

# **Corporate Plan 2013/14**



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## Chair and CEO's introduction

This is the second annual corporate plan under which the Commission will deliver the priorities set out in our 2012/15 strategic plan. It builds on work from the previous year as well as new areas which will support these strategic priorities and help to deliver real progress on equality and human rights.

After a period of uncertainty as a result of government reviews of the Commission we are now in a much more stable position. We have an agreed budget for the next two years and a new framework document defining our relationship with government. We also have a new chair, deputy chair and board in place to oversee the Commission's work.

The Commission has a number of statutory duties and powers which provide the basis for our 2013/14 corporate plan. These include providing legal assistance to victims of discrimination and undertaking strategic litigation to support the clarification of the law; providing codes and guidance on equality and human rights; regulating and enforcing relevant legislation; and monitoring and promoting respect for human rights, the latter forming part of our role as a UN National Human Rights Institution.

The Commission's work will also build on the programme of activities we carried out in 2012/13. This includes following up on our statutory assessment of the 2010 spending review. We are working with departments across government to help to ensure future financial decision making is fair.

We will also work with local authorities, public and private sector providers and other regulators to implement the conclusions of our previous statutory inquiries into the provision of home care to vulnerable people; disability related harassment; and the treatment of vulnerable workers.

Over the last 18 months, the Commission has worked with various police forces to improve their use of stop and search, and we will extend this area of work over the next year by showing how other forces can continue to reduce crime while improving their equality and human rights performance.

The Commission will follow up on our earlier research into how female non-executive directors are appointed to corporate boards, by widening our focus to look at the talent pool more generally and to ways in which women can be encouraged to advance their careers. We will also work more generally with the private sector to identify and address issues which affect businesses' ability to recruit and manage staff, and deliver services competitively.

Having considered which equality and human rights issues could most effectively be addressed by the Commission, the board has agreed that the Commission should develop proposals for a formal Section 16 Inquiry to examine policy and practice in care homes and hospitals that focuses on the deprivation of liberty for people who lack capacity, and the effectiveness of safeguards currently in use.

Following the decision by Parliament to activate the provision that refers to caste in the Equality Act, we will undertake research into caste issues in this country and make recommendations.

The Commission will also respond to the conclusions of the government review of the Public Sector Equality Duty, when it reports.

The Commission's ability to deliver has been helped by the many improvements which we have been making to how we work. As well as achieving stability in our budget and staffing for the next two years, we have improved our corporate governance and have built a track record of strong financial management.

We have significantly reduced costs to the taxpayer by reorganising our office accommodation across England, Scotland and Wales to save more than £1m a year and have reduced our reliance on interim managers, also saving £1m annually. Overall, we have achieved total efficiencies of £6m on our core operations.

We are keen to continue to build our partnerships with other organisations, fellow regulators, business and employers, and others who can help improve the ways in which equality standards and respect for human rights are achieved. We will be working hard to demonstrate our commitment to genuine and constructive partnerships which deliver shared aims and objectives.

The Commission has a valuable role to play in helping Britain become a fairer country, particularly where we target our resources to the best effect and work closely with others to deliver results. This corporate plan is an opportunity for others to see where we believe we can achieve this outcome and where they can work with us to make a real and lasting difference.



**Baroness Onora  
O'Neill of Bengarve**

*Onora O'Neill*



**Mark Hammond**

*Mark Hammond.*

## **Purpose, powers and duties**

The Commission's purpose is to protect and promote equality and human rights, and it has been given a range of statutory powers and duties, which are set out in the Equality Acts. As a UN National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) it operates in accordance with the Paris Principles. It is also a National Equality Body (NEB) as mandated by the European Union Equal Treatment Directive<sup>1</sup>.

### **Equality Act 2006**

#### **General duty**

The Commission's general duty is to exercise its functions with a view to encouraging and supporting the development of a society in which: people's ability to achieve their potential is not limited by prejudice or discrimination; there is respect for and protection of each individual's human rights; there is respect for the dignity and worth of each individual; each individual has an equal opportunity to participate in society; and there is mutual respect between groups based on understanding and valuing of diversity and on shared respect for equality and human rights.

