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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**List of issues in relation to the seventh periodic report of
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland***

1. The State party is requested to submit in writing the information requested below (preferably not exceeding 10,700 words) by 29 March 2024.

A. General information

2. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹ please provide further information on the measures implemented to ensure the full justiciability of economic, social and cultural rights in the State party, including concrete examples of rulings in which the domestic courts have invoked or applied Covenant provisions. In this regard, please include information on the 2021 ruling of the Supreme Court in *R (SC & Ors) v. Secretary for Work and Pensions*. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,² please provide information on the measures taken and their impact in preventing a potential weakening of the scope of human rights protection and access to remedies under the proposed new bill of rights. In this regard, please provide information on the measures taken to enshrine the provisions of the Covenant in the proposed bill of rights for Northern Ireland. Please provide information on how the legislatures in all jurisdictions of the State party were involved in the implementation of and follow-up to the previous concluding observations³ and in the development of the seventh periodic report.

3. Please provide information on any measures taken to protect and promote Covenant provisions and environmental standards under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 and the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill 2022. In this regard, please provide information on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill 2022. Please provide information on any measures taken to assess and address the impact of the loss of funding from the European Social Fund and the European Regional Development Fund.

4. Please indicate the measures taken to meet the target of allocating 0.7 per cent of the State party's gross national income to development assistance and by how much the grant element of bilateral aid to least developed countries was increased during the reporting period. In the light of the information on international development cooperation in the report of the State party,⁴ please provide information on the findings of the social and human rights assessments conducted in the implementation of programmes and projects in the field of education services abroad and how those findings have contributed to ensuring transparency and accountability for non-State providers of education services, including low-cost private schools. Please provide information on the measures taken to establish an effective monitoring mechanism to regularly assess the impact of low-cost and private education

* Adopted by the pre-sessional working group at its seventy-second session (6–10 March 2023).

¹ [E/C.12/GBR/CO/6](#), paras. 6 and 8.

² *Ibid.*, para. 9.

³ [E/C.12/GBR/6](#).

⁴ [E/C.12/GBR/7](#), paras. 18–20.



projects on the quality of free public education in receiving countries and to take remedial action, when required.

5. Please provide information on the measures taken to collect comprehensive and comparative data relevant to assessing the extent to which Covenant rights are realized in the State party, including in the devolved administrations, the Crown Dependencies and British Overseas Territories. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,⁵ please indicate any specific measures taken to implement essential Covenant provisions in the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, including on coordination and monitoring mechanisms in place to track progress.

6. Please provide information on the results achieved regarding implementing the updated 2016 National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights. Please provide further information on compliance mechanisms and means of enforcement to ensure respect for economic, social and cultural rights and the exercise of human rights due diligence in business operations abroad and in supply chains, in particular with respect to chemical manufacturing and extractive industries. Please provide information on the legislative and administrative measures in place to ensure the legal liability of companies and effective remedies for human rights violations committed abroad by corporations domiciled under the jurisdiction of the State party and provide concrete examples of enforcement mechanisms and remedial actions.

7. Please provide information on measures taken by the State party with regard to the mitigation of climate change, including specific measures, and their impact, to meet the nationally determined contributions for reducing emissions that the State party has set itself under the Paris Agreement. Please also provide information on the progress made in reducing per capita greenhouse gas emissions and on targets that the State party has set for further reductions. With respect to climate change adaptation policies and measures, please provide information on:

(a) How the State party assesses the effects of climate change on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly for marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and groups;

(b) Whether the State party has developed or plans to develop a national adaptation plan, with an adequate allocation of all required resources, to address the impacts of climate change on, *inter alia*, economic, social and cultural rights;

(c) Measures taken to strengthen preparedness for and responses to natural disasters, disaster risk reduction measures and measures taken to adopt a strategy to this end, with an adequate allocation of financial resources;

(d) Which institutions are tasked with the development and implementation of climate change adaptation measures and policies for slow-onset impacts in different areas, such as agriculture, housing and health, and how coordination among the institutions responsible for disaster preparedness and management is ensured.

B. Issues relating to the general provisions of the Covenant (arts. 1–5)

Maximum available resources (art. 2 (1))

8. Please provide information on the evolution of the following, covering the past 10 years:

(a) The proportion of the population living below the nationally defined poverty line;

(b) Levels of inequality, before and after taxes and transfers, if possible defined as the ratio between the total income of the richest 10 per cent of the population and the total income of the poorest 40 per cent and as the ratio between the assets owned by the richest 10 per cent of the population and the assets owned by the poorest 50 per cent;

⁵ E/C.12/GBR/CO/6, paras. 7–8.

