

Scotland's New Human Rights Bill

Have Your Say!

Scotland's New Human Rights Bill, Have Your Say

Tuesday 11th July, Village Hotel Glasgow

CEMVO Scotland is a national intermediary organisation and strategic partner of the Scottish Government Equality Unit. Our aim is to build the capacity and sustainability of the ethnic minority (EM) voluntary sector and its communities. Since being established in 2003, we have developed a database network of over 600 ethnic minority voluntary sector organisations throughout Scotland to which we deliver a wide range of programmes that provide capacity building support to the sector.

As a national organisation, we continually engage with the EM voluntary sector and its communities, which enable us to gather intelligence about the needs and issues affecting the sector. This helps our organisation to deliver tailored support to the sector, and to work strategically with public, statutory, and government agencies to tackle a range of prevalent issues such as race equality, social inclusion, capacity building and civic participation.

One of our core programmes at CEMVO Scotland is the Race for Human Rights. The aim of this programme is to support public bodies and third sector organisations to embed race equality and human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions. This is achieved by adopting an anti-racist and human rights-based approach.

Working with colleagues within CEMVO Scotland's Ethnic Minority Environmental Network(EMEN), our Human Rights Officer has designed and delivered a targeted community engagement event to collect qualitative data to inform CEMVO Scotland's public response to Scotland's New Human Rights Bill. Our event was exclusive to people from EM backgrounds and EM led-organisations.

To help promote trust within communities, we were delighted to have representatives from the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill Team and the Race Equality team from the Equality and Human Rights Directorate.

There were three key topics for the event:

- 1) The Rights to a Healthy Environment
- 2) Public participation and Capacity Building
- 3) Racism, human rights and access to justice

To ensure meaningful engagement, each participant was provided with a briefing pack which provided background information on human rights and the right to a healthy environment. Together with brief presentations from both our Human Rights Officer and Environmental Officer outlining the value of incorporation and what it may look like, this ensured informed decision making.

After speakers presented, participants were asked to split into three breakout groups. Each group had a different topic with a facilitator and notetaker. Facilitators moved to different groups twice to ensure that every attendee responded to all topics.

The aim of the breakout groups was to encourage participants to have their views, opinions and feelings reflected in CEMVO Scotland's consultation response to the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill Consultation. These discussions were solution-focused as much as possible, although recognising that it might not always be appropriate. It was also important for facilitators to gather qualitative evidence, focusing on experiences, stories, opinions and feelings of participants.

This report summarises discussion on Topic 2 and 3 (Public participation and Capacity Building; Racism, human rights and access to justice)

Topic 2

Public participation and capacity building

- Key parts of the implementation and making rights real, are public participation and capacity building of duty-bearers. This is outlined in the proposed Human Rights Scheme. What are some key points the Scottish Government must follow for this to be inclusive.

Prompting questions

- What has your experience of participating/engaging with Scottish Government?
- What do you think are the challenges in public participation
- What could Scottish Government do to increase participation/engagement with EM communities, particularly around minimum core obligations.
- How can the Scottish Government and partners effectively build capacity across the public sector to ensure the rights in the Bill are delivered?
- The Human rights scheme also aims to raise awareness of rights and provide effective information to rights-holders, how can the Scottish Government do this effectively?

Incorporation

- Do you think incorporation could improve inequalities?

Prompting questions

- What do you think about incorporating more rights into legislation?
- Do you think incorporation of rights into Scots Law will make positive changes

Responses:

All participants were invited to share their thoughts, feelings and experiences about the above topic. There were clear trends in responses across all three groups. Firstly, there were calls on engaging with the elders of the community to ensure their voices and needs are heard

but also recognising their intergenerational influence. This however should not be an exhaustive approach, it still must be recognised that elders don't reflect the views of the whole community. Another key theme was requests for a blended approach to engagement that includes being flexible in terms of hosting events online and in person, geographical areas and how the event is advertised e.g including mosques community centres.

In terms of capacity building, it was clear that capacity building should be mandatory for Scottish Government representatives and facilitators on how to engage effectively with EM communities.

Another key theme was power. Recognising the power of community leaders to help promote events, acknowledging that participation is power and this power must be shared and reflecting common attitudes from duty-bearers who also power of duty-bearers.

Finally, participants stated that de Additionally it was noted that it is vital that the younger generation are involved in the process and that people need to be made aware of what their rights are e.g right to access translated documents.

Topic 3

Racism and human rights

- a. Do you think racism, racial discrimination is linked to human rights?

Prompting Questions

- Do you think racism is viewed as a human rights issue in society?
- Do you think there would be value on framing racism as a human rights issue
- What do you think would be required to change how racism is viewed, i.e for it to be seen as a human rights issue

Access to justice

- a. The consultation proposes to reform front line complaints handling of public bodies to improve our access to justice, what do you think needs to change to see improvements?

