



**First Minister's National Advisory
Council on Women and Girls**

Website Summary

March-June 2020 Spotlight: Racism and inequality

**WITH THE VOICES OF
EVERYONE WE WANT TO
CREATE A
SCOTLAND
WHERE WE'RE ALL EQUAL**

**#GENERATION
EQUAL**



YOU SAID – WE LISTENED

During March to June 2020, we invited public feedback on the Spotlight topic of racism and inequality. We'd like to give a huge thank you to everyone who shared their experiences and ideas.

A full report has been given to the NACWG and a summary version is shared below.

Please note: these reports summarise the responses received to this open call for submissions. They do not represent the views of the National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (we are seeking feedback to gain more insight) nor do they represent a majority view or the view of the Scottish population. They represent the views of those organisations or individuals who have chosen, proactively, to respond.

Who did we hear from?

We heard from a range of individuals and groups who held 'Wee Circle' discussions. The Spotlight also prompted discussion on social media. The diversity questions we ask are optional but show that we heard directly from people from different ethnic backgrounds, a range of ages. Sexual orientations and levels of disability.

WE ASKED THREE QUESTIONS:

- Q1. IN SCOTLAND, THERE ARE NO FEMALE MSPS OR SCOTTISH MPS OF VISIBLE MINORITY ETHNICITIES. HOW SHOULD WE ADDRESS THE ISSUES WHICH SUSTAIN SYSTEMS WHICH EXCLUDE MINORITY ETHNIC PEOPLE AND THEIR EXPERIENCES FROM THE MAINSTREAM?**
- Q2. IN SCOTLAND, WE KNOW THAT FOR WOMEN THERE WAS A MINORITY ETHNIC EMPLOYMENT GAP OF 26.8 PERCENTAGE POINTS IN 2018. YET THERE HAS BEEN 30 YEARS OF RACE EQUALITY IN LEGISLATION. WHAT COULD WE DO DIFFERENTLY TO ADDRESS AND CHANGE THE SYSTEMS WHICH CAUSE/RESULT IN THESE ISSUES AND IN THIS DISCRIMINATION?**
- Q3. WHAT ACTIONS SHOULD THE NACWG RECOMMEND TO IMPROVE GENDER EQUALITY FOR MINORITY ETHNIC WOMEN AND GIRLS?**



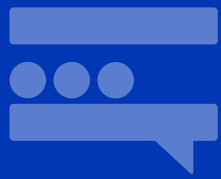
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WHAT DID WE LEARN?

The responses included a very wide range of themes and suggestions.

Some of the feedback was more about diversity and tended to locate the drivers for change within Minority Ethnic communities (with an emphasis on giving women and girls more encouragement and opportunities). Other feedback was more about systemic barriers and institutional racism (with an emphasis on how these systems and power structures need to change, for Minority Ethnic women to have full equality and equity).



MAIN ISSUES



1.

AWARENESS AND ENCOURAGEMENT

Many responses to Q1 focused on actions around making young Minority Ethnic women and girls more aware of opportunities in politics and offering them greater encouragement and support.



2.

SOCIETAL AND SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Some respondents felt that 'encouragement' wasn't enough if there are systemic barriers to Minority Ethnic women accessing and succeeding in political roles. Feedback included reference to the way high profile and powerful Minority Ethnic women can receive a disproportionate amount of 'attack', with race and gender overlapping to become a focal point for racist abuse and threats. This creates far greater safety and wellbeing considerations for a Minority Ethnic woman entering politics, than for a white man.



3.

A FUNDAMENTAL RESISTANCE TO NAMING RACISM FOR WHAT IT IS

Several pieces of feedback highlighted how an unwillingness to name and admit to racism and racist systems allows their effects to persist and prevents the honest discussion needed to bring about meaningful change.



4.

WHITE POLITICIANS DOING MORE TO UNDERSTAND AND REPRESENT MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Several respondents noted that Minority Ethnic communities shouldn't be reliant on representation by someone of their own ethnic group, to have their experiences listened to and issues represented. Feedback suggested white politicians should do more to make sure they are understanding and supporting minority and marginalised groups.



5. MITIGATING ACTION

Respondents shared mixed views on the use of quota systems. Those not in favour felt quotas risked preventing the best candidate getting the job. Those in favour saw quotas as a necessary, temporary step in overcoming societal and organisational racism.



6. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION

School and education were a recurring theme in relation to the Minority Ethnic employment gap and underlying causes.



7. LEGISLATION

Feedback highlighted several limitations around Race Equality legislation. This included concerns around those responsible for applying and upholding the law. Feedback also noted concerns around awareness of, and access to legal support:



8.

BETTER ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SCOTLAND'S HISTORIC RACISM

Some responses identified a need for more acknowledgement and education around Scotland's colonial past, how Scotland was involved in and benefitted from the slave trade, and the lasting impact of this.



9. DATA

Responses touched-on the importance of having the disaggregated data required to identify which part of the system is driving the Minority Ethnic Employment gap. Feedback included concern at the removal of sex-based data collection and the impact this could have on understanding the intersection of race and gender, and the safety of Minority Ethnic women.



10.

EMPLOYER SCRUTINY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Several responses called for employers to be held more accountable. It was also suggested that employers could do more to help Minority Ethnic people with language and visa issues.



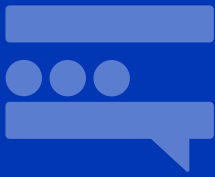
11.

WHITE PEOPLE NEEDING TO RECOGNISE THEY ARE THE PROBLEM

Some respondents highlighted the need for white people to recognise themselves, their biases, and their actions as the problem. Examples included white biases in the workplace with exclude or disadvantage Minority Ethnic people such as scheduling office meals during Ramadan and deeming Afro hair against the rules. The inability or unwillingness of white people to acknowledge themselves as racist was seen as a justification for temporary use of quotas.

Suggested actions reflected the issues above e.g.: focusing on schools and education; listening to and involving Minority Ethnic women and girls; use of quotas to accelerate progress; Government leading by example (e.g. diverse representation in materials); protecting single sex spaces.

Actions were also suggested around: women's committees; racism in the media; understanding racism between minorities in Scotland; delivering culturally sensitive public services; funding inclusion and integration initiatives; more ethnically mixed activities for children; an enquiry into racism and sexism in Scotland; exploring and protecting the benefits of single-sex spaces for Minority Ethnic women; and more positive media role models.



THANK YOU

This is a summary of the responses and can't highlight every individual point raised. However full feedback has been shared with the NACWG.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their feedback – it is valuable. We'd love as many people as possible to share their ideas on our next Spotlight topics. We have a new one every two months.