

EHRC: Great Britain Strategic approach

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The Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission for Great Britain is both a national equality body and an 'A' status National Human Rights Institution (NHRI).



Who we are: our vision and purpose

Our vision

A society built on the foundations of equality and human rights, improving everyone's lives and helping people in Britain live well together

Our purpose

To promote and uphold equality and human rights laws and standards across England, Scotland and Wales, so that everyone gets a fair chance in life

How we work

In everything we do, we pride ourselves on being independent, authoritative and agile.

Our legal duties

We enforce the Equality Act 2010, which is our primary legalisation, making it unlawful to discriminate against individuals based on the protected characteristics of:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation.

Our legal duties

- **Advise** central and devolved governments on the effectiveness of equality and human rights laws
- **Measure and report** on progress toward equality and human rights outcomes
- **Promote understanding** and good practice in relation to equality
- **Work to end unlawful discrimination and harassment** and **enforce** the Equality Act
- **Protect and promote** human rights.

Our powers

- **Provide expert advice** equality and human rights to policy-makers and legislators
- **Undertake research** to improve understanding of human rights and equality issues, and the effectiveness of interventions
- **Hold organisations to account** and **undertake strategic litigation** to clarify the law or drive change across a particular sector or issue
- Provide **information and guidance** to support organisations to comply with equality and human rights obligations.

Enforcement

Where necessary we can use our unique powers to take action to:

- **Conduct investigations** into breaches of the Equality Act 2010
- **Make legally binding recommendations** and enter **agreements** with organisations on actions they need to take
- **Assess compliance** with the Public Sector Equality Duty, and issue notices
- **Provide legal assistance**, intervene in legal cases and bring our own legal cases.

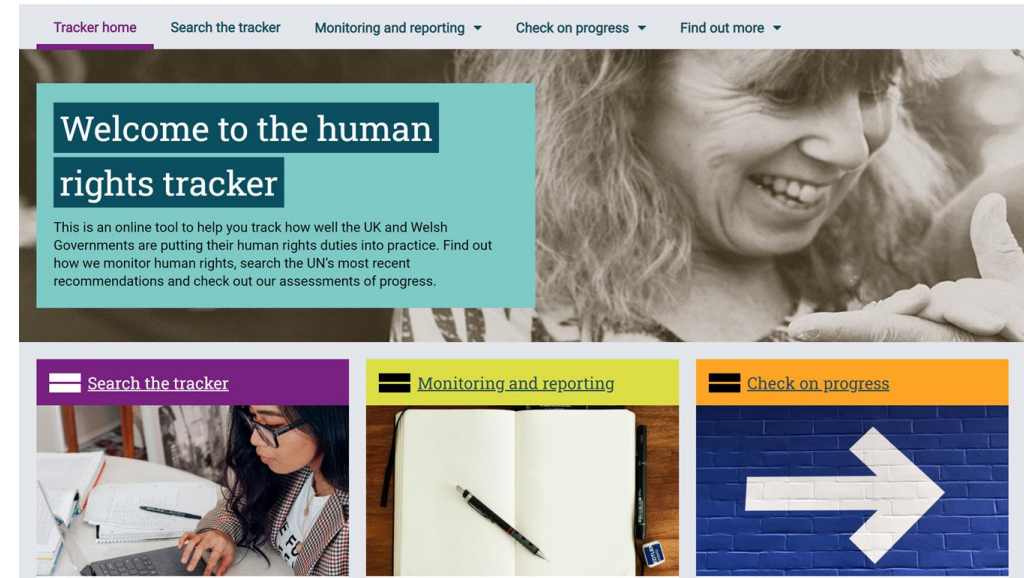
Human rights monitoring

We promote, monitor and report on seven UN treaties signed by the UK as well as feeding into the UPR

We also help civil society organisations understand their rights and support them to engage with UN human rights processes

Our online tool www.humanrightstracker.com sets out how well the UK and Welsh Governments are putting their human rights duties into practice.

It is used by civil society organisations to use international human rights standards to hold our governments to account.



Where we work

Our role extends across Great Britain – in England, Scotland and Wales.

This means we have three Governments and our work needs to take into account the different devolved contexts in each nation.

