

Race, Equality and Human Rights Network

Policy Recommendations, Outcomes, and
Meeting Notes – April 2025



Policy Recommendations Report

Following the 30th April 2025 Meeting of the Ethnic Minority – Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland)

Acknowledgement of Policy Failures and Context

The Ethnic Minority – Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland) convened on 30th April 2025 against a backdrop of significant structural failings in the protection and advancement of ethnic minority rights in Scotland. The meeting took place in the continuing context of:

- Post-pandemic inequalities
- The EU exit and associated instability
- A cost-of-living crisis disproportionately impacting ethnic minority communities
- A marked rise in racism, hate crime, and emboldened far-right rhetoric.

The following recommendations reflect the input of network rights holders at this meeting. The full meeting note and agenda are included in this document.

The 30th of April was the first meeting of the network in 2025. This followed a busy period to end of 2024 that included:

- 6th November meeting with Minister Kaukab Stewart on CERD Recommendations
- October community consultations on an anti-racism observatory for Scotland
- 10th December meeting with Minister Kaukab Stewart on progressing the Race Equality Framework 2025 – 30

It is now July 2025. In the intervening period:

- The anti-racism observatory was announced by press release.
- Community consultation report and the EQIA remain unpublished.
- Despite requests no information has been provided on the future of the REF 16-30 or Race Equality Action Plans
- No progress has been made in advancing the CERD August 2024 recommendations accepted in full by the Scottish Government on 6th November

We state unequivocally that the Scottish Government's engagement with rights holders - especially in relation to the Race Equality Framework 2016–2030 and Race Equality Action Plans - has been wholly inadequate. There is a continued vacuum of transparency, leadership, and accountability regarding what is being done to progress the rights of ethnic minority communities in Scotland.

Although the Scottish Government accepted the UN CERD (Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination) 2024 recommendations in full, we are now nearly a year on with no clear public strategy or implementation plan for how these will be progressed within the national human rights and equalities architecture.

Recognition of Civil Servant Engagement

We acknowledge and thank the civil servants who did attend and contribute to the 30th April meeting. Their engagement is appreciated and necessary.

However, we must question why positive policy work—such as the incorporation of international human rights treaties and the development of the Hate Crime Strategy Implementation Plan—continues to take place in silos, disconnected from any race equality action approach or measurable outcomes aligned to the Race Equality Framework 2016–2030.

This strategic social contract between the Scottish Government and ethnic minority communities was built on the principles of co-production, accountability and measurable change. The current failure to align key initiatives with that framework signals a worrying retreat from long-standing commitments.

Our Commitment in the Absence of Leadership

In light of this institutional gap, the Ethnic Minority – Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland) reaffirms its commitment to:

- Mobilising communities with lived experience at the centre of policy discussions
- Advocating for full, accountable implementation of race equality commitments
- Engaging core duty bearers—including the Scottish Government, Police Scotland, Local Authorities, and Human Rights Institutions—through democratic, transparent, and experience-led forums
- Ensuring the voices of marginalised and minoritised groups are heard, respected, and acted upon.

Core Policy Recommendations

1. Human Rights Incorporation Must Be Grounded in Race Equality

- The Human Rights Bill must explicitly incorporate UN CERD and reflect a commitment to intersectional racial justice.
- Prioritise economic, social and cultural rights in areas including housing, health and trauma support, cost of living protections, and language access (ESOL).
- Embed racial equality benchmarks into any human rights monitoring and implementation process.

2. Link Hate Crime Strategy to Race Equality Commitments

- The Hate Crime Strategy Implementation Plan must be operationalised through a Race Equality Action lens.
- Local authority toolkits and public guidance must include: actions addressing micro aggressions and institutional racism; Standards for local data collection disaggregated by ethnicity and identity; Community-led oversight and co-design with racialised communities.