#### **Equality and diversity**

The Commission is also under a duty to: promote understanding of the importance of equality and diversity; encourage good practice in relation to equality and diversity; promote equality of opportunity; promote awareness and understanding of rights under the Equality Acts; enforce the Equality Acts; work towards the elimination of unlawful discrimination; and work towards the elimination of unlawful harassment.

#### **Paris Principles**

The Paris Principles were adopted by the UN National Human Rights Institution and by the UN General Assembly in its Resolution.

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<sup>1</sup> Directive 2000/43/EC of 29 June 2000 implementing the principle of equal treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, Directive 2002/73/EC amending Council Directive 76/207/ECC on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions (now Recast Directive 2006/54/EC), Directive 2004/113/EC of 13 December 2004 implementing the principle of equal treatment between men and women in the access to and supply of goods and services.

They relate to the status and functioning of national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights:

“First, the institution shall monitor any situation of violation of human rights which it decides to take up. Second, the institution shall be able to advise the Government, the Parliament and any other competent body on specific violations, on issues related to legislation and general compliance and implementation with international human rights instruments. Third, the institution shall relate to regional and international organisations. Fourth, the institution shall have a mandate to educate and inform in the field of human rights. Fifth, some institutions are given a quasi-judicial competence.”

Compliance with the Paris Principles is the central requirement of the accreditation process which regulates NHRI access to the UN Human Rights Council and other bodies. This is a peer review system operated by a subcommittee of the International Coordinating Committee of NHRIs.

## **National Equality Bodies**

National Equality Bodies provide independent assistance to victims of discrimination, conduct independent surveys of discrimination, publish independent reports and make recommendations on any issue relating to discrimination.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED)**

The Public Sector Equality Duty consists of a general equality duty, set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 and a number of specific duties. In summary, all public authorities must, in the exercise of their functions, have due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act; advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Commission has a duty under Section 8 of the Equality Act 2006 to promote and enforce equality legislation, so has a statutory role to regulate the PSED. This role requires the Commission to collect evidence about the performance of public authorities and to take relevant action to promote compliance, to conduct/support research about the effectiveness of the legislation and to advise public authorities about what they need to do to meet their obligations, and to promote good practice.

## **Strategic plan 2012/15**

The Commission's strategic plan sets out its agreed priorities until 2015 which are:

- To promote fairness and equality of opportunity in Britain's future economy;
- To promote fair access to public services, and autonomy and dignity in service delivery;
- To promote dignity and respect, and safeguard people's safety.

## **The Statutory Committees: Disability, Scotland, Wales**

The Equality Act 2006 requires the Commission to have a Disability Committee, which has decision making powers on those matters which solely concern disability. The Commission must seek the advice of the Committee on all matters which relate to disability in a significant way. In 2012/13 there was an independent review of the Disability Committee, as required by statute. The findings from this review will be forwarded, with the Commission's response to the Secretary of State, for consideration in 2013/14.

The Equality Act 2006 requires the Commission to have Scotland and Wales Committees. Decisions in respect of a range of the Commission's powers are formally delegated to these Committees and the Commission is required to consult the Committees on all aspects of its work that affect people in Wales or Scotland.

The Wales and Scotland Committees also identify specific priorities which are incorporated into the business plan each year.

The Wales Committee priorities for 2013/14 include: work to explore the benefits of aligning inequality and poverty strategies across Wales; targeted work with public authorities to ensure the Public Sector Equality Duty achieves positive outcomes; improving Welsh workplaces through encouraging employers to develop workplace policies on domestic abuse and mental health; developing new workplace guidance on religion and belief; increasing access to equality and human rights advice through a transfer of expertise programme; developing and promoting the evidence base including 'How Fair is Wales?', 'Who Runs Wales?' and Census 2011 data; and providing oral evidence to the Commission on Devolution in Wales.

In Scotland, the Commission shares its human rights remit with the Scottish Human Rights Commission (SHRC). The EHRC covers human rights issues arising from matters reserved to the Westminster Parliament; and the SHRC covers issues arising from devolved matters. In practice, the two Commissions work in partnership on a number of human rights issues.

The Scotland Committee priorities for 2013/14 include: work in schools to improve reporting and response to identity based bullying; targeted work with audit and inspection bodies to embed equality within their inspection regimes; work in support of Scotland's National Action Plan on Human Rights; and 'A Fairer Future Rights-Based Scotland' - a large scale project to undertake research and engage with the people of Scotland on the kind of Scotland they would like to see, no matter what the outcome of the independence referendum.

