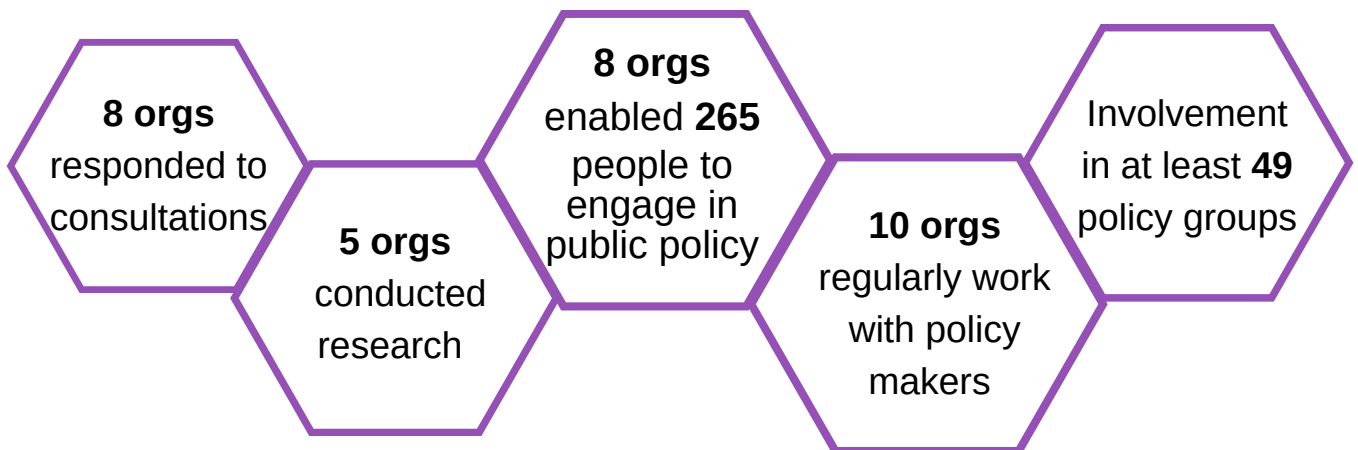
**STEP**

**WSREC**



# ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 <p><b>Work with individuals</b></p>	Providing advice	6	1,098
	Enhancing participation	7	919
	Building confidence	7	392
	Providing training	2	55
	Advocacy / Casework	5	772
	Information Sharing to individuals	9	19,445
	Other support to individuals	2	360
			<b>No. of Orgs</b>
 <p><b>Work with organisations</b></p>	Training to organisations	8	69
	Capacity building support	5	100
	Shared knowledge/information	8	667
	Other work with organisations	2	27



## Key policy contributions include:

- Anti-Racism in Education Programme
- National Care Service
- New Scots Integration Strategy refresh
- Human Rights Bill consultation
- UK COVID Inquiry
- Scotland COVID Inquiry
- Housing Bill Consultation
- Gypsy Traveller Action Plan

## Activity Examples

### Multi-Cultural Family Base

Recently launched the Young Ambassadors Programme, a participatory scheme encouraging young people to develop leadership skills and make changes in their communities. It is hoped that in time the programme will be able to support decision making within the wider organisation.

### STEP

STEP's Starter Sack early years programme has had unprecedented reach, with interest extending beyond Scotland. For example, Brighton Traveller Education Service, with support from the University of Sussex, are keen to use the model as an effective approach for improving engagement in education for children and families from the Gypsy/Traveller community. They highlighted the digital interactivity of resources as an innovative stand-out feature providing accessible early education to a community who otherwise are excluded from many standard learning materials.

Race Equality organisations report on collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. Examples include:

### Feniks

Feniks established a working partnership with the British Association of Counselling and Psychology to address challenges in recognising foreign qualifications. In addition, they took a lead role in initiating discussions with other third sector organisations and facilitating engagement with BACP on this matter.

### BEMIS Scotland

Following consultation with the 58 member organisations of the Ethnic Minority National Resilience Network, BEMIS re-launched the network in December 2023 as the Race, Equality and Human Rights Network. The member organisations are reflective of communities protected and recognised under Article 1 of the ICERD treaty and will coordinate engagement on key race equality developments in Scotland. Quarterly meetings are hosted in communities across Scotland by the different members, such as the March session hosted by CSREC in Stirling, and attended by 65 stakeholders and the Minister of Community Safety, who provided an update on the Hate Crime Act 2024.

## OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Between them, the Race Equality organisations are working towards all eight of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

### Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

**Friends of Romano Lav** planned and delivered a nine week community education programme, working with seven individuals and partner organisations, co-taught by six community catalysts and delivered to 12 young Roma participants who were immersed in rights-based training and education. Six of these young people were trained in how to be co-facilitators.