3. Invest in Anti-Racism Education and Awareness

Anti-racism must be aligned to ethnic minority people's rights covering colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin. No more hierarchy. No more competitive equality. The Government has an obligation to support us all.

- Embed anti-racism, colonial history, and cultural competence across school curricula, teacher training, youth engagement, and peer-led interventions.

- Extend this education to frontline services, public transport, healthcare, and the justice sector.

4. Centre Integration, Access and Migration Justice

- Improve recognition of international qualifications and pathways to employment.
- Improve systems to support migrant women fleeing domestic abuse.
- Fully fund ESOL and other integration services.
- Provide public education for employers on visa entitlements and rights-based hiring practices.

5. Commit to Meaningful Community Engagement

- End tokenistic consultation by: Sharing outcomes and decisions transparently; funding community organisations to lead local engagement; addressing barriers faced by all other under-represented groups.
- Develop a Community Accountability Charter with clear feedback loops and standards of engagement.

6. Improve Hate Crime Response and Data

- Strengthen police and justice responses with: Timely follow-ups; Victim-centred 3rd-party reporting redesign; Data disaggregation that captures motivations and identity aspects.
- Create systems to report and act on lower-level prejudice and microaggressions.

7. Build Structural Accountability Mechanisms

- Publicly outline how UN CERD recommendations will be implemented in Scotland;
- Mandate inter-agency cooperation on race equality outcomes;
- Establish independent oversight bodies rooted in communities to track and challenge institutional performance;
- Provide enforcement mechanisms and legal redress for rights violations.

Conclusion

The Scottish Government must re-centre its work in racial equality within the strategic commitments it made in the Race Equality Framework 2016–2030. Rights incorporation, hate crime policy, and social inclusion must not operate separately from this commitment.

Until such leadership is restored, the Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland) will continue to organise, advocate, and represent the voices of our communities. We remain committed to engaging with duty bearers in good faith but insist on demonstrable action not rhetorical reassurance.

This report stands as both a record of community-identified priorities and a call to urgent action. Progress on race equality in Scotland cannot be further delayed or decoupled from the commitments already made. We expect full alignment, implementation, and accountability.

Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland) 30th April 2025 Meeting Agenda

Date: Wednesday, 30th April 2025
Location: The Albert Halls Albert Place, Stirling FK8 2QL
Time: 10am - 2pm (Inclusive of lunch)
Host organisation: Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC)

Agenda

10:00 – 10:30am: Arrival Tea / Coffee
10:30 – 10:35am: Welcome Dr. Eman Hani (CSREC)
10:35 – 11:20am: Trevor Owen (Head of Human Rights Strategy and Legislation Unit)

Human rights incorporation and Implementation

- What are your thoughts and priorities for development of the Human Rights Bill going forward?
- How would you like to engage with the development of the Bill between now and the next Parliamentary session?
- Are there gaps in your knowledge in relation to the rights proposed for incorporation that it would be helpful to work with others on?
- What are your strengths in relation to the rights proposed that you could share knowledge on with others?
- What kind of learning materials and practice development opportunities have been helpful in the past to aid development of your understanding of the rights landscape?

11:20 – 11:25am: comfort break
11:25 – 12:15pm: Lucy Allan (Hate Crime Policy Manager)

The Hate Crime Strategy Implementation Plan and the Local Authority Resource

Utilising the local authority resource to tackle hate crime in a community context.

“How can the local authority resource can be applied locally (including encouraging community engagement, promoting awareness and education, support for victims, monitoring and reporting, and multi-agency collaboration and law enforcement)”

12:15 – 12:20: Comfort Break
12:25 – 13:15: Commitment to Safeguarding Democracy (Eman CSREC / Danny BEMIS / Amanda Gordon Scottish Government – Head of Strategic anti-Racism and Disability Equality)

Tackling the emerging far right in Scotland.

