

Is Britain Fairer?

Assessing the evidence and identifying the gaps

Date Wednesday 2 December 2015

Time 13.50 – 16.00

Venue CASE
London School of Economics
and Political Science (LSE)
Room 104, 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields
London WC2A 3PH

Organiser



Equality and Diversity Forum

www.edf.org.uk | www.edfresearch.org.uk

in collaboration with



Equality and Human Rights Commission

www.equalityhumanrights.com

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Background

We live in a country with a long history of upholding people's rights, valuing diversity and challenging intolerance. This is because fairness, dignity and respect are values that we all share.

Because we hold these values dear, we have laws to protect us from discrimination and defend our basic rights as human beings. These laws are promoted and enforced by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. As part of its duties, the Commission is required to provide Parliament and the nation with five-yearly reports on equality and human rights progress in England, Scotland and Wales.

In 2010, the Commission produced its first equality progress report, *How Fair is Britain?* This was followed by a separate human rights progress report, the *Human Rights Review*, in 2012.

On 30 October 2015 the Equality and Human Rights Commission published a landmark follow-on report on both equality and human rights progress, entitled ***Is Britain Fairer?*** (available from www.equalityhumanrights.com/IsBritainFairer).

The report was the biggest ever national study of the state of equality and human rights undertaken, not just in Britain, but worldwide.

To answer its eponymous question, the Commission's *Is Britain Fairer?* team undertook an intensive, systematic 18-month review in consultation with government, academic, business and voluntary sectors partners.

The review employed robust measurement frameworks to assess equality and human rights progress across ten domains relevant to twenty-first century life in Great Britain. The evidence captured for each domain was published in a series of evidence papers. These were accompanied by three supporting papers – a context paper, methodology paper and technical paper – which provided the necessary background to the review (all are available at www.equalityhumanrights.com/IsBritainFairer).

In total, the Commission published nearly 2,000 pages of evidence.

The report presented to Parliament outlined the key findings and, based on the collected evidence, identified eight key equality and human rights challenges for Great Britain over the coming years.

The identified challenges were as follows:

1. **Improve the evidence** and the ability to assess how fair society is.
2. Raise standards and close attainment gaps in **education**.
3. Encourage fair recruitment, development and reward in **employment**.
4. Support improved **living conditions** in cohesive communities.
5. Encourage **democratic participation** and ensure **access to justice**.
6. Improve access to **mental health** services and support for those experiencing (or at risk of experiencing) poor mental health.
7. Prevent **abuse, neglect and ill-treatment in care and detention**.
8. Tackle targeted **harassment and abuse** of people who share particular protected characteristics.

This seminar is the first opportunity for the research community to hear from the team behind *Is Britain Fairer?* and to explore how the Commission's periodic review may be used to improve understanding of equality and human rights in Britain.

Agenda

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| 13.50 – 14.00 | Registration (tea and coffee will be available) |
| 14.00 – 14.05 | Welcome and introductions by seminar chair Asif Afridi, brap and EDF |
| 14.05 – 14.50 | <i>The Is Britain Fairer?</i> report, review methodology and related work by the EHRC's Colin Douglas and Dr Verena Brähler |
| 14.50 – 15.10 | How academics and researchers can use <i>Is Britain Fairer?</i> by Dr Polly Vizard, CASE, LSE and Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard, Runnymede Trust |
| 15.10 – 15.50 | Panel discussion structured around the following questions: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What does <i>Is Britain Fairer?</i> tell us about the challenges for research – and researchers – on equality and human rights?2. How can the research community address gaps in the evidence base on equality and human rights?3. What would we like to see from the follow-up work by the Commission - particularly planned protected characteristic-specific progress reports? |
| 15:50 – 16:00 | Closing remarks and way forward |

Speakers

Asif Afridi (seminar chair)

Asif is Vice-chair of the Equality and Diversity Forum and the Deputy CEO at brap, a national equality and human rights advisory organisation based in Birmingham.

Asif is a published researcher focusing principally on issues of human rights and equalities. Before joining brap he worked with the European Commission in China and Belgium in the field of human rights. Recent published research work has focused on issues of: deprivation; social networks; social cohesion; inequalities in political representation; and regulating for human rights protection in the UK.

Colin Douglas

Colin is interim programme director for the 'Is Britain Review?' review – the Equality and Human Rights Commission's five-yearly statutory review of equality and human rights in Britain. Before this, he was interim director of communications for the Commission.

Until 2013, Colin worked for the Department of Health as Director of Communications for the NHS and was a member of the NHS Management Board. In 2012 he was seconded to NHS England as its first director of communications to set up of its communications function and oversee its launch. He left in 2013 to become self-employed, focusing on interim work. Before joining the Department of Health he was Director of Communications for the Health & Safety Executive from 2004 to 2008. Prior to this he held the same position with the Audit Commission, and similar Board positions with Sport England and Transport for London.

Dr Verena Brähler

Verena is Head of the 'Is Britain Fairer?' review at the Equality and Human Rights Commission which she joined in 2014. She has a PhD degree in Security & Human Rights from University College London and has previously worked as a Rule of Law Intern for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna and as a Policy Analyst for the International Council on Security and Development in Rio de Janeiro and London. Her research interests include human rights, equality/inequality, security, crime prevention, law enforcement, criminal justice, organised crime, terrorism, insurgent groups and violence.