(c) The economy, in particular through the annual variations of gross domestic product (GDP), GDP per capita and the level of public debt and household debt in proportion to GDP;

(d) The proportion of public revenue generated through taxes and as a percentage of GDP, the proportion of public revenue obtained through direct and indirect taxes, the corporate tax revenue rate and the percentage of total revenue generated from personal tax collected on the incomes of the richest 10 per cent of the population, as well as provide an evaluation of the amount of tax evasion and tax avoidance and the fiscal cost of the main tax benefits;

(e) Public expenditure as a percentage of GDP and, within total public expenditure, the proportion of the public budget allocated to social spending, including social security, food, water and sanitation, housing, health and education;

(f) The proportion of the public budget allocated to defence;

(g) Any fiscal policies adopted in response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic;

(h) Measures taken to reduce tax avoidance and illicit financial flows and to ensure transparency in all jurisdictions of the State party serving as major financial centres;

(i) Funding of overseas development programmes over the past 10 years, in proportion to GDP, and the conditionality or requirements for the receiving countries.

Non-discrimination (art. 2 (2))

9. In reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,⁶ please provide information on measures taken to adopt a comprehensive anti-discrimination law prohibiting direct, indirect and multiple forms of discrimination on all grounds, providing effective remedies for the victims, including within judicial and administrative procedures in all jurisdictions of the State party.

10. Please provide information on the steps taken to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers are not discriminated against in the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights under the Nationality and Borders Act 2022, in particular with regard to section 12, "Differential treatment of refugees", section 40, "Illegal entry and similar offences" and section 41, "Assisting unlawful immigration or asylum seeker". Please provide information on the impact of section 115 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, "Exclusion from benefits", on the economic, social and cultural rights of refugees and asylum-seekers and provide statistical data on access to employment, social security benefits, housing, health-care services and education to refugees and asylum-seekers. Please provide information on the applicability of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees in all territories and jurisdictions of the State party. In this regard, please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that all persons applying for international protection are given access to fair and efficient asylum procedures, protection against refoulement and access to independent appeal mechanisms. Please provide up-to-date statistical information on the number of asylum requests filled and the number of asylum requests granted and rejected, including the grounds for rejection, for all jurisdictions of the State party over the last five years. Please also provide information on the average waiting time for the processing of asylum requests.

Equal rights of men and women (art. 3)

11. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,⁷ please provide information on the following:

(a) Results achieved and impact of the initiatives mentioned in the report of the State party on equality between women and men;⁸

⁶ Ibid., para. 23.

⁷ Ibid., para. 27.

⁸ E/C.12/GBR/7, paras. 46–51.

- (b) Updated statistical data on the representation of women, including women from disadvantaged and marginalized groups, in political and public life, in Parliament and in county, district and executive authorities in all jurisdictions of the State party;
- (c) Measures taken to address and monitor occupational segregation in all jurisdictions of the State party;
- (d) Statistical data on the evolution of the gender pay gap, disaggregated by age, sex, gender, ethnic group, employment sector, disability and region, over the past five years, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of job losses among women and men, and means of enforcing reporting regulations on the gender pay gap.

C. Issues relating to the specific provisions of the Covenant (arts. 6–15)

Right to work (art. 6)

12. With reference to the reservations of the State party to the Covenant, please indicate whether the State party envisages withdrawing its interpretative reservation to article 6. Please provide information on the measures taken, and on their impact, to prevent the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the labour market, including unemployment and under-employment rates, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability and region in all jurisdictions of the State party, over the last five years. Please provide information on the measures taken and the results achieved in implementing the Government's Plan for Jobs, including its monitoring and compliance mechanisms and key performance indicators. Please indicate the measures taken by the State party to address the barriers preventing refugees and asylum-seekers from accessing employment.

13. Please provide information on results achieved, including statistical data disaggregated by sex, gender, age, employment sector, region, rural/urban area, ethnicity, disability or other relevant indicators, for all jurisdictions of the State party on the following:

- (a) Measures taken to promote youth employment, including the Kickstart and Youth Offer programmes;
- (b) Measures taken to promote the insertion and retention of persons with disabilities into the labour market, including the Work and Health programme, the Intensive Personalised Employment Support programme, the Access to Work programme and the Disability Confident scheme, including disaggregated data for persons with severe learning disabilities;
- (c) Any measures taken to increase and ensure the participation of ethnic minorities and disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups in the job market, including concrete results;
- (d) Measures taken to create employment opportunities at the middle-income level, particularly in regions and jurisdictions where the percentage of workers on low-income salaries is significant.