Link: <https://www.gov.scot/news/commitment-to-safeguarding-democracy/>

13:15 – 13:20: AOB – Thanks (Next meeting date)
13:20 – 14:00: Lunch and networking

Attendees

Name	Organisation
Tanveer Parnez	BEMIS Scotland
Eman Hani	CSREC
Elaine Hill	CSREC
Kyle O'Brien	CSREC
Andrew Henderson	CSREC
Georgia Johnston	CSREC
Kelly Sagar	Forth Valley Indian Association
Nabela K M Ahmad	International Women's Group
Esther Moodie	FENIKS
Shirell Johnson	MECOPP Gypsy/Traveller Service
Kavita Chamd	MECOPP
Mick Conboy	NO2HATE forum
Abril Flores Rojo	Kairos Women+
Hannah Kearns	Multi-Cultural Family Base
Ghzala Khan	WSREC
Ahmad Mourad	Scottish Intercultural Association
James Calder	MECOPP
Agota Rauktyte	Citizens' Rights Project
Faye Torabi	Grampian Regional Equality Council
Angie Mwafulirwa	Sharpen Her: The African Women's Network
Aymen Al-Khawlani	Maryhill Integration Network
Iain Walker	Just Right Scotland
Myshela Haywood	GREC
Brogan Grimley	Central Scotland Regional Equality Council
Magda Czarnecka	Feniks
Dr. Hector Williams	GREC
Noomi Anyanwu	CSREC
Trevor Owen	Scottish Government
Lucy Allan	Scottish Government
Amanda Gordon	Scottish Government

Meeting Notes

Trevor Owen: Human rights incorporation and Implementation

- The new UK Government election presented an opportunity to work more collaboratively and incorporate CEDAW, CERD, etc.
- **Priorities:**
 - The inclusion of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights into Scottish legislation.
 - Health & housing
 - Cost of living
 - Housing standard
 - Using relocation to give accommodation to those seeking asylum or with refugee status.
 - not only private landlords' but also the government's role to secure this.
 - Preserving cultural rights for ethnic minorities – need to be given just as much weight as other rights.
 - On the narrative of the far-right about immigrants as a whole, the government have noticed and are making some approaches to deal with it. More priority needs to be given to this.
 - Counter procedures from the government to tackle this + support for organisations promoting cohesion.

Discussion:

Education:

- how can the far-right rhetoric be addressed through curriculum in schools?
 - Teach/give more knowledge to children about colonial history and its impact, start the difficult conversations from the ground up at an early age to tackle these narratives before they are encountered. This needs to start with educators & school systems.

Rights of migrants:

- how do they gain access to refuge when fleeing Domestic Abuse? They need better support mechanisms and better access to information.
- Access for Asylum Seekers and Refugees to ESOL classes is essential for integration at all levels – the importance of this needs to be recognised.

Other issues mentioned:

- Employers' lack of knowledge on visa processes and access to this information.
- Skilled people having limited to no access to their preferred workspaces yet these same spaces are crying out for workers. Needs could be met on both sides – system needs to be reviewed.
- No access to jobs/education as foreign qualifications are not recognised – conversion courses/employability programmes – take example from other countries.
- Grass-root level engagement to reach a wider range of voices/more meaningful engagement with communities that are often left out i.e. Gypsy Traveller Community.
- Lived experiences need to be shared in the racial context, this should include (refugees, immigrants, diasporas).

- Feedback should be counted from community/grass-root leaders.
- Engagement Spaces need to be open to attend by the public.

Accountability:

- Stop using “Consultation Fatigue” as an excuse to not engage. The problem is that no form of feedback or follow up is ever given after consultations which causes community members to feel exploited. Transparency is important.
- Consultations like this are helpful but sometimes we get consultation fatigue. We know how to tackle but where are our inputs going? More transparency is needed; updates from the government to show where the process have been made.
- Accountability from the public sectors (statuary services) because the third sectors have been picking up the slacks they refused to take; meanwhile these services are getting all the funds.
- Address “consultation fatigue” by ensuring feedback to all is transparent and inclusive; some migrant groups are often excluded from consultations, but would definitely still appreciate the feedback.

