**Landmark charity report highlights the “scale of racial inequality” in Wales**

In a report published on Monday 5 July 2021, a Cardiff-based charity has raised concerns on the “scale of racial inequality” in Wales - with police-recorded hate crimes rising by a third since 2016/17.

The ‘*Joint* *NGO Shadow Report on Racial Inequality in Wales’,* published by Race Equality First, highlights significant failures to address ethnic disparities in all areas of life, and calls on the Welsh Government to implement key reforms to eliminate racial discrimination in Wales.

The report – the first of its kind in Wales - has been developed to inform the next United Nations (UN) examination of the UK and aims to investigate whether the UK has successfully tackled racial discrimination in areas such as policing, the criminal justice system, employment and education.

The report outlines how hate crimes recorded by the police have increased by more than a third, from 2,941 in 2016/17 to 4,023 in 2019/20. A total of 2,634 of those recorded in 2019/20 were racially motivated, an increase of 27 per cent from the 2,080 reported in 2016/17.

Ethnic minorities continue to be disproportionately stop-searched by the police across all four of Wales’ force areas: South Wales Police, Gwent Police, Dyfed-Powys Police and North Wales Police. The biggest disparities came in Gwent, where the report found that Black people are 10 times more likely than White people to encounter a stop and search.

In the public sector, ethnic minorities remain substantially underrepresented in senior jobs, with only 1.3 per cent of teachers and 1.9 per cent of police officers identifying as Black and Minority Ethnic (BME), despite the Welsh BME population standing at 5.6 per cent.

Meanwhile, in education settings, there are stark concerns around attainment levels for children from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller populations, with only 11.1 per cent of these pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C, compared to 56.5 per cent of White students.

Commenting on the findings, Christina Tanti – the research and evaluation coordinator at Race Equality First who wrote the report – said: “After speaking extensively with other anti-racist charities and groups and by reviewing existing statistics, it became evidently clear that the scale of racial inequality remains vast in Wales. Having the ability to produce the first Wales-only report to go to the UN has given us a unique opportunity to make specific recommendations that accurately reflect the experiences of ethnic minorities in Wales.”

The report will be reviewed by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the UN body that monitors compliance by UN member states to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).

In the last report, from 2016, the UN CERD Committee concluded that there had been an outbreak of xenophobia and discrimination against ethnic minorities in the UK since the EU referendum campaign.

Ms Tanti continued: “Previous UN reports focused on both England and Wales, but many of the issues were the same then as they are in this Welsh report; growing xenophobia caused by Brexit has progressed into the COVID-19 pandemic, with South East Asian populations especially facing intimidation and violence.

“But it isn’t just blatant examples of racism – much of what ethnic minorities face is covert too. From being more likely to live in poorer quality housing or work in precarious ‘gig economy’ jobs, to facing racial bullying in school and into their adult lives, the reality of day-to-day life for BME people in Wales is in stark contrast to that of many White British people.

“While the Welsh Government has implemented some positive changes, such as the creation of the Race Equality Action Plan (REAP) to make Wales an anti-racist nation by 2030 or its aim to make Wales a ‘Nation of Sanctuary’ for asylum seekers and refugees, this report shows that there is a lot more to be done for racial discrimination to be eradicated in Wales – and this will only happen if the Welsh Government holds itself to account and takes the recommendations in our report seriously.”

One person who knows the impact of racial discrimination in Wales is Jessica Dunrod, co-chair of the Cardiff University Race Equality Steering Group, co-founder and director of I'm Representing Inclusive Educational Curriculum Consultancy and author of children’s books *‘Your Hair is Your Crown’* and *‘Outstanding’,* which details the adventures of a Black child called Hope.

She has in the past turned to Race Equality First for support after her child faced discrimination and bullying at a school in Cardiff.

“I grew up being told that things would change and that racism wouldn’t be an issue when I was older,” Jessica Dunrod said. “But I know from listening to my child and the experiences he has faced in school that this couldn’t be further from the truth.

“While there are many great charities and groups out there doing the hard work to try and reduce racial inequality in Wales – such as Race Equality First – this is all for nothing if there isn’t genuine accountability and an honest discussion on how things can improve from the very top. Only then can Wales become a truly anti-racist nation.”