

National Statement And Action Plan On Race Equality

The development of a National Statement and Action Plan was one of the recommendations made following the Executive's comprehensive and wide ranging review of race equality, which reported in November 2005. The Statement will set out the vision, basis and direction for our future work on race equality, and the action plan will outline what the Scottish Government will do and when, including around ethnic minorities and the labour market, Gypsies/Travellers, race equality in rural areas, and refugee integration. These specific policy areas were highlighted in the review of race equality as areas requiring more dedicated work and action. Four Strategic Groups were therefore established by the Government to prepare action plans. The reports have now been finalised and will inform the Government's Action Plan. (For this reason the groups' reports will be published simultaneously with the National Statement and Action Plan.)

Earlier this year, the former Minister for Communities decided to postpone publication of the Statement and Action Plan until the next parliamentary session as it was clear from feedback from internal and external stakeholders (following a consultation event in December 2006) that the Strategy would benefit from further development. In addition, the Minister wanted to take the opportunity to carry out more consultation and discussion, which was called for by many stakeholders.

Following the election, it has been necessary to tie this work in with the Spending Review and other internal ongoing work around the development of outcomes and indicators to support our 5 Strategic Objectives. It is important that the Statement and action plan is positioned within the context of this new work.

Work is being undertaken to revise the draft Statement with a view to issuing it for further consultation in early 2008.

[NB- it has been changed from a Strategy to a Statement because the Scottish Government will be reviewing and republishing its wider Equality Strategy in 2008 which will include race equality. Our strategy for race equality and community cohesion should rightly be considered and positioned within the wider equality context and therefore we will publish a statement on race equality alongside the action plan and not a strategy].

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