14. In the light of paragraph 40 of the report of the State party,⁹ please provide information on the measures taken to ensure that practices with regard to recruitment, retention, promotions, salaries and other conditions of employment in all jurisdictions are not discriminatory or do not have a discriminatory effect. In this regard, please provide information on measures taken to address the underrepresentation of members of ethnic minorities in senior positions in the public and private sectors and in self-employment. Please provide statistical information disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, region or other relevant indicators regarding the number of discrimination claims before employment tribunals, the most common type of claims raised, the investigations carried out, the decisions rendered and the remedies provided to victims since 2015.

⁹ Ibid., para. 40.

Right to just and favourable conditions of work (art. 7)

15. Please provide information on the coverage of the national minimum wage and the enforcement of the minimum wage in all jurisdictions of the State party, the indexation of the national minimum wage to the level of inflation and the measures taken or envisaged to increase the national minimum wage to a level that provides workers and their families with a decent living. Please indicate if there are plans to apply the national minimum wage equally to all those in employment, regardless of their age, including those holding an apprentice position. Please provide statistical information on the evolution and impact of in-work poverty, disaggregated by age, sex, gender, ethnicity, region and rural/urban area, in all jurisdictions of the State party, over the last five years. In this regard, please indicate whether the minimum salaries introduced in the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies provide workers and their families with a decent living. Please indicate whether the State has considered lifting the reservation of postponement of the application of article 7 (a) (i) of the Covenant regarding the provision of equal pay to men and women for equal work in the private sector.

16. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁰ please provide information on the measures taken, and on their impact, to reduce the use of temporary employment, precarious self-employment and "zero-hour contracts" in all jurisdictions of the State party. Please provide information on measures taken and their impact in addressing the overrepresentation of disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups working on zero-hour contracts and increase their options to choose more secure working conditions and employment contracts. Please provide statistical data on the scale of zero-hour contracts and precarious work arrangements in all jurisdictions of the State party, disaggregated by age, sex, gender, ethnicity, disability, sector of employment and media hourly wage, over the last five years.

17. Please provide information on the findings and impact of the disability workforce reporting consultation. Please also provide information on measures taken and their impact on the development of voluntary ethnicity pay-gap reporting guidelines. Please provide information on the measures taken to address the disability and ethnicity income gap across all jurisdictions of the State party and include statistical information on their evolution, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, region and employment sector, over the last five years.

18. Please provide information on any measures taken to ensure that all workers are free from physical and mental harassment, including sexual harassment, and on means of enforcing such measures in all jurisdictions of the State party. Please provide statistical data on harassment in the workplace, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, region, disability, ethnic group or other relevant indicator, including the most common types of workplace harassment. In this regard, please indicate how the findings from the 2021 consultation on sexual harassment in the workplace have contributed to addressing this issue in the State party.

19. Please provide information on the steps taken by the State party to build the capacities of business entities, both in the private and public sector, to monitor, identify, prevent and be accountable for forced labour in their operations or supply chains under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Please provide information on the findings and results achieved through the Labour Market Enforcement Strategy 2020–2021. In this regard, please provide statistics on the number of referrals to the National Referral Mechanism, the most common types of exploitation identified, the number of cases granted "reasonable grounds" or "conclusive grounds" and the remedies provided over the last five years.

20. In the light of the information on the working conditions of migrant workers in the report of the State party,¹¹ please provide information on the steps taken to establish a single enforcement body for employment rights, indicating a timeline for the adoption of corresponding primary legislation. Please provide information on the monitoring mechanisms in place to ensure that repayment clauses intended to invest in staff development are not misused to impose disproportionate fines on migrant workers who resign from their

¹⁰ E/C.12/GBR/CO/6, para. 32.

¹¹ E/C.12/GBR/7, paras. 34–35.

positions. Please provide data on recruited workers under the seasonal workers scheme who have been out of work after relocating to the State party and indicate the legal safeguards enforced to ensure that such workers will not be exploited through debt bondage.

Trade union rights (art. 8)

21. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹² please provide information on the steps taken to conduct a thorough review of the Trade Union Act 2016 and to ensure the effective implementation of the Employment Relations Act 1999. Please provide information on sections 3, 8, 9 and 16 of the Trade Union Act 2016 and explain how those sections meet the obligations of the State party under article 8 of the Covenant. Please also provide information on the use of electronic balloting for industrial action and strikes. Please provide information on the Strikes (Minimum Service Levels) Bill. In this regard, please provide information on the guarantees in place to ensure that public and private sector workers can exercise their right to strike, including on the measures adopted to ensure that there are no undue restrictions on the right to strike and to bring legislation in line with article 8 of the Covenant in the British Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

Right to social security (art. 9)

22. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹³ please provide information on the steps taken to review and reverse the cuts in social security introduced by the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016. Please provide disaggregated data on the impact of the reforms to social security on women, children and persons with disabilities, low-income families and families with children. Please provide statistical information on access to social protection schemes, including health insurance, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, region and rural/urban area. With reference to the reservations of the State party to the Covenant, please indicate whether the State has considered lifting the reservation of postponement of the implementation of article 9 on the right to social security.