## **Comprehensive Budget Review**

A Comprehensive Budget Review of the Commission published on 14 January 2013 identified the resources needed to fulfil the Commission's statutory duties and exercise its statutory powers. On the back of that review government has indicated that in 2013/14 and 2014/15 the Commission should have a steady state budget of £17.1m per annum to discharge its functions.

The government has also confirmed that the Commission can access additional programme funding of up to £7.8m in 2013/14 and £8m in 2014/15 to support wider activities which contribute to equalities and human rights priorities. From the core budget of £17.1m, with around 200 staff, the Commission will do the work which it is required to do, will continue with work already started, and will start new work or take existing work into new areas. The Commission will also explore potential new work for the future.

## **Work we are required to do**

### **Legal support to victims of discrimination and strategic litigation**

The Commission has allocated up to £1.4m per annum to provide financial support for cases of strategic importance where individuals may have been the victim of unlawful discrimination and there is a significant wider public interest at stake; and to take cases in its own name and intervene in existing proceedings where there is a compelling opportunity to clarify the law, or to deal with significant issues of discrimination or breaches of human rights.

The Commission's legal strategy, which will be reviewed in 2013/14, requires it to examine carefully whether other, non-legal options provide more effective ways of tackling a particular issue. It will give priority to supporting cases which: advance the objectives in the Commission's strategic and corporate plans; help to prevent equality and human rights abuses and proactively tackle continuing abuses; or raise strategically significant human rights issues; or on which the Commission is uniquely placed to act; or which have the capacity to respond to new and emerging strategically significant issues.

Factors which will be considered in determining whether the Commission should intervene in, support or take a particular legal case include: whether the case has good prospects of success; whether the use of funds is cost-effective; whether the case is likely to clarify, extend, strengthen or otherwise test compliance with equality and/or human rights law; whether the outcome would have wider tangible benefits for those with a protected characteristic; whether the case will secure better understanding of rights and obligations under equality and/or human rights law; whether it will challenge a decision, policy or practice that is significantly detrimental, or has adverse impact, in terms of human rights and/or equality law; whether it has the potential to improve the equality and/or human rights policies and practices of a strategically significant organisation or sector; whether it addresses widespread or systemic equality and/or human rights problems that litigation brought by others has failed to tackle; and whether, in the case of interventions in proceedings brought by others, the Commission's submissions are likely to provide added value to the court/tribunal beyond the arguments advanced by any of the parties to the case.

### **Regulation and enforcement**

The Commission aims to be a firm but fair regulator, mindful of the day-to-day challenges faced by organisations, in particular small and medium sized enterprises. The main aims of the Commission's compliance and enforcement policy are: to help organisations to understand and comply with their obligations under equality and human rights law, and to aspire to best practice; to use its resources in the most efficient and effective way, targeting them where they are most likely to have the greatest impact; to ensure its regulatory actions are evidence-based, proportionate and consistent, using formal sanctions as a last resort; and to be open, transparent and accountable as a regulator. The Commission will continue to engage collaboratively with other regulators in 2013/14 to help ensure that their work is grounded in equalities and human rights.

## **Codes and guidance**

The Commission has a statutory responsibility to promote understanding of the Equality Acts and the Human Rights Act. On occasion it is useful and important to produce various forms of codes and guidance on the legislation, new case law or other legislative developments. During 2013/14 new material will be prepared and published as the need arises.

## **National Human Rights Institution**

As an A status National Human Rights Institution (NHRI) the Commission has a particular responsibility to monitor the UK's performance against a number of United Nations (UN) Treaties.

In 2013/14 the Commission will continue to chair the Eurogroup of NHRIs' UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) working group, and will share best practice as part of the UK independent mechanism on UNCPRD. It will support capacity building with disabled people and disabled people's organisations to empower them to use the treaty, and contribute to monitor its implementation domestically. It will urge government to work towards an action plan on the implementation of the UNCPRD.

It will actively work with the Eurogroup on the rights of older people, and seek to influence the work of the UN and Council of Europe (CoE) to strengthen the rights of older people and promote domestic awareness of the need to strengthen rights.

