

PM announces new independent organisation to tackle deep-rooted injustices in society

A new independent body responsible for challenging social injustices and creating a fairer country has been announced today by Prime Minister Theresa May.

The Office for Tackling Injustices (OfTI) will present future Governments with more effective, data-driven, evidence-based challenge to help drive forward reforms to tackle wide-ranging disparities in society.

Following the approach taken by the Race Disparity Audit which uses data to analyse how a person's ethnicity affects their experiences of public services, the new body will use data and analysis to find out what the key barriers are for specific groups and gather data that is currently unreliable or simply not available.

The OfTI will look at disparities in areas including socio-economic background, ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation and explore if specific groups of people are unfairly discriminated against or held back from getting on in life.

For example, the body will use data to drive Government to look at gender and disability inequalities in the workplace and in housing. Women, who generally enter the workplace with higher qualifications than men, are paid less at entry level and only 32% of disabled private renters said their accommodation was suitable.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

Deep-seated societal injustice requires a long-term focus and cannot be eliminated overnight.

Since becoming Prime Minister, I have challenged the injustices which still exist in our society through the power of data – from our world-leading gender pay gap reporting to the Race Disparity Unit – and I have demanded that if disparities cannot be explained, they must be changed.

I am proud of what we have achieved to make the UK a more just society. But there is more to be done now and in the years to come, if we are truly to say that this is a country which works for everyone – no matter who they are or where they're from.

That's why the Office for Tackling Injustices will go further, using the power of data, gathered from extensive sources, to shine a spotlight on key injustices and provide the catalyst for better

policy solutions. By holding Government and wider society to account, we can create lasting change.

Minister for Women and Equalities, Rt Hon Penny Mordaunt said:

We know that high quality data and evidence are important tools in tackling inequality. We need to know how well we are tackling injustice and the impact on people's lives.

The Office of Tackling Injustices will provide that accountability in the new Cabinet Office equalities hub at the heart of government. Sitting alongside the world-leading Race Disparity Unit, the Government Equalities Office and the Office for Disability, it will be an important part of work to drive change throughout Whitehall and improve lives across the country.

Maria Miller, Chair of the Women and Equalities Select Committee said:

I'm delighted that the Government is taking seriously its commitment to this agenda. The sorts of social justice issues the Prime Minister has highlighted require a sustained focus based on good evidence. The Women and Equalities Select Committee welcomed the approach taken by the Race Disparity Audit and I hope the Office for Tackling Injustices can take this further – with additional independent challenge.

Ruth Hunt, Chief Executive of Stonewall said:

We're really pleased that the Government is making this commitment to improve the data we have on the challenges facing LGBT communities. Reliable data on the experience of LGBT people is scarce, and there are huge difficulties gathering it. The Office for Tackling Injustice will give us a clearer picture of the barriers and better enable us to act against the discrimination LGBT people still face.

Simon Woolley OBE, Director of Operation Black Vote and Chairman of the Race Disparity Audit said:

As the Office for Budget Responsibility acts as an independent watchdog over the public finances, so will the Office for Tackling Injustices objectively assess the Government's progress towards social justice.

I will do all I can to support and champion this new Office, which I believe will become a shining beacon that not only shines

necessary lights on those injustices the Prime Minister cares about such as gender equality, social mobility and race inequality, but also a powerful bulwark for change.