



**Northern
Ireland
Office**

**Programme of NIO Consultations,
Screenings and
Equality Impact Assessments**

**SIX MONTHLY UPDATE
February 2020**

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SECTION 75 – THE LEGAL BACKGROUND

Under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) is required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation
- men and women generally
- persons with a disability and persons without
- persons with dependants and persons without.

In addition, and without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group. The NIO is also required to meet our legislative obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order.

Monitoring & Publication

The NIO uses the tools of **Screening** and **Equality Impact Assessments** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments we must relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010); and
- Practical guidance on equality impact assessment (February 2005)

In line with Schedule 9 4.(2)(d) the NIO is required to publish details of any Screening Policies & Equality Impact Assessments. Our Equality Scheme sets out that we will publish this information on a six monthly basis.

A summary of Screening Reports & Equality Impact Assessments will be included in the Section 75 Annual Progress Report.

To aid in publication of this information and the completion of The Annual Progress Report, each Business Group should provide a quarterly return detailing:

- Any Consultation Exercises
- Screening Exercises
- Equality Impact Assessments

NIO Programme of Consultations, Equality Screening & Equality Impact Assessments

i) Consultation Exercises within the last 6 Months

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations)
Recently Completed consultations			
Legal Framework: Troubles-related incident Victims Payment Scheme	Closed 26 November 2019		Yes
A new legal framework for abortion services in Northern Ireland	Closed 16 December 2019		Yes
Terrorism Act 2000 Video recording with sound Code of Practice	Closed 14 October 2019		
Current Consultations			
A consultation on same-sex religious marriage and conversion entitlements in Northern Ireland	Closed on 23 February 2020		Yes

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations)
Forthcoming Consultations (within the next 3 months)			

* A limited Consultation is a consultation which lasts less than 12 weeks.

ii) **Screening Exercises within the last 6 Months**

Policy	Current Status
Screening Exercises	
Section 75: Equality Impact Assessment - The Victims' Payment Regulations 2020	Published 22 October 2019
Section 75: Equality screening on the provision of a new legal framework for accessing abortion services in Northern Ireland (consultation)	Published 4 November 2019
Section 75: Equality screening on same-sex religious marriage; and conversion entitlements consultation	Published 20 January 2020

iii) **EQIA Timetable**

Policy	Current Status
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	
Nil	

If require any assistance please contact The Corporate Governance Team on 028 90 76 5437.