

Equality, Race and Disability Evidence Units: Ministerial and Stakeholder Progress Update, June 2025

Established in 2022, the Evidence Units continue to work closely with policy and analytical colleagues across government to improve the availability, quality, granularity and accessibility of evidence about individuals with protected and associated characteristics, so that we fully understand the level and types of inequalities across Wales.

The Evidence Units consist of four teams:

- Equality Evidence Unit,
- Race Disparity Evidence Unit,
- Disability Disparity Evidence Unit,
- Equality Statistics Development Unit.

Most of the work of the Evidence Units is deliberately cross-cutting and intersectional. The Evidence Units are made up of a mixture of analysts, which includes statisticians and social researchers who support policymaking across the Welsh Government.

The new Equality Statistics Development Unit was established in September 2024 to carry out the statistical and data reporting functions of the Evidence Units, working alongside the other units to provide statistical support for their projects.

This [stakeholder update](#) details progress made over the past year and outlines the Evidence Units priorities for 2025-26.

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Projects completed in 2024-25

Research to explore recommendations from the Disability Rights Taskforce (June 2025)

The Evidence Units have been working with the Disability Rights Taskforce to consider two of the recommendations from the Taskforce. The first project explored the current UK-wide Disability Confident Employer scheme and the idea of having an enhanced or distinct scheme for Wales. The second project looked at the idea of establishing a National Centre for Independent Living for Wales and how it could operate. [The reports were published](#) in June 2025, along with the Draft Disabled People's Rights Plan. These projects piloted a coproduction approach to Government Social Research and a lessons learned report on the approach will also be published in due course.

Review of Equality Data in the National Survey for Wales (June 2025)

The Evidence Units have reviewed the National Survey for Wales to assess to what extent the National Survey is representative of and could be used to look at survey results for equality groups in Wales; and make recommendations on how to improve the quality and granularity of equality data collected in future surveys. The report will be published by the end of June. Further work to explore options for boosting the National Survey are also being explored by the Evidence Units and the findings will be considered in due course.

Review of Diversity in the Public Sector Workforce and Boards in Wales (March 2025)

This report presents the findings of two complementary pieces of research; surveys on public sector bodies and board members in Wales and a review of relevant literature on diversity in the public sector. The overarching objectives were to: provide an indication of the diversity of public boards in Wales and explore whether public sector board members' diversity data is being collected effectively; and to understand the value of diversity in public sector bodies and identify barriers and appropriate strategies to increase diversity in unrepresented groups in workforces and senior management. [The Review of diversity in the public sector workforce and boards in Wales](#) was published in March 2025.

Review of Welsh Government Equality Data Sources and Outputs (January 2025)

The purpose of this review was to improve awareness of existing equality sources and outputs held by or produced by the Welsh Government and to systematically identify where there are gaps across the equality evidence base. The review is being used to help identify potential further improvements in the collection, reporting and use of protected characteristic data. The [Review of Welsh Government equality data sources and outputs](#) was published January 2025.

Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan (ArWAP) Impact Measurement Framework (December 2024)

The Race Disparity Evidence Unit has continued to provide analytical support for ArWAP by supporting the development of the refreshed plan and establishing an approach for its evaluation. The [Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan Impact Measurement Framework](#) was published in December 2024. This report sets out a suggested approach to developing an indicator framework for ArWAP; alongside proposed high-level areas to measure (the key sets of numbers and statistics) that will be assessed regularly to help us understand whether the plan is making a difference. The impact measurement framework will be used as one part of the many evidence sources we will use to assess whether change has taken place when evaluating the overall impact of the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan.

LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales Evaluability Assessment (November 2024)

The Welsh Government commissioned Alma Economics to carry out an evaluability assessment to provide recommendations on how the LGBTQ+ Action Plan should be evaluated. The [LGBTQ+ Action Plan for Wales evaluability assessment](#) was published in November 2024. The report has been used to inform the design of a [process evaluation](#) and baselining work for a future impact evaluation. The evaluation will help determine whether the LGBTQ+ Action Plan is successful and is achieving its intended aims of improving the lives and experiences of LGBTQ+ people in Wales.

Well-being of Wales Report: More Equal Wales Chapter (September 2024)

This report collates published equality statistics for the More Equal Wales chapter in the annual Well-Being of Wales report, helping assess progress across National Indicators. It is a key source used by Welsh Government stakeholders, citizens, and media to understand trends and challenges facing Wales, while providing Senedd Cymru with data for scrutiny against Wales' performance goals. The [Well-being of Wales report: More Equal Wales chapter 2024](#) was published in September 2024.

New and ongoing key priorities for 2025-26

Equality action plan measurement, evaluation and support

The Welsh Government equality action plans set out the Welsh Government aspirations and priority actions to improve the lives of people with these protected characteristics. These include:

- the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan
- the Disabled People's Rights Plan
- the LGBTQ+ Action Plan.