23. Please provide information on the impact and results of implementing the Universal Credit scheme, including the percentage of the current population under its coverage, coverage targets and milestones for all jurisdictions of the State party, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, region, ethnicity, disability and employment sector. Please provide information on the impact of reducing the Universal Credit earnings taper rate from 63 per cent to 55 per cent.

24. Please provide information on the steps taken to ensure indexation between State benefit rates and the cost of living and to guarantee that all social security benefits provide a level of benefit sufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living. In this regard, please provide information on the findings and recommendations of the latest statutory benefit cap review and the methodology to calculate the local housing allowance. Please provide information on the steps taken to ensure that sanctions in relation to social security are subject to prompt and independent dispute resolution mechanisms.

25. Please provide information on steps taken to ensure that procedural requirements for non-nationals to access social security services are practical, easy to understand and do not lead to the barring of such services in the form of sanctions. Please comment on the measures and initiatives implemented to train and raise awareness among social security and immigration personnel in order to facilitate a culturally sensitive, inclusive and non-discriminatory environment when processing requests made by non-nationals.

Protection of the family and children (art. 10)

26. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁴ please provide information on the steps taken to ensure the availability, affordability and accessibility of childcare services across all jurisdictions of the State party. Please provide information on

¹² E/C.12/GBR/CO/6, paras. 38–39.

¹³ Ibid., paras. 40–41.

¹⁴ Ibid., paras. 43–44.

the impact of the shared parental leave scheme, including data on parental leave uptake, disaggregated by sex, gender, age, ethnicity, income, disability, region and other relevant indicators, for all jurisdictions of the State party. Please indicate how the shared parental leave evaluation findings have impacted parental leave benefits in the State party, including information on the challenges identified and measures implemented to address them. With reference to the reservations of the State party to the Covenant, please indicate whether the State has considered lifting the postponement of the implementation of article 10 (2) of the Covenant with regard to paid maternity leave.

27. Please provide information on the measures taken to regulate and monitor private and for-profit providers of child protection services in the State party, such as children's homes. In this regard, please provide information on the steps taken or envisaged by the State party to ensure adequate accommodation and protection measures for children under the age of 18 who have been deprived of a family environment and placed in unregulated alternative care or residential care homes.

28. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁵ please provide information on the measures taken to ensure the adequate provision of social care services for older persons by both private and non-profit providers in all jurisdictions of the State party, including data on the ratio of staff per resident in residential care services, visiting hours and other arrangements, as well as on standards for adequate accommodation for residential facilities and nursing homes. Please provide information on the impact and concrete results of the People at the Heart of Care white paper on social care for older persons in the State party. Please provide information on how the carer review and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 have contributed to addressing reports of discrimination and abuse in residential and home-care settings.

Right to an adequate standard of living (art. 11)

29. In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, please provide updated information on the poverty rate, including data on the number of children living in poverty, measured as relative income poverty, both before and after housing costs, disaggregated by age, sex, gender, ethnicity, disability and region, for all jurisdictions in the State party over the last five years. In this regard, please provide information on the steps taken to develop a comprehensive child poverty strategy and explain how the introduction of statutory indicators, such as parental worklessness and children's educational attainment, has helped to address child poverty in the State party.

30. Please provide information on the following:

- (a) Impact and concrete results of the Affordable Homes Programme, the shared ownership scheme, the Care and Support Specialised Housing Fund and Housing to 2040 in meeting the sufficient supply of adequate housing in all jurisdictions of the State party;
- (b) Results achieved through the Disabled Facilities Grant, including data on the type of adaptation funded;
- (c) Measures taken and their impact in implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017, its review and the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (2021–2024);
- (d) The extent of overcrowded housing in all jurisdictions of the State party, including statistical data disaggregated by region, sex, gender, age, disability, ethnicity, income and other relevant indicators over the last five years;
- (e) The number of social housing requests presented at the council level in all jurisdictions of the State party, including statistical data disaggregated by region, sex, gender, disability, ethnicity, income and other relevant indicators over the last five years;
- (f) The extent of homelessness and rough sleeping in the State party, including statistical data disaggregated by region, sex, gender, disability, ethnicity and other relevant indicators over the last five years;

¹⁵ Ibid., paras. 59–60.