It will need to submit a shadow report on the Convention Against Torture and to support the examination process; to submit a shadow report on the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, and to support the examination process; and to continue to monitor and develop evidence for the Convention on Rights of Disabled People, the Conventions on Civil and Political Rights and Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on Rights of the Child (in partnership with the Children's Commissioner) prior to examinations due in 2014/15.

The Commission will need to develop an evidence base for the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mid-year review (due October 2014) which will report against key concerns raised within the UPR, and ensure this is aligned with treaty monitoring.

## **Research and Information**

The Commission has statutory obligations to monitor progress towards the aims in the Equality Acts and to assess the UK's compliance with the international human rights framework. The research and information work programme for 2013/14 includes: maintenance of an intelligence system, which draws on a wide range of data and produces themed outputs for decision-making and horizon scanning; regular publication of evidence around the state of Britain's equality and human rights; population of measurement frameworks as part of preparation for the next periodic review; gathering evidence to support the monitoring of the UN human rights treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and other treaties; and developing the evidence base for the proposed Section 16 Inquiry.

## **Engagement and communications**

The Commission will continue to provide evidence based analysis and legal advice on key provisions before Parliament, and to promote awareness of the law on equality and human rights. The Commission will use a wide range of channels, including digital and social media, to promote positive, accurate messages, and to counter inaccurate messages, about the application of the law on equalities and human rights.

## **Work we will continue to do in 2013/14**

There are a number of areas where the Commission's work in 2012/13 will continue into 2013/14, to complete specific projects or to ensure we are getting the most value from previous investment. These areas of work are principally the following:

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

In 2012/13 the Government initiated a review of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The Commission has observer status on this review, which is expected to report in mid-2013, and will consider and respond to the findings of the review when they are known.

The Commission will continue to seek to develop a robust evidence base on the general and specific duties. Regulatory monitoring, and follow up enforcement and compliance action where authorities are performing inadequately, will continue. The Commission will promote best practice in applying the duties in a way which improves policy making and delivery, addressing unfairness and discrimination, whilst avoiding unnecessary bureaucratic burdens.

**Impact:** Improved capacity of public authorities to deliver policies which do not have an unfair impact, or discriminate unlawfully, and which are cost-effective; a better informed public debate on the PSED, supported by a robust and objective evidence base and examples of good practice.

## **Improving effective financial decision making**

In May 2012 the Commission published ‘Making fair financial decisions’, a report of its Section 31 Assessment of the extent to which HM Treasury (HMT) had met its equality obligations when considering the impact of decisions in the 2010 Spending Review (SR10). It found that there was some room for improvement in the early stages of the processes to ensure that decisions were fair and lawful. Since then the Commission has been working with HMT and departments on ways of monitoring the implementation and impact of the SR10 measures as they are rolled out; and developing a common approach to impact assessment across government for fiscal events and spending reviews. An expert advisory group with HMT for England and Wales, and in Scotland an Equality Budget Advisory Group working with the Scottish Government, aim to promote best practice across government in ensuring that equality is built into fiscal policy making. The Commission is developing tools for policy makers to track the cumulative impact of spending decisions.

**Impact:** Fairer decision-making within departments and across government, that reflects an improved understanding of equality impacts.

## **Disability harassment**

The Commission’s report of its inquiry on disability harassment was followed up by the publication in October 2012 of the ‘Manifesto for Change’, which set out specific steps which public authorities should take to improve the way they meet their responsibilities to prevent and eliminate disability related harassment. In 2013/14 the Commission will monitor compliance with the manifesto and publish a report setting out progress. It will also use its powers under section 23 of the Equality Act 2006 to undertake legally binding agreements with some authorities identified during the inquiry to improve their responsiveness to disability-related harassment.

## **Religion and belief**

The legal protections offered by the HRA and the Equality Acts are relatively new. In recent years, several cases have tested the freedom to manifest religion or belief, and protection against discrimination connected with religion.

Some cases considered employees' rights to time off for religious observance; others considered the right of teachers or pupils to wear religious dress, or the right to wear religious symbols in the workplace. Several cases have been about whether an employee in the public service can refuse to provide a service which conflicts with their religious views where this may result in discrimination against others. Many of the cases on religion have attracted considerable media coverage and public debate.

Building on the project started in 2012/13 the Commission will continue to promote better understanding of the law and clarify complex issues. The aim is to build a wide and strong alliance among faith groups, secular and humanist organisations, employers and Government.