Dr Polly Vizard

Polly is Associate Professorial Research Fellow at the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard

Debbie is Head of Research at the Runnymede Trust where she has worked since 2005 (as a Policy and Research Analyst). Debbie has significant policy and research experience in the areas of equality, diversity and widening participation. Her recent publications include oral history work exploring the contribution of Asian NHS staff to the health service, Runnymede reports exploring the impact of changes to the National Curriculum on the teaching and learning of diversity in schools, the relationship of race equality to Widening Participation policies in higher education and re-examining the persistent gaps in rates of school exclusion for minority ethnic pupils and their white counterparts.

About the organisers

Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF), EDF Research Network and Equally Ours

The Equality and Diversity Forum (EDF) is the network of national non-governmental organisations committed to equal opportunities, good community relations, respect for human rights and an end to discrimination. Our vision is of a society where everyone can fulfil their potential and make their distinct contribution; a society where diversity is celebrated, people can express their identities free from the threat of violence and everyone is treated with dignity and respect; a society where your chance to flourish is not limited by who you are or where you come from.

To help achieve this vision we have three strategic goals:

1. To build the capability of the voluntary and community sector to advance equality and human rights.
2. To help make a reality of equality and human rights by informing policy and practice.
3. To build support for equality and human rights by influencing public debate.

The EDF eNewsletter reaches over 4,700 subscribers, providing information about a wide range of policy, legislation, activities, publications, events, vacancies and funding opportunities for organisations and individuals concerned with equality and human rights.

The EDF Research Network is a multi-disciplinary equality and human rights network bringing together academics, policy makers, NGOs and funders to inform and improve policy and legislation. The Network has approximately 300 members and associate members. It is a collaborative project supported by leading equality and human rights academics and coordinated by EDF.

Equally Ours is a project led by EDF in partnership with other national charities to show the importance of human rights and how they benefit us all.

See www.edf.org.uk and www.edfresearch.org.uk for more information, to subscribe to EDF's eNewsletter or to join the EDF Research Network.

See www.equally-ours.org.uk/ for information about EDF's human rights project.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission

The Equality and Human Rights Commission is a statutory body established under the Equality Act 2006. It is an independent body responsible for protecting and promoting equality and human rights in Great Britain. It aims to encourage equality and diversity, eliminate unlawful discrimination, and promote and protect human rights. The Commission enforces equality legislation on age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It encourages compliance with the Human Rights Act 1998 and is accredited by the UN as an 'A status' National Human Rights Institution.

Registered participants*

Name	Organisation
Asif Afridi	brap
Prof Lizzie Barmes	Queen Mary University of London
Fiona Bartels-Ellis	British Council
Fay Bartram	Stonewall
Jane Becker	Ministry of Justice
Dr Verena Brähler	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Dr John Brennan	LSE
Dr Irene Bucelli	LSE
Dr Tania Burchardt	LSE
Daniel Button	New Economics Foundation
Radhika Bynon	Young Foundation
Jenny Chanfreau	LSE
Collette Cork-Hurst	Arts Council England
Ruth Craven	London Borough of Camden
Chris Curtis	YouGov
Malen Davies	NatCen
Colin Douglas	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Dr Moira Dustin	EDF Research Network
Sigrid Fisher	University of Cambridge
Lisa Greensill	LVSC
Jenny Gulliford	London Councils
Moussa Haddad	Child Poverty Action Group
Scarlet Harris	TUC
Ali Harris	Equality and Diversity Forum
Dr Catherine Harris	University of Sheffield
Prof Anthony Heath	University of Oxford
Jennifer Holroyd	Voluntary Action Islington
Dr Erica Howard	Middlesex University
Poornima Karunacadacharan	Race on the Agenda

Name	Organisation
Berhanu Kassayie	Praxis
Preeti Kathrecha	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Michael Keating	
Richard Keyte	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Dr Omar Khan	Runnymede Trust
David Kingman	Intergenerational Foundation
Laura Kudrna	LSE
Prof Nicola Lacey	LSE
Erica Licht	LSE
Luis Lopez Reichling	LSE
Jamiesha Majevalia	British Academy
Joyce Mamode	University of Warwick
Rosa Marvell	Institute for Employment Studies
Adam McDonnell	YouGov
Emma McKay	Young Women's Trust
Andy McKeown	Scope
Emran Mian	Social Market Foundation
Dr Janna Miletski	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Dr Martin Mitchell	NatCen
Gay Moon	Equality and Diversity Forum
Tim Morgan	Government Equalities Office
Dr Karim Murji	Open University
Dr Alita Nandi	University of Essex
Prof Jacqueline O'Reilly	University of Brighton
Jennifer Panting	Equality Challenge Unit
Dr Natalia Paszkiewicz	Independent Academic Research Studies (IARS)
Prof Diane Perrons	LSE
Ilenia Piergallini	Early Intervention Foundation
Daniel Quirke	London Councils
Jiwan Raheja	Independent consultant
Prof Sheila Riddell	University of Edinburgh
Dr Heather Rolfe	National Institute of Economic and Social Research
Clara Inez Rubiano	LSE

Name	Organisation
Jon Simmons	Home Office
Jessica Southgate	4Children
Christopher Thoung	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Prof Mathias	University of Roehampton
Janet Veitch	Women's Budget Group/Equality and Diversity Forum
Dr Marc Verlot	Equality and Human Rights Commission
Dr Polly Vizard	LSE
Phil Ware	University of Birmingham
Dr Debbie Weekes-Bernard	Runnymede Trust/Equality and Diversity Forum
Bill Wells	
Jon White	Department for Communities and Local Government
Chris Whitwell	Friends, Families and Travellers
Nicola Wildash	YouGov

* Participants registered to attend as at 25 November.