Challenges:

- Challenges in engaging people to have lived experiences heard: generational trauma from bad treatment and not seeing “other’s rights” being upheld so why theirs?
 - We see these issues across Gypsy/Traveller communities and other BAME communities (incl. carers & cared for)
- G/T quote- “we are bottom of the pile”
- Engagement should not be tokenistic- meaningful, give feedback, give enough time to feed in, do research of community/have cultural awareness training etc.
- Community members are left feeling bottom of the pile – so why bother.
- Feel as though there is no purpose to reporting their experiences at times.
- Negative experiences with authorities have become a barrier.
- Gypsy traveller community are rarely involved in events.
- Engagement that is offered, shouldn’t be so tokenistic.
 - This can be related to communities’ everyday life experiences also.

Debate of Gypsy Traveller Community in Parliament:

- Actual things that have been said like “they are not law-abiding citizens”.
- Again poor behaviour by media/social media is a huge contributor.

Access to support:

- Not many spaces that promote community cohesion (aside from activities like language café).
- Local council aren’t talking to the communities as much now. The 3rd Sector have facilitated these spaces but we need more from the government.
- Rights to certain protections (legal aid) are not always actually covered due to extra financial burdens which are often incurred. What’s being labelled as accessible is not actually a true reflection of what is happening
- Supporting people accessing legal aid. For example: interpreter cost isn’t covered. Cost either have to be taken by legal firms or clients themselves.

- Making sure people can access the support and resources they're entitled to (language, transport...)

Priority focus:

- Priorities need to include every area covered by the Human Rights Bill: all the protective characteristics.
 - This is to ensure that multiple identities and intersectionality are respected.
- There is a lack of support for carers, people with NRPF limits, and the legal sectors (legal aid) to enforce the bill.
- Recognise Human Rights issues around immigration.
 - Women's rights
 - Communication barriers
- Positive obligations around:
 - Mental health support
 - Counselling for trauma associated with other regimes/countries
 - Financial stability
 - Language (ESL) support
- Incorporate and strengthen CERD in a way that is compatible with HRA
- Build and improve rather than complicate and/or undermine.
- Consideration of intersectionality and non-competing rights
- Faith based service provision and support
 - Understanding and celebrating different cultures
 - Cultural competence within services
- Funding/opportunities to celebrate different cultures and communities. Promote understanding intercultural exchange.
- Focus on positive obligations not deficits mitigations
- Needs to be backed by funding
- Arbitrators, champions, enforcement recourse

Lucy Allan: The Hate Crime Strategy Implementation Plan and the Local Authority Resource

- **Prevention and Early Intervention** – 3rd Sector/3rd Party Reporting Centres are only fire-fighting things that have already happened, but pre-emptive reduction is needed.
- **Local Authority Tool-kit** – Support organisations, communities, local authorities to tackle and address Hate Crime; this will be a published resource but will be continuously updated.

Discussion:

Promoting Awareness:

- Peer support groups for minority communities. Information sessions to share lived experiences.
- Information like "Toolkit" and other resources mentioned by Lucy, needs to be given directly to community members.
- All of this needs to be available in different formats to accommodate differing literacy levels, language requirements. Accessibility helps to broaden community access.

- Integration is vital as well as promoting difficult conversations between community groups not just within their own spaces.
 - Inviting them to engage/reflect on topical conversations, in the media, to help unpack unconscious bias, stereotypes and privilege.
- Awareness needs to be on both sides, both victims and potential perpetrators need to be involved.
- Encouraging such difficult conversations across communities is important – a lack of this inhibits prevention.

Early intervention:

- how do we build trust if bigger cases aren't being picked up. How would that encourage people to report smaller offences i.e. verbal abuse on public transport, in accordance with zero tolerance policy?

