
Iain Bell | Deputy National Statistician and Director
General for Population & Public Policy

Rt Hon Maria Miller MP
Chair, Women and Equalities Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

25 October 2018

Dear Mrs Miller,

In my response to the Committee's report on the Race Disparity Audit of 7 August, I agreed that we would keep the Committee updated on the progress of the Office for National Statistics (ONS) equalities data audit.

I am pleased to inform the Committee that today the Centre for Equalities and Inclusion have published our final report on this¹ which considers the state of existing evidence across all the protected characteristics specified in the Equality Act 2010. As described in my previous letter, we convened a working group to assess the extent of the current evidence base from the range of sources available; this group included representatives from across government, including the Government Equalities Office, the Equality and Human Rights Commission and the Race Disparity Unit.

Our work on the audit together with discussions with users illustrated a number of issues with the existing evidence base. These relate to accessibility, coverage and comprehensiveness of the data, granularity, harmonisation and inclusiveness in data collection and reporting. While some of these issues reflect gaps in the evidence base in relation to specific areas for protected characteristic groups, some reflect a lack of even basic information on specific groups.

This audit is our starting point. We will continue work to include additional sources and to ensure its comprehensiveness. Our next steps will be to consider the findings with our partners across government, academia, business and the third sector, to prioritise and take appropriate action. We will also be considering ways to make the audit more accessible to users.

I will continue to keep the Committee updated on our progress and would welcome your feedback, in particular regarding how the Centre may take into account the Committee's priorities when developing our future workplans. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Iain Bell

Deputy National Statistician and Director General, Population and Public Policy
Office for National Statistics

¹ ONS, October 2018, [Equalities Data Audit, Final Report](#)