### Outcome 4

People with protected characteristics have increased influence in decisions that affect them

**WSREC** provided advice and information to a parent whose child had been subjected to prejudice-based bullying at school relating to the protected characteristics of race and disability. Advice included suggesting specific requests to make of the school, with reference to both the school's own policy and external guidance. The parent now feels empowered with links made to communicate themselves going forward.

### Outcome 7

The experience of people with PCs is increasingly used to inform the policy and practice of public bodies

**GREC** submitted evidence to the Equality, Human Rights and Social Justice Committee's Inquiry on Human Rights of Asylum Seekers. Kaukab Stewart, MSP acknowledged their contribution at a December Scottish Parliament Committee debate. "I want to pay tribute and thank those organisations that do so much with the limited resources to support asylum seekers and refugees to understand their rights and limited entitlements. These organisations such as (...) and Grampian Regional Equality Council who also helped to facilitate our engagement sessions".

## Case Study

This case study from CEMVO highlights a charity's ongoing journey to diversify its workforce and address the challenges that come with it. It demonstrates the commitment to anti-racism and a proactive approach to continuous improvement.

In early 2022, a charity that supports adults with disabilities and their families approached CEMVO's Race for Human Rights (R4HR) team for guidance. The organisation's goal was to increase the number of ethnic minority employees to better reflect Scotland's diverse population.

The R4HR team identified three key actions to help the charity reach their goal:

- 1. Review of Recruitment Policies:** The R4HR team examined the relevant policies to ensure they included human rights principles and specific anti-racist commitments.
- 2. Improve Data Collection and Analysis:** Helped develop a campaign to collect data using a human rights-based approach, aiming to reduce non-disclosure rates.
- 3. Provide Anti-Racism Training for staff:** including "Challenging Racism from a White Perspective" and "Human Rights-Based Approach to Policy Development."

The charity implemented the recommended changes and improvements.

By November 2023, the charity reported significant progress:

- A 38% increase in BAME (Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic) responding to recruitment initiatives.
- More non-British names applying for roles.
- An 18% increase in applicants not identifying as British nationality.

Despite these successes, the charity faced new challenges with a more diverse workforce, particularly in handling racist incidents. In early 2024, they sought further support from the R4HR team to address these issues.

The R4HR team collaborated with the organisation's senior leadership to co-create an Anti-Racist Guidance Model on how to handle racism and racist incidents. This involved:

- Delivering training sessions to help management teams understand racism and how to be effective allies.
- Facilitating workshops to enable staff to apply their new learning with their expertise to co-design the guidance model.

One key challenge was dealing with racist incidents involving the people they support, many of whom have additional needs and may not understand the impact of their words. The charity wanted to protect their staff from experiencing any form of racism at work, and so hoped that the design of the Anti-Racism Guidance Model tool might help to handle racist incidents and ultimately prevent them from happening.

## 8. CONCLUSION

This is the fifth progress report of the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights fund. Organisations have continued to build on successful delivery. Highlights include the increasing evidence of networking and collaboration among funded organisations, and the impact of funded activity extending beyond Scotland, with organisations in contact with groups from other parts of the UK looking to replicate the innovative approaches.

Multi-year E&HR funding has been seen as advantageous, being used as 'leverage' to secure other funding for new activities that add value to existing work. Many groups also report that three years of continued E&HR funding has enabled a significant pattern of research and development. As a result, organisations report being at a pivotal stage in their planning cycles, and are reviewing their theories of change in light of impact and learning. Organisations have welcomed the Scottish Government's decision to extend the fund by six months to March 2025. However, the continued uncertainty about future funding has led to staff turnover. The E&HR team at Inspiring Scotland are undertaking a review to understand the 'real costs' of funding uncertainty on organisations.

The cost-of-living crisis continues to be the main challenge arising from progress reports. Many organisations continue to be affected by the hostile external operating environment in the wake of public policy activity, such as the recent Hate Crime legislation. This is leading to an increase in 'bad faith' queries, groups avoiding organising in-person events because of the risk of disruption, or not engaging in social media. Some groups have reported instances of difficult or aggressive service users, who often present as frustrated at their lack of success in seeking support through previous avenues.

During the reporting period, we facilitated two 'spotlight sessions' highlighting collaboration of funded groups, and three policy specific meetings of the Gender and Race Equality portfolios respectively. Over the next 12 months, we will continue to build on these positive working relationships.

## About Inspiring Scotland

Inspiring Scotland is a registered Scottish charity with a mission is to inspire people, communities, organisations and government to work together to drive social change and transform lives. Our vision is that every person in Scotland can enjoy a happy, healthy life free from poverty or disadvantage.

We do this by raising funding from private individuals, trusts and foundations, Scottish Government and local authorities and investing in social funds addressing our strategic themes. These include improving the life chances for children and young people and supporting people who face barriers to inclusion because of discrimination and disadvantage to live flourishing lives.

Our aim is to amplify and strengthen the impact of organisations across civic society by helping them build their strength, resilience and reach.

**INSPIRING SCOTLAND**

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