Media Portrayal:

- need to try and counteract negative media narratives.

Outreach work with Schools:

- Speak about racism, hate crime, lived experience.
 - Educators are not always aware of minority experiences – ignorance can make issues worse. This also applies to any form of additional needs i.e. autism.
 - This enforced education of professionals also needs to extend to public services i.e. bus companies.
- Critical thinking/creative sessions – dynamic communication to appeal to younger audiences.

Monitoring/Reporting/Standards for Support:

- How is data gathered going to be used/scrutinised? Are local authorities going to be made accountable for results? How are we going to avoid biased interpretations of the data (people from the communities being addressed, need to be present in the room for these conversations).

Following through on reports of hate crimes:

- inadequate responses/response times from Police. Better procedures need to be put into place to allow quicker reactions to incidents.
 - Not taking the voices of some demographics seriously. Need to start making them more of a priority.
- Some way of monitoring every form of discrimination i.e. micro-aggressions that would not constitute a hate crime – measures needed to address prejudice at every level.
 - More focus on collecting data on these daily acts of exclusion to get the full picture of minorities experiences.
- Some form of follow-up mechanism – which will allow for reporting instances where the initial report is not handled properly.
- Review of 3rd Party Reporting processes – need to become more victim centred.

Community Engagement:

- More in-depth/tailored/meaningful awareness and training.
- Targeting service providers in all sectors e.g. retail, hospitality, etc.
- When riots are happening – need to observe the impact on communities – consultations are important.
- BEMIS consultation – Democracy Matters.
- Impact of negative media/politician portrayals – encourages hatred, bias and racist terminology.

Cohesion:

- Integration – bringing communities together through activities, cultural events etc.
- No “Tick Box” service
- Community cohesion can work.
- “Freedom of Speech” – Media explanation of such terms causes confusion, better education is needed.

Engaging with Law enforcement/taking a multi-agency approach:

- More hate crime awareness – posters etc.
- Better processes for reporting incidents of hate crime – including graffiti.
- Most organisations tend to engage with the police rather than local authorities.
- Lack of communication departmentally – especially for housing issues.
- Poor complaint procedures, lack of trust in the local authorities.
- Rarely ever consequences for perpetrators.
- Perpetrators using bureaucracy. The victim then becomes the perpetrator.
- Racist bullying – teachers brush it under the carpet.
- Data that would be helpful – ‘headline’ info about motivation, e.g. not just ‘racism’, but anti-immigration, language based, neighbour dispute, stranger attack, school bullying etc. – to allow more focused intervention.
 - What **element** of the person’s identity was targeted? (this data can be anonymised to avoid concerns)
- Also: national stats etc should disaggregate incidents targeting police – v. different power relationship + circumstances.
- Trust – where does the information go? Reports need to be followed up.
- Established, experienced professional organisations – learn from them, what has worked?
- Need more positive interactions in general, if only being met with hostility people are not going to approach.
- Fear of retaliation for reporting is greater than faith in the justice system.
- **Meaningful Engagement!**
- When politicians, police, media constantly use racist and derogatory terms/ stereotypes (for gypsy/traveller people) – these become accepted by wider communities.

Far-right discussion [All]

- Low levels of hate, discrimination, racism just taken as “normal” or less serious.
- Incitement and enablement from politicians and government fosters the negative environment which is empowering the far right.

- Where is the money/power being allocated? Far-right is so “loud” because they are so well funded.
- Focus on the structural issues which are allowing these issues to take place rather than trying to address societal values.
- Inclusion of microaggressions/definitions of prejudice/experiences of hate crime needs to happen in all Anti-Racism Statements going forward.
- Focusing on systemic collective changes that can be made.
- Focusing the education system to acknowledge the UK’s colonial past to help combat the existence of unconscious biases.
- Making far-right organisations and bodies illegal/forcing them to face sanctions.
- Sanctions on media/incitement of violence. All of this needs to be addressed by the government.
- Structural funding and support to uplift positive voices.
 - Ensure these messages are being directed towards the far-right themselves rather than just circulated in already safe spaces.
- Be careful of using Far-right rhetoric in our own spaces. “Freedom of Speech” and “Rights to Opinions” do not constitute racism/hatred/incitement of violence.
 - Stricter view needed from the Scottish Government on where these boundaries lie.
- Targeting actual offenders with specific rehabilitation programmes that specifically address types of racism and hate crime on the front lines.