**Impact:** Better understanding of the law related to religion and belief by stakeholders and employers and improved practice in relation to the appropriate protection of religion and belief in the workplace. Consideration of whether the current legal framework could be improved.

### **Private sector engagement**

The Commission, along with all arms length bodies, will seek to contribute to the growth agenda by helping businesses work more effectively. To support that aim it will work more closely with businesses on the equality and human rights issues with which they deal on a daily basis. It will also look at long term, strategic issues which may affect businesses' ability to recruit or manage staff, or deliver services competitively.

The Commission will seek to build its credibility with the private sector by: listening to what the private sector says it needs to help it comply more effectively with equality and human rights law; working on specific problems with business leaders in a specific sector; developing work in partnership with business leaders on common problems they face; seeking improvements by supporting new standards or good practice; and providing guidance on the law that is reliable, brief and easy to understand.

The Commission's legal enforcement and compliance powers complement the partnership approach, but are powers of last resort and will be used only where collaborative endeavours have not proved successful.

**Impact:** Improved understanding by the private sector of the role of the Commission; improved understanding and responsiveness of the Commission to private sector issues relevant to equality and human rights.

## **Home Care Inquiry follow up**

The Home Care Inquiry made important recommendations for England and Wales, to protect the human rights of older people receiving home care. Building on two sets of guidance, for older people and local authorities, the focus in 2013/14 will shift to engagement and compliance work based on a “one year on” review. Findings from the inquiry will continue to be used to advise on legislation, and to improve the practices of home care providers and the relevant health and local authority bodies.

**Impact:** The aim is to help organisations and individuals who are in a position to improve protection of older people’s human rights in home care settings to acquire a clearer understanding of the part they can play in safeguarding human rights - particularly where they have legal obligations to do so - and to help equip older people, their families and support organisations to challenge threats to their human rights.

## **Policing**

Over several years the Commission has worked to help improve the way police forces use their stop and search powers. Disproportionate use of stop and search remains of central concern to black and ethnic minority communities and the Commission will continue to monitor performance, work with police forces where there is cause for concern, and use its enforcement and litigation levers where necessary to improve compliance. The Commission will consider engaging with the elected Police and Crime Commissioners and the new Single Police Service for Scotland to make its interventions more effective; and will take full account of the changing landscape for law enforcement and its possible implications and risks.

**Impact:** Police services will show a better understanding of their equality and human rights obligations and follow best practice, including greater self-scrutiny and transparency of reporting, to demonstrate progress is being made.

## **Work we will start or take in new directions this year**

Since being appointed in January 2013 the new board has started to identify additional areas where the Commission can have the greatest impact using its specific powers. The board is clear that any new work should be properly scoped, that the benefits and value for money should be clear, and that care should be taken not to duplicate relevant activity by other bodies.

Additional work which the board has so far agreed can be included in the plan for 2013/14 includes:

### **Widening the talent pool**

Work on women on boards has been taken forward by the Government Equalities Office and others since Lord Davies' report in 2011. The Commission contributed to this through a report on the role of executive search firms. In 2013/14 the Commission will look further upstream, examining what steps can be taken to widen the talent pool of women who could take on executive roles across the FTSE 350.

**Impact:** The aim is to work with business to identify the barriers to developing a more robust pipeline of female talent and to identify a potential programme of practical improvements.

### **Improving protection for vulnerable workers**

The Commission's Meat and Poultry Inquiry Review report in 2012 revealed that, despite improvements for example in the treatment of pregnant workers, and segregation of workers by nationality, which were brought about principally by the effective engagement of the supermarkets, there remained a low level of awareness of employment rights within the meat and poultry processing sector.

Workers also reported coercive and threatening behaviour. The threat of losing their jobs meant workers were too scared to turn down overtime, be absent from work when ill, make a claim against a firm following an accident, or say the work was too hard. Even where firms and agencies had put in place complaints procedures, many workers reported they were afraid of complaining for fear of losing their jobs.

Where workers had complained, some reported that their complaints were not investigated properly, or that they were treated worse after complaining. There is a case for continuing to encourage progress in this sector.