(g) Information on the standards for adequate provision of temporary accommodation, the maximum time spent in temporary housing conditions and measures implemented to transition to permanent housing arrangements, including for asylum-seekers in reception centres and other temporary facilities.

31. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁶ please provide additional information on the measures taken to address the persistent inequalities in housing in Northern Belfast. In this regard, please provide information on reports of paramilitary intimidation, violence and illegal lending, leading to housing segregation and displacement in Northern Ireland, with a disproportionate effect on women.

32. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁷ please provide information on the impact of the Traveller Site Fund, the Affordable Homes Programme, Housing to 2040, the Housing (Wales) Act 2014 and the Irish Travellers Accommodation Strategy 2021–2026 in ensuring adequate access to culturally appropriate accommodation, including permanent and transit pitches (sites used to provide permanent or temporary accommodation for residents), for Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities. In the light of information in the report of the State party,¹⁸ please provide an update on how Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities were involved in the development and implementation of the design guides for public sites. In this regard, please provide information on the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, in particular part 4 on "Unauthorized encampments", and its impact on culturally appropriate housing for Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities.

33. Please provide information on any measures taken to develop a comprehensive national strategy to promote and protect the right to adequate food. Please provide information on any initiative to assess the impact of food insecurity and malnutrition across all jurisdictions of the State party, which particularly affect older people, asylum-seekers and persons with disabilities, including information on action taken to address obesity in children.

Right to physical and mental health (art. 12)

34. Please provide information on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the National Health Service in all jurisdictions of the State party, including the backlog of operations, procedures, medical examinations and other medical procedures, wait times and the working conditions of health service personnel. Please provide information on the impact and concrete results achieved through the guidance provided by the National Health Service, the Migrant health guide, guidance on health and well-being for asylum-seekers and refugees, strategic planning groups and the Enabling Gypsies, Roma and Travellers plan (2018) in reducing inequality in access to health-care services.

35. With reference to the Committee's previous concluding observations,¹⁹ please provide information on the steps taken to reform the Mental Health Act (1983) and effectively implement comprehensive mental health strategies in all jurisdictions of the State party. Please provide information on the steps taken to address the high suicide rate among men, young people and Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities in all jurisdictions of the State party.

36. Please outline the measures taken to increase access to services in the area of sexual and reproductive health in all jurisdictions of the State party, including the provision of services at the community-level and the establishment of referral mechanisms for women who have been refused abortion by medical practitioners on the basis of conscientious objection. Please provide information on whether legislative amendments are foreseen to scale up access to reproductive and health-care services, including the termination of pregnancies in all jurisdictions of the State party.

37. Please provide information on drug-related deaths and indicate any steps taken to review legislation criminalizing personal drug use and any studies carried out to analyse the impact of such legislation on access to health-care services by people who use drugs. Please

¹⁶ Ibid., para. 50 (e).

¹⁷ Ibid., para. 50 (d).

¹⁸ E/C.12/GBR/7, paras. 122 and 124.

¹⁹ E/C.12/GBR/CO/6, para. 58.

also provide information on the measures taken, and on their effectiveness, to tackle the high incidence of HIV/AIDS and hepatitis C among people who inject drugs and the high number of deaths by overdose.

Right to education (arts. 13–14)

38. Please provide information on concrete measures taken to address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on educational attainment and children's access to education, including specific actions to address the disproportionate effects on the most disadvantaged and marginalized children. Please provide information on any steps taken to address the poverty-related attainment gap in all jurisdictions of the State party. Please provide information on the measures taken to improve access to education for children from Roma, Gypsy and Traveller communities in all jurisdictions of the State party and to combat the discrimination, bullying and harassment they face in schools. Please provide updated statistical information on the enrolment and completion rates of primary and secondary education students, disaggregated by age, sex, gender, region, disability, income, ethnicity or other relevant indicators.

39. Please provide information on measures taken and the budget allocated for implementing the Shared Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 and the Integrated Education Act (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Cultural rights (art. 15)

40. Please provide information on any steps taken to implement Irish language and Ulster-Scots strategies. Please provide information on the status of the proposed Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill and how it would contribute to fostering intercultural dialogue and reconciliation.

41. Please provide information on policies and measures adopted to ensure access to sports, sports facilities and competitions by persons with disabilities, particularly children and youth with disabilities and transgender persons.

42. Please provide information on measures taken to facilitate everyone's access to the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress, including ensuring access to the Internet and digital literacy training specifically for disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups, aiming at closing the digital divide, as well as measures to safeguard the right to privacy and cultural identities.