Post Meeting Key Evaluation Points

Human Rights

1	anonymous	There has been too much delay in enacting legislation incorporating the new laws
2	anonymous	There appears to be a general willingness to work towards incorporation of human rights from Government, but little in the way of practical outcomes, nor forward planning for e.g. the knock on legal aspects (funding legal aid to allow people to enforce their rights, funding for public authorities to prevent breaches in the first place etc).
3	anonymous	Sorry, I don't have anything to add to this.
4	anonymous	Important that any discussion remains focused on tangible developments and their impact on communities most likely to be affected.
5	anonymous	Clear presentation and it was helpful to have a roadmap of progress. Not a personal issue (as I am new in post) but a lot of people raised consultation fatigue

6	anonymous	The meeting's focus on the incorporation and implementation of human rights, particularly in relation to race equality, is both timely and essential. It's important to understand how ethnic minority communities will be meaningfully involved in shaping, delivering, and evaluating these policies. Questions remain around how progress will be measured, how data will be used to drive improvements, and what concrete outcomes are expected from this and future meetings. Overall, the event presented a valuable opportunity to strengthen rights-based approaches and ensure they are effectively embedded across Scotland's public institutions.
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Tackling Hate Crime

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	There seem to be lack of reporting by majority of the group who feel that their complaints are not taken seriously.
2	anonymous	LAs provide courses for individuals diverted from prosecution, by way of rehabilitation. There does not appear to be any course for those charged with Hate Crime. This situation is not sustainable. Separately, funding for 3PRCs largely falls to LAs but this needs to be renegotiated in light of the 3PRC review, with agreed standards, procedures and resources. A related issue has gone through almost unnoticed. The Victims etc Bill is going through without any reference to Hate Crime. The EQIA was silent on Hate Crime. Happy to speak in more detail.
3	anonymous	The clearest presentation, good to see how the strategy is being implemented. Discussion perhaps ended up in the weeds.
4	anonymous	Tackling hate crime through the effective use of local authority resources is a critical and practical approach, given councils' proximity to communities and their role in delivering key services. A key consideration is how local authorities are resourced and trained to recognise, respond to, and prevent hate crime, particularly in ways that are culturally competent and community informed. It is vital to understand what mechanisms currently exist for reporting and responding to hate crime locally across Scotland, and how accessible and trusted these are for marginalised groups. Are these mechanisms straightforward and easy for communities to use, and are their voices genuinely heard, or are they being ignored in subtle or systemic ways? Additionally, how are local authorities partnering with community organisations and police to ensure a coordinated, victim-centred response? Questions also arise around data sharing, staff training, and whether there is consistent practice across different councils. Ensuring sustained funding and political commitment will be

ID	Name	Responses
		essential to making local strategies effective and long-lasting. A further consideration is how hate incidents in schools are often minimised and framed as typical childhood behaviour, rather than being treated with the seriousness of hate crime. This raises difficult questions about whether local authorities are willing, or equipped, to address the broader systemic and cultural biases that such incidents expose, particularly when these extend into families and communities

Do you have any comments or questions on the theme of tackling the far right / protecting democracy addressed at the meeting?