The Commission will also bring together influential business partners and regulators, building on its model for the Meat and Poultry Processing Inquiry and the relationships it developed with the supermarket sector, in order to make progress in another supplier sector. The Commission has good relationships with the Health and Safety Executive and is developing its relationship with the Gangmasters Licensing Authority and this project will continue the approach to co-regulation.

**Impact:** The Commission aims to maintain its impact by engaging with the meat and poultry processing sector for a further year, to ensure public reporting on performance indicators already agreed with the supermarkets. The Commission aims to extend its impact by leveraging its knowledge and approach to a new sector, to be selected during the development work for the project.

## **Deprivation of liberty safeguards**

The Commission is developing proposals for a formal Section 16 Inquiry to examine policy and practice in care homes and hospitals on the deprivation of liberty of people who lack mental capacity, and the effectiveness of the safeguards currently in use. This issue has been explored with various organisations and individuals, including the Care Quality Commission, Court of Protection Users Groups, Mind, Liberty, barristers and leading academics. Stakeholders have identified some significant problems and flaws in the application of the current safeguard provisions. All have stressed the need for systemic change to ensure that the human rights of people in extremely vulnerable situations are effectively protected.

**Impact:** Improvements to the protection and promotion of human rights of people who do not have capacity to make decisions about their own care in care homes and hospitals.

## **Improving access to employment opportunities – Modern Apprenticeships.**

Research and data on Modern Apprenticeship schemes consistently highlight issues of occupational segregation in placements for young men and young women, as well as low participation rates for young ethnic minorities and disabled people.

Although access to Modern Apprenticeship programmes between men and women has to some extent equalized, the pattern of placements appears highly segregated with for example 98% of engineering placements in Scotland going to men and 84% of social care placements to women. Inequality of pay is also evident in gender segregated programmes with ‘traditionally male’ apprenticeships offering double the rate of remuneration of ‘traditionally female’ ones. Data on other groups is patchy and inconsistent and the Commission has therefore commissioned research to uncover data on ethnic minorities, disabled people, LGBT and faith groups which we will receive shortly. This research also looks at the extent to which industry has addressed issues of diversity in labour market supply and the extent to which equality conditions have been placed on providers of apprenticeships in public contracts across Europe.

2013/14’s work will build on this through a series of planned engagements with funders and providers of Modern Apprenticeships to negotiate agreement on targets for improving access of different groups to apprenticeships, to consider how to measure improvements over an 18 month period and to develop a toolkit and other resources for providers.

## **Caste discrimination**

Following the decision by Parliament that the provision banning discrimination on grounds of caste should be activated, the Commission will undertake research on caste issues in this country and will make recommendations.

## **Work we will examine further**

The Commission will undertake further analysis, and will engage with stakeholders and potential partners in order to reach a view about which areas of work should be addressed in future. Possibilities include:

### **Disabled access to retail banking services**

Disabled people have reported difficulties accessing banks. The Triennial Review<sup>2</sup> found that disabled people of all ages were more likely than non-disabled people to have no bank account, and where they did have an account, to have more difficulties in accessing all the associated benefits and facilities. A study which asked physically disabled volunteers to survey the accessibility of 191 automated teller machines (ATMs) across the UK in 2006 found that 42% of volunteers needed assistance to use the cash machine, and of the ATMs surveyed, 59% were considered not to be fully accessible.

The growth of online consumer information and services makes e-accessibility critical across both public and private sectors. Web-based technologies are supplementing or replacing access traditionally provided via personal contact, buildings or hard copy. Goods and services are made available at lower prices online (for example, for airline and rail tickets, books, CDs). Job opportunities are ever more frequently advertised online and often inaccessible to people using screen readers.

The Commission will examine the possibilities for further work with the retail banking sector to encourage greater uptake of their services by disabled people and to increase digital participation more generally.

### **Increasing participation and attainment of disabled children**

The Triennial Review identified the disability qualifications gap as one of the equality challenges ‘most significant and most urgently in need of resolution’. Less is known about participation of disabled pupils in wider school curriculum activities and particularly sport, and scoping information and evidence on this, including case studies of good practice, would be a key aim of further work in this area.

In September 2012, the Commission issued technical guidance on the use of auxiliary aids in order to support reasonable adjustments in schools in England, Scotland and Wales. It is proposed that in 2013/14 this guidance should be disseminated through a range of partners, and that the wider possibilities should be explored further in consultation with stakeholders.