A key priority of the evidence units for 2025-26 is therefore to continue to support these plans with analysis and evaluation activity. This includes developing theories of change, measurement frameworks, carrying out and commissioning evaluations, monitoring and reporting. This evidence will be used to assess the roll out the plans and whether they are being delivered in a way to achieve their desired outcomes. A consistent approach will be applied where appropriate and take into consideration the Strategic Equality and Human Rights Action Plan.

Improving the equality statistics evidence base

This priority seeks to improve the availability, quality, granularity and accessibility of equality data. It involves filling any measurement gaps for the core priorities set out in the aforementioned equality plans for Wales. This includes:

- Working with other Welsh Government analysts following the initial review of Welsh Government Equality Data Sources and Outputs in 2024/25 to explore opportunities to make more equality data available
- Encouraging data collectors to produce more granular equality data e.g research exploring options to boost underrepresented groups in the National Survey for Wales
- Exploring data linking and use of administrative data e.g. project to produce more detailed analysis of ethnicity and disability pay gaps
- Interrogating existing sources at a granular level to improve the insight provided on equality e.g. debt data sources.

Mainstreaming equality, inclusiveness and involvement in research and statistics

Our mainstreaming work includes embedding equality considerations throughout the research cycle and developing equality question best practice in Welsh Government. For 2025/26, this includes:

- Continuing our work to develop appropriate questions for how information on Social Model of Disability can be collected, where NatCen have been commissioned to carry out this work. This

will support Welsh Government to understand the impact of policies on disabled people and how policies can reduce or remove barriers for people with health conditions. The interim report is due to be published in Summer in 2025

- Further developing internal guidance for Welsh government analysts in equality data collection, scoping research to consider equality and reporting.
- Developing a strategy for equality mainstreaming across sectors in Wales and undertaking a project to understand barriers and enablers to collecting and reporting on equality data,
- Conducting a lessons learned exercise following our work with the chairs of the Disability Rights Taskforce, where they were invited to test an approach to coproduce and deliver research alongside Welsh Government analysts and policy officers. The lessons learned exercise will be used to help inform how Welsh Government analysts and policy officials can work with stakeholders in the future.

Producing and sharing equality research and lived experience

A programme of work to develop the current evidence base on barriers to employment for disabled people. This comprises of two core projects and ad-hoc evidence support.

The first project is to review evidence published since the 2021 Locked Out report on barriers to employment and ‘what works’ in addressing them. Work on this project is currently underway and scheduled to be completed before the end of 2025. The second ‘core’ project is a survey of small and medium-sized enterprises in Wales, which will gauge employer awareness and understandings of matters relating to the recruitment and retention of disabled employees. Questions for this project were commissioned on the 2025 Spring Business Omnibus Survey delivered by Beaufort. Findings from the survey will be published within a Welsh Government report by autumn 2025.

Together with ad-hoc analytical support across employment policy areas, this programme of work will help to improve the evidence available to decision makers regarding the employment of disabled people, highlighting priority areas to address and informing the direction of related interventions.

Synthesizing and disseminating existing equality evidence

This includes collating published equality statistics for the More Equal Wales chapter in the annual Well-Being of Wales report so stakeholders, citizens, and media to understand trends and challenges facing Wales. It also includes supporting the Welsh Government 2025/26 budget process by compiling equalities evidence to understand the impacts of budget decisions on equality groups as part of the Strategic Integrated Impact Assessment.

Influencing methodological advancements in equality data collection and reporting.

Liaise closely with the Office for National Statistics, the Office for Statistics Regulation and other government departments to contribute to and influence the ongoing development of the equalities evidence landscape. This includes (but is not limited to) future Census development work, GSS harmonisation work-streams, the Future of Population and Migration Statistics (FPMS) and the transformation of the Labour Force Survey ensuring Welsh data needs are considered in developing equality data sources and definitions.

Evidence Units Work Programme 2025-26

Annex A provides a full list of the projects the Evidence Units plan to work on in from June 2025 to June 2026. These have been informed by policy needs as part of the evidence planning process across the four Evidence Units.