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	I think the far right should be made illegal
2	anonymous	It was striking how underprepared the Government seems on this. There seems to be an underestimation of the consequences of inaction, and while the recent summit may well have been a useful step, it doesn't seem to have filtered into anything approaching a plan yet. Coming to a meeting of largely third sector organisations and asking for ideas for how we could get Scotland to a stage where far right views are unacceptable and "we can all get together and sing kumbaya" felt flippant and churlish.
3	anonymous	It is not clear who the far right are. Most people seemed to be labelled for questioning the government or whoever opposes their views. I think the Reform Party should not be side-lined but debated.
4	anonymous	When I heard the FM's call for politicians to unite against the far-right, I was delighted. It sounded exactly like what was needed: seek agreement on the parameters of debate within a democratic society; and take a more structured view of how we collectively address the causes and means by which prejudice, ill-will and hate are allowed to emerge and to spread. The published statement however avoids any reference to Hate Crime. Neither does it make any reference to the rallying point for all far-right movements, in all countries across all time i.e. scapegoats. The consistent need to identify targets for prejudice and hate based on actual or perceived difference. I underline the full spread of characteristics protected under the law, as any effort which focuses on one and not all will tend to undermine solidarity and support those who want to

ID	Name	Responses
		unpick progress to date. (to eradicate any partial approaches which can only weaken the movement for equality for all.) Equal opportunities has its part to play, but the clear rationale behind the law on Hate Crime is needed in an everyday policy context, and needed as a deliverable policy goal. The statement can still provide an opportunity to recognise that targeting minority communities is no longer an activity for the margins. Its influence is found everywhere. This is the challenge and how we respond to the challenge will define whether we are successful or not. If we truly want to protect democratic values in Scotland, and tackle the politics of fear, we should go wider e.g. critically appraise how we apply the law on Hate Crime, educate our children, set expectations and apply standards across civil society and challenge the media, traditional and online, on their professional standards and consider our personal roles as individual citizens. To challenge effectively, I suggest that we acknowledge the value of genuinely working together to address Hate Crime, respecting the lives of others; underlining common values, valuing everyone's contribution, with the ultimate goal of ensuring everyone's participation without let or hindrance. Democracy never survives when it allows a voice to those who would destroy it.
5	anonymous	A disappointing session. There was a noticeable lack of understanding of the social factors driving support for the far-right, and little attention paid to intersectionality—specifically, how racist ideologies often overlap with anti-feminist and anti-LGBTQ+ beliefs. It was unclear what Scottish Government's strategy is, particularly in terms of how they plan to engage with individuals vulnerable to radicalisation. Overall, it felt like a missed opportunity to draw on the knowledge and lived experiences of those present.
6	anonymous	Conversation was very tiring, no new and useful comments were made by SG. When confronted with wish to more prompt action, this was dismissed.
7	anonymous	A key concern is how public institutions, including education, law enforcement, and local authorities, are being supported to identify and counter far-right

ID	Name	Responses
		narratives before they take root in communities. It must also be acknowledged that politicians and the media play a significant role in shaping public discourse. When inflammatory or divisive language is normalised by political leaders or amplified by the media, it creates fertile ground for far-right ideologies to grow. Therefore, part of protecting democracy must include holding public figures and media outlets accountable for the narratives they promote. Politicians and media have a powerful influence on public attitudes, and when they use divisive language or spread harmful stereotypes, they risk fuelling far-right ideologies. What steps are being taken to ensure responsible messaging and accountability in these spaces? Efforts to tackle the far right must be comprehensive, addressing not only those at the margins but also the mainstream environments that can enable or excuse intolerance and hate. This includes confronting the denial culture that downplays the presence or influence of far-right attitudes in Scotland, as reflected in claims that "most people in Scotland are not far-right." Such narratives risk obscuring the more insidious, everyday forms of prejudice—what might be described as an “Empire” mode of Othering, that are embedded in institutions and social norms. Challenging overt hate is necessary, but it is equally important to address the subtler cultural and systemic expressions of exclusion that often go unacknowledged. It would be helpful to know what preventative strategies are being implemented to build community resilience, promote inclusive democratic values, and engage young people in critical thinking and civic education. How are online spaces being monitored and addressed in Scotland, particularly where radicalisation occurs subtly?