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2 <http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/key-projects/how-fair-is-britain/>

## Pregnancy and maternity discrimination

There is considerable evidence of discrimination against women who are pregnant, on maternity leave or on their return to work. The Commission will assess existing research and guidance for employers and employees and consider how to improve employer understanding of their rights and obligations and employee understanding of their employment rights and obligations.

## Future possibilities

Work under other headings will continue to be weighed up and explored during the year, and if of sufficient merit will be included in a pipeline for further scoping in 2014/15. Subject to prioritisation, this might include the possibility of building on a recently agreed formal agreement with the Department of Health on data transfer in order to pursue more work in the health service (subject to the discussions about the Draft Data Protection Regulation); raising aspirations, including more extensive examination of modern apprenticeships and the differential careers advice provided to different groups; the life chances of looked after children; the practices of Work Programme providers; young black men and employment; and access to justice, with particular reference to the impact of the changes to legal aid funding.

## Funding and resource allocation

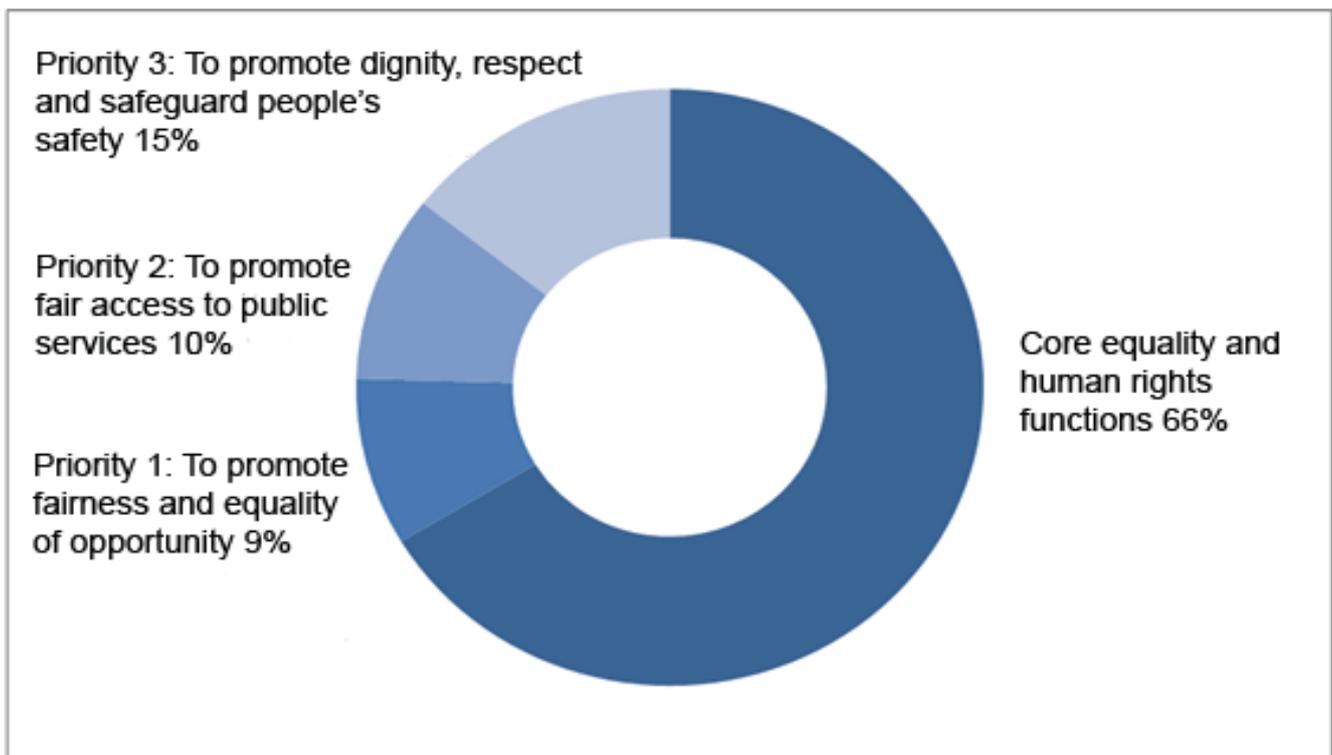
The Commission's budget allocation for 2013/14 is £23.64m, which is shown in Figure 1. This comprises steady-state funding of £17.1m for our core equalities and human rights functions and £6.56m to complete continuing organisational reforms.