Our human rights work in Scotland covers issues that relate to matters reserved to the UK Government. The Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC) covers devolved matters, such as health and education. We work closely with the SHRC where we have a shared interest in improving human rights on specific issues.

We regularly collaborate with SHRC and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, most recently on a joint statement on human rights and climate change to mark the COP 26 climate change summit in Glasgow.

Strategic Approach

Strategic approach

‘Is Britain Fairer?’ evidence base: produced every three years to assess the state of equality and human rights in Britain and help us to identify the biggest issues

Treaty Shadow Reports: used to inform our own strategic planning as well as influence national policy

Strategic Plan: produced every three years to typically follow ‘Is Britain Fairer?’, consulted on with stakeholders to check our thinking, especially where there are data gaps. Allows us to focus, but also to act with agility.

Business Plan: produced annually to outline the work that we will deliver to fulfil our Strategic Plan objectives.

Developing our Strategic Plan

In developing our last draft strategic plan we considered...

- Internal review of evidence through our Measurement Framework.
- Mapping where our existing work has ongoing relevance.
- Consideration of implications for different protected characteristic groups.
- Assessment of the key human rights and equality challenges facing Great Britain, and where we think we can bring our powers to bear to have impact.
- Early and light-touch engagement with some key stakeholders with emphasis on ensuring we do not duplicate work.

Principles of our approach

Agile: We are able to move and adapt quickly to respond effectively to emerging issues.

Balanced: We take a balanced approach to responsive and planned work, as well as to how we collect, collate and present evidence.

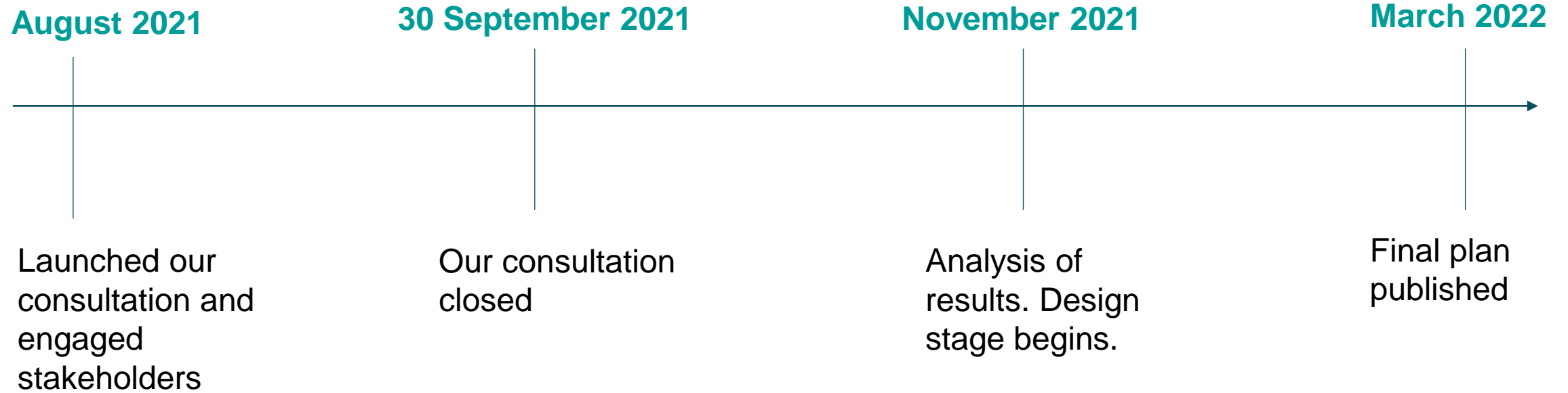
Cross-cutting: We work to better identify and address overlapping and intersecting rights and equality issues.

Collaborative: We work together with partners to enhance response and delivery and avoid duplication.

Our current proposed areas of focus

- Upholding an effective framework for protecting equality and human rights
- Fairness for children and young people
- Upholding rights and equality in health and social care
- Fairness in a changing workplace
- Fostering good relations, promoting respect between groups and understanding of rights
- Artificial Intelligence and emerging digital technologies

Timeline



Questions & Answers