

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee
Tuesday 13 January 2026
1st Meeting, 2026 (Session 6)

Inquiry into the operation of the Public Sector Equality Duty in Scotland (PSED)

Overview

1. The [public sector equality duty](#) (PSED) is a legal requirement for public authorities and organisations carrying out public functions (private or voluntary sector contracted to work on behalf of public authorities).
2. The purpose of the PSED is to make sure that public authorities and organisations carrying out public functions think about how they can improve society and promote equality.
3. The Committee agreed to an inquiry on the operation of the public sector equality duty on 17 December 2024.
4. It launched a [call for views](#) on 7 February 2025 closing on 28 February 2025. The Committee received [51 responses](#).
5. The Committee held three evidence sessions in the course of the inquiry. The [first session](#) was with public authorities, [the second](#) was with equality organisations and the [third session](#) was with the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) and the Scottish Government.
6. The Committee had intended to consider a draft report in April 2025, on Parliament's return from Easter recess. However, the Committee agreed to delay consideration of a draft report in light of the issuing of the Supreme Court's judgment in *For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers* on 16 April 2025.
7. The Committee ultimately published [a report on 30 September 2025](#). The Committee subsequently received a [response to the report from the Scottish Government](#) on 16 December 2025.
8. At today's meeting, the Committee will take evidence from the EHRC and the Scottish Government on the response to the report. Specifically, the Committee will hear from:

Panel 1

- John Wilkes, Head of Scotland, Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland; and
- Jennifer Laughland, Head of Scotland Legal, Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland.

Panel 2

- Kaukab Stewart, Minister for Equalities;
- Nick Bland, Deputy Director, Mainstreaming and Inclusion, Scottish Government; and
- Vuyi Stutley, Solicitor, Legal Directorate, Scottish Government.

Committee consideration

9. The Committee is asked to note the information provided above.

Clerks to the Committee
January 2026