What are the top three next steps we must take to advance the work of Race Equality in Scotland?

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	More education and awareness raising especially in schools colleges more action by the police and courts more rehabilitation offered to perpetrators especially vulnerable children and teenagers led astray
2	anonymous	Early intervention, tackling misinformation, targeting of deprived areas for action.
3	anonymous	I feel there is lot of prejudice by all the political leaders. None of leaders are trying to unite us. Most of them have taken a stance and openly antagonising certain communities with their rhetoric.
4	anonymous	Any action in support of race equality must be draw up from the perspective of intersectionality.

ID	Name	Responses
5	anonymous	1. Utilise the breadth of experience in the network when shaping policy and engagement with SG, Local Authorities, and other key bodies 2. Foster cross-sector collaboration to avoid working in silos and achieve greater impact 3. Monitor the development of AROS to ensure it reflects the breath of ethnic minority experiences
6	anonymous	Plan of Action for Race Equality. Using consultations in a more sustainable way, avoid having to repeat same issues every time. Follow up and follow through. More lived experience influence into policy and in SG.
7	anonymous	Embed accountability across all levels of government and public services; this includes setting measurable targets, regular reporting, and consequences for inaction, ensuring that public bodies actively work to reduce racial disparities rather than simply acknowledging them. Sustained investment in community-led solutions is essential; long-term funding and support should be directed toward grassroots and community-led organisations, who are best placed to understand and address the needs of ethnic minority communities. Their role in policy development, service delivery, and monitoring must be central. However, funding criteria should also encourage inclusive approaches that promote integration and social cohesion—ensuring, where appropriate, that community projects actively involve members from across the wider community. This helps avoid narrow definitions of “community” that may reinforce single ethnic identities at the expense of broader social inclusion. Tackle structural racism through education, data, and policy reform; advancing race equality means addressing the root causes, not just the symptoms. This includes integrating anti-racism into education systems, e.g. revision of the history curriculum for a proper focus on colonial history, improving the collection and use of disaggregated data to inform policy, and reforming institutions to eliminate structural barriers.

How would you like future meetings of the network to be conducted? For example, round-table discussions? Smaller break-out workshops? Guests speakers? Government presentation and Q+A?

ID	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Combination of what was used previously such as speakers round table discussions and workshops.
2	anonymous	With the election approaching and a number of pressing cases coming to a head I think it is unlikely that I will manage to attend the next meeting, but I think

ID	Name	Responses
		Government presentation and Q&A works well in terms of making sure that Government hears the views of participants directly.
3	anonymous	Guest speakers and Government policy makers with opportunity to ask extensive questions.
4	anonymous	The format is good already. I particularly like getting policy leads or politicians in for presentation and Q&A
5	anonymous	An important space for dialogue and accountability with the Scottish Government. It may also be valuable to have visitors from out with the EHR sector to both speak and listen. Table discussion can be good but I find they work best when they are facilitated to ensure focus and inclusivity.
6	anonymous	All could be useful, depending on the theme. Break out rooms did work well, but I have felt the third sector representatives knew about the issues we just repeated them among each other. Either specific action should be requested which we work on in the small groups or more useful to utilise Gov representative's time somehow.
7	anonymous	For future meetings of the network, a mix of formats would be ideal to encourage both information-sharing and deeper engagement. Government presentations followed by Q&A sessions are useful for updates and transparency, but these should be balanced with smaller breakout workshops or round-table discussions, which allow for more meaningful dialogue, collaboration, and community input. Guest speakers, especially from grassroots organisations or those with lived experience, can add valuable insight and help keep the conversation grounded in real-world challenges. Prioritising interactive and inclusive formats will help ensure all voices are heard and that the network remains action-oriented and community-focused.