Prompting questions

- What has your experience been of complaints handling in a public forum, school, hospital etc?
- Do you think incorporating more rights into legislation will improve front-line complaint handling?

Responses

Participants were clear that there is a 'fundamental link' between racism and human rights as it is an 'infringement of dignity'. However there were clear messages that in reality human rights were seen as a privilege and not for 'us'. In each group, participants spoke about the need for change for the new Human Rights Bill to have impact. For example, in terms of the power duty-bearers hold over people on a day to day basis and who is responsible for their accountability. Furthermore, participants felt that the 'system is broken' and is 'too prescriptive', meaning that if you are not able to fit into a 'mould' then you can't access

services. Participants felt that the system must change for meaningful impact of the legislation and that people must know their rights and ‘how to work the system’.

In terms of access to justice and front line complaint handling, three key words emerged from the groups: anonymity, transparency and less victimisation. In each group there were clear patterns of mistrust amongst complaints systems, e.g. going round in circles in the complaints system and ending back at the beginning with no progress and where do you go when it’s the institution you are complaining about such as the Police. Again participants highlighted the impact of lack of diverse workforce of public institutions has on complaints handling process and trust within institutions. Although one participants highlighted that there can sometimes be ‘diversity delusion’ in that the responsibility is solely on the one ‘diverse’ individual from both the community and the institution meaning that they can become isolated from their own racial community. Participants suggested that their should be particular trained staff on anti-discrimination and human rights complaints.

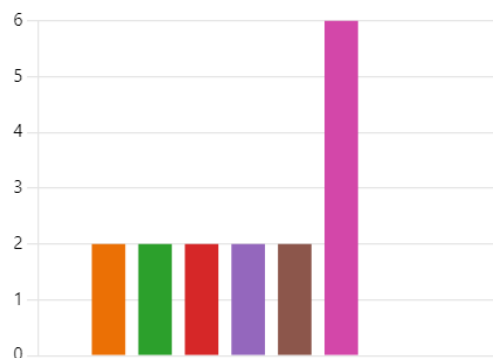
Participant Data

On the day of the event, sixteen participants attended. Participants at the event were asked to complete an Equal Opportunities form to allow CEMVO to evidence quantitative data on the demographic of participants. Twelve participants (75%) completed the Equal Opportunities form.

1. What is your age?

[More Details](#)

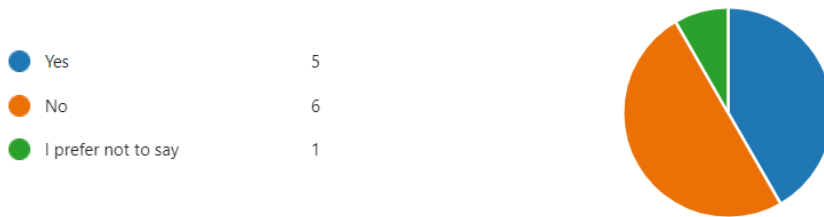
● Up to and including 24 years	0
● 25-34 years	2
● 35-44 years	2
● 35-44 years	2
● 45-54 years	2
● 45-54 years	2
● 55-64 years	6
● 65-74 years	0
● 75+ years	0
● I prefer not to say	0



- 16.6% of participants were aged 25-34 years old
- 16.6% of participants were aged 35-44 years old
- 16.6% of participants were aged 45-54 years old
- 50% of participants were aged 55-64 years old

2. Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term health condition?

[More Details](#)



42% of participants described themselves as having a disability or long-term health condition

50% of participants described themselves as not having a disability or long-term health condition

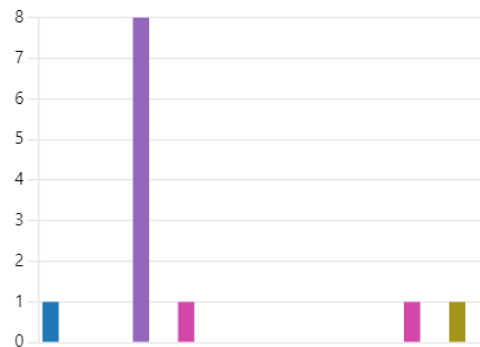
8% of participants preferred not to say

4. How would you describe your ethnicity

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

White Scottish	1
White British	0
Irish	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
Black Caribbean	0
Black African	0
Polish	0
Arab	0
Gypsy or Traveller	0
Irish	0
Roma	0
Showman/Showwoman	0
White and Black Caribbean	0



● White and Black Caribbean	0
● White and Black African	1
● White and Asian	0
● I would like to self-describe my ...	1
● I prefer not to say	0

5. Please describe your ethnicity

[More Details](#)

1
Responses

Latest Responses
"White german"