Annex A: Evidence Units Work Programme 2025-26

Project	Aim	Team(s)	Publication/ completion
Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan Process and Early Impacts Evaluation	To understand whether ArWAP is being implemented effectively and can be improved. To collect baseline data for use in a future impact evaluation	Race Disparity Evidence Unit	Multiyear project to be commissioned in summer 2025.
ArWAP Dashboard and Metric reporting	To visualise and report data on the ArWAP measurement framework indicators	Race Disparity Evidence Unit	To follow commissioning of process evaluation
Race lived experience projects	To collect qualitative data on the lived experiences of people in Wales and their experiences on various topics related to ArWAP	Race Disparity Evidence Unit	Autumn 2025
Caravan Count review	To review the current online data collection arrangements for Gypsy & Traveller caravans, pitches and sites; and make recommendations as to how the data collection / statistical series can be improved to better meet policy and local authority needs	Equality Statistics Development Unit	Winter 2025
Disabled People's Rights Plan Theory of Change	To outline the intended process through which the Disabled People's Rights Plan will achieve its outcomes and support a subsequent evaluation of the plan	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Spring 2026
Unpopulated Measurement Framework for the Disabled People's Rights Plan	To present the high-level indicators for providing insight on the direction of travel and progress of the DPRP	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Spring 2026
Process Evaluation for the Disabled People's Rights Plan	To assess the early implementation of the Disabled People's Rights Plan, identifying emerging outcomes and any areas for improvement.	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Multiyear project, to be commissioned in 2026.

Project	Aim	Team(s)	Publication/ completion
Barriers to employment for disabled people evidence review	To review evidence on the barriers to employment for disabled people and 'what works' in terms of addressing them	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Winter 2025
Employer Survey – Recruitment and retention of disabled employees	To understand employer perceptions and understandings of disabled people in employment	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Autumn 2025
Develop appropriate questions for how information on Social Model can be collected	To develop a suite of questions, response options, and guidance that reflect the Social Model of Disability, to incorporate into future social research and enable a standardised, consistent approach	Disability Disparity Evidence Unit	Interim report and literature review Summer 2025 Final report Spring 2026
LGBTQ+ Action Plan Process and Early Impacts Evaluation	To understand whether the LGBTQ+ action plan is being implemented effectively and can be improved. To collect baseline data for use in a future impact evaluation	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2027
LGBTQ+ Action Plan Unpopulated Measurement Framework	To present the high-level indicators for providing insight on the direction of travel and progress of the LGBTQ+ Action Plan	Equality Evidence Unit	Winter 2026
Guidance on gender, sex and trans history data collection	To bring coherence on sex, gender and trans history data collection	Equality Evidence Unit	Winter 2026
Strategic Equality and Human Rights Action Plan Unpopulated Measurement Framework	A framework for indicating progress against the National Equality Objectives	Equality Evidence Unit	Spring/summer 2026
Review of the Equality & Inclusion Awareness and Innovation Grants	To understand if the changes to the Equality and Inclusion Grants are helping grant recipients to deliver activities that support equality groups	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2027
Internal summary of equality evidence for budget allocation	To inform the budget process by highlighting the equality impacts of budget decisions	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2025

Project	Aim	Team(s)	Publication/ completion
Well-Being of Wales 2025 – More Equal Wales Chapter	To collate the published equality statistics for the More Equal Wales chapter in the annual Well-Being of Wales report which helps us to assess whether we are making progress across the National Indicators	Equality Statistics Development Unit	Winter 2026
Debt data exploration	To investigate relevant data sources and explore feasibility of collating and publishing data on debt in Wales, broken down by protected characteristics	Equality Statistics Development Unit	Spring 2026
Welsh Government Equality Data Sources and Outputs in 2024/25: follow up with analysts on improvements	To ensure that key findings from statistical article are disseminated and to promote, encourage and reflect ongoing improvements to WG statistical outputs	Equality Statistics Development Unit	Ongoing
National Survey piloting for Respondent Driven Sampling	To investigate how the National Survey for Wales can produce granular results on equality groups and fill gaps on the Measurement Frameworks for the various equality Action Plans	Race Disparity Evidence Unit	Ongoing throughout the contract period
Review of the National Survey: pooled analysis	To analyse National Survey for Wales data and explore the feasibility of using pooled data to produce robust estimates by equality characteristics	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2025
Advisory role: Ethnicity and Disability granular pay gaps	To examine how and whether data on pay gaps can be collected and published for different protected and associated characteristics at a more granular level than currently published	Equality Statistics Development Unit	Spring 2026
Coproduction lessons learned exercise	To understand lessons learned from the piloting of coproduction of research with disabled people in government	Equality Evidence Unit	Spring 2026
Guidance for scoping research to mainstream equality across Welsh Government	Review of how organisations embed mainstreaming equality throughout their	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2025

Project	Aim	Team(s)	Publication/ completion
	organisations to support equality strategies/action plans		
Barriers and Enablers to collecting and reporting on equality data	To understand the barriers and enablers for analysts in Welsh Government to collecting equality data to identify areas of improvement	Equality Evidence Unit	Winter 2026
Guidance – inclusive language when reporting analysis	To provide guidance to Welsh Government analysts so they can appropriately refer to and discuss equality groups in their outputs	Equality Evidence Unit	Summer 2025
Develop strategy for equality mainstreaming across sectors	To improve the consistency and embedding of equality in research across sectors and organisations outside Welsh Government	Equality Evidence Unit	Autumn 2025