



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

PUBLICATION

Socio-economic Duty: children's rights impact assessment

An assessment of how the Socio-economic Duty affects children's rights.

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Describe and explain the impact of the proposal on children and young people

Children are more likely to be in relative income poverty than the population overall. In the most recent **data** there was a small increase in the share of children in relative income poverty, up to 29 per cent in 2015 to 2018. A literature review by the Centre for Research in in Early Childhood (CREC) finds that evidence they examined indicates that in the UK, especially, parents' socio-economic status continues to be the primary predictor of which children prosper in adult life. They report that the magnitude of early childhood inequality in the UK is well-documented; some estimates suggest that half the attainment

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gaps for pupils are already present at the start of primary school. Using Millennium Cohort study data, this [research](#) shows large gaps exist in the UK for vocabulary tests between children aged 4 and 5 from families with middle incomes and those from families with lowest fifth of incomes.

Therefore in relation to public bodies meeting the requirements to give due regard to the need to reduce inequality of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage, it would seem likely that the Duty will bring about a positive impact for children and young people. In particular children who experience inequality outcomes because of their social and economic status.

Explain how the proposal is likely to impact on children's rights

Equality and discrimination are inextricably linked to human rights. Socio-economic disadvantage has the potential to blight a person's ability to access and enjoy the human rights available to them in the UK, through a mixture of domestic law [the Human Rights Act 1998](#), retained EU law and international human rights law. Such disadvantage can result in long-term inequalities in education, health, life satisfaction, prosperity and participation in public life.

Approaching implementation of the Socio-economic Duty in the correct way will help public bodies to maximise their contribution to addressing such inequalities, and also to meet their obligations under the [Human Rights Act 1998](#) and international human rights law, including [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#). It will be for public bodies to understand where they can achieve the greatest impact, however those bodies covered by the Duty will be required to give due regard to the need to reduce inequalities of outcome as a result of socio-economic disadvantage through the decisions that they take. Many of these decisions would be expected to impact on children and young people.

It is unlawful for public bodies in Wales to act incompatibly with the [European](#)

Convention of Human Rights. Public bodies also have obligations as part of the state to consider, observe and give effect to international human rights treaties signed and ratified by the UK. Altogether, there are seven international human rights instruments which have been ratified by the UK, all of which have socio-economic relevance.

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