66% of participants described their ethnicity as Pakistani

8% of participants described themselves as Chinese

8% of participants described themselves as White Scottish

8% of participants described themselves as White and Black African

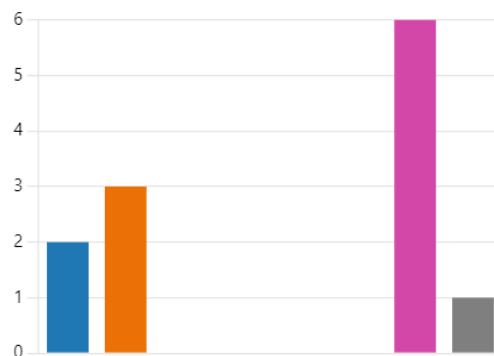
8% of participants preferred to self-describe

6. What is your gender?

Cisgender means that your gender identity matches the biological sex you were assigned at birth

[More Details](#)

● Cisgender Man	2
● Cisgender Woman	3
● Non-binary	0
● Transgender Man	0
● Transgender Woman	0
● Agender	0
● Prefer not to say	6
● Self describe	1



17% of participants described themselves as a Cisgender man

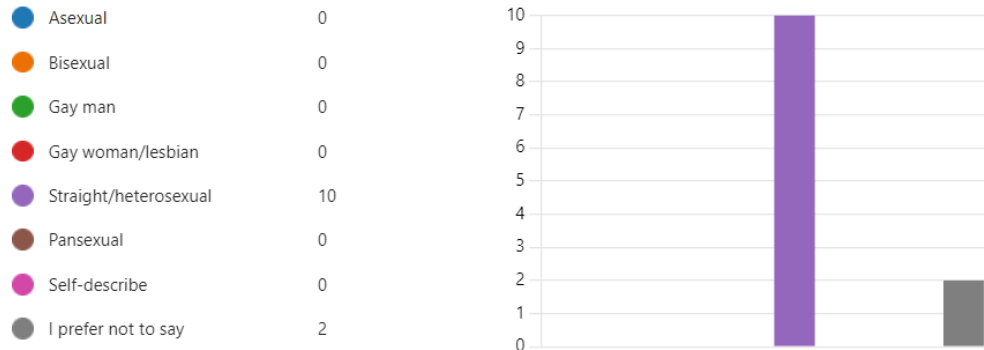
25% of participants described themselves as a Cisgender woman

50% of participants preferred not to disclose their gender identity

8% of participants preferred to self-describe their gender identity as 'Male'

8. Which of the following describes your sexual orientation?

[More Details](#)



83% of participants described their sexual orientation as Straight/heterosexual

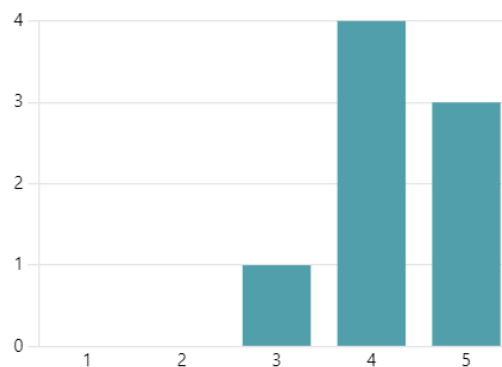
17% of participants preferred not to disclose their sexual orientation

After the event we asked participants to complete an Evaluation Form on how found the event. Eight participants responded.

1. How would you rate the information provided?

[More Details](#)

4.25
Average Rating



The average rating for the event was 4.25 out of 5: 38% rated 5 out of 5; 50% 4 out of 5 and 13% 1 out of 5.

2. How would you rate today's event?

[More Details](#)

● Excellent	4
● Very good	4
● Good	0
● Fair	0
● Poor	0

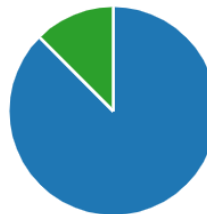


Overall, participants described the event as excellent or very good (50% respectively)

3. After attending this event, are you more confident in your understanding of human rights?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	7
● No	0
● Maybe	1



88% of participants felt that they were more confident in their understanding of human rights as a result of the event.

4. Did your knowledge of human rights increase because of this event?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	7
● No	1
● Maybe	0



88% of participants stated that their knowledge and understanding of human rights had increased as a result of the event. 12%(1 person) stated that it had not.

When participants were asked to share one thing that they had learned at the event, the following responses were received:

- The new Bill
- In a systemic way
- A lot
- Environmental rights
- Sharing resources
- A right to healthy environment

When asked what would have helped improved their knowledge, participants responded:

- Specific issues
- Learning from people
- More material before the event
- More lived experience

7. Do you feel your views were heard at today's event?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	8
● No	0
● Maybe	0



100% of participants felt that their views were heard at the event

8. Do you feel more involved with influencing public policy/legislation?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	6
● No	0
● Maybe	2



75% of participants felt more involved with influencing public policy/legislation, 25% were unsure, as a result of the event.

If you would like more detail or discuss future collaborations please get in touch:

You can find out more about the Race for Human Rights consultancy programme at:

<https://www.cemvoscotland.org.uk/programmes/r4hr>

or contact Clare at

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