Figure 1: 2013/14 Budget Settlement

<b>£million</b>	<b>Core</b>	<b>Transitional</b>	<b>Total</b>
Administration	15.027	4.820	19.847
Depreciation (Administration)	0.500	0.900	1.400
Programme	1.400	-	1.400
Resource	16.927	5.720	22.647
Capital	0.150	0.840	0.990
<b>Total Financial Allocation</b>	<b>17.077</b>	<b>6.560</b>	<b>23.637</b>

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of our planned expenditure of the £17.1m steady state budget in 2013/14 on our core equality and human rights functions and strategic priorities.

Figure 2: 2013/14 Budget Allocation



## Delivering value for money

The Commission has made significant progress in reducing corporate costs over the last year: the budget for 2013/14 represents a saving of £6m (26%) on core operations. Significant savings have been delivered from non front-line activity, for example approximately £1m savings as a result of the reduction of interim staff and over £1m savings on accommodation.

A number of additional areas have been identified for efficiencies in 2013/14. This includes the continued implementation of an accommodation strategy to realise an additional £0.3m saving from estate rationalisation by the end of the financial year. A business case for transition towards shared services for business support functions is being developed.

## Governance and risk management

The Commission's strategic and operational work is overseen and directed by the board of Commissioners, comprising the Chair, Deputy Chair and Commissioners.

In January 2013 the appointment of new Commissioners was announced. Between them, board members have an in-depth knowledge of the equality and human rights landscape and extensive experience of working for and with employers in the public and private sector and with trade unions.

In February the board approved a new governance and committee structure to improve governance and enable greater scrutiny of the impact of the Commission's work.

In 2012/13 the Commission implemented a new risk management policy and during the first half of 2013/14 staff are being trained in order to develop an effective risk management culture.

### **Commissioners 2013/14**

- Baroness Onora O'Neill of Bengarve CBE (Chair from 12 November 2012)
- Sarah Anderson CBE (Acting Deputy Chair from 11 September 2012 to 15 January 2013)
- Caroline Waters OBE (Deputy Chair from 15 January 2013)
- Evelyn Asante-Mensah OBE (from 15 January 2013)
- Ann Beynon OBE (re-appointed 3 December 2012)
- Laura Carstensen (from 15 January 2013)
- Chris Holmes MBE (from 15 January 2013)
- Kaliani Lyle (re-appointed 29 March 2013)
- Professor Swaran Singh (from 15 January 2013)
- Sarah Veale CBE (from 15 January 2013)

### **Developing the Commission's people**

The aim is to develop a more agile and responsive organisation with improved capability and capacity to achieve its strategic objectives and deliver its statutory obligations and functions. The Commission is committed to fostering an inclusive working environment where everyone is treated with fairness and respect, and where diversity is valued. How well this is being achieved and the level of staff engagement will be measured through staff surveys.

### **Equality considerations**

Equality is at the heart of the Commission's work and it actively considers the impact of all policies and services delivery on individuals with different protected characteristics to improve the impact and deliver better outcomes.

A range of relevant monitoring information is gathered to ensure that due regard is paid to equality. This enables good equality evidence to be integrated into decision-making and resource allocation. This equality information is published on the Commission's website.

This evidence is used to identify equality objectives for the programme of work and also for the Commission as an employer, as a regulator and as a procurer of goods and services.

# Contacts

**[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)**

The Commission's publications are available to download on our website: **[www.equalityhumanrights.com](http://www.equalityhumanrights.com)**. If you would like to discuss the option of accessing a publication in an alternative format please contact: [engagementdesk@equalityhumanrights.com](mailto:engagementdesk@equalityhumanrights.com).

## **Equality Advisory and Support Service (EASS)**

The Equality Advisory Support Service has replaced the Equality and Human Rights Commission Helpline. It gives free advice, information and guidance to individuals on equality, discrimination and human rights issues.

Telephone: 0808 800 0082

Textphone: 0808 800 0084

### **Opening hours:**

09:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday

10:00 to 14:00 Saturday

**Website:** [www.equalityadvisoryservice.com](http://www.equalityadvisoryservice.com)

**Post:** FREEPOST Equality Advisory Support Service FPN4431