



**Northern
Ireland
Office**

Programme of NIO Consultations, Screenings, and Equality Impact Assessments

SIX MONTHLY UPDATE – JUNE TO DECEMBER 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 follow Equality Commission guidance:

- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities; and
- Practical guidance on equality impact assessment.

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			
Same-sex religious marriage in Northern Ireland	Consultation response published	16 July 2020	
Conversion entitlements in Northern Ireland	Consultation response published	22 October 2020	
Current Consultations			
Non-Jury Trial Provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007	Launched on 23 November 2020	Due to close on 15 February 2021	No

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Is this a Limited* Consultation (please complete for any new/current Consultations)
Forthcoming Consultations (within the next 3 months)			
None			

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

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

Policy	Current Status
Screening Exercises	
Non-Jury Trial provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007	Initial screening completed in advance of consultation launch on 23 November 2020.
Shared History Fund - Northern Ireland Centenary Programme	Published 23 December 2020
Marking the Centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021	Published 23 December 2020

iii) **EQIA Timetable**

Policy	Current Status
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS	
None	

If require any assistance please contact The Corporate Governance Team on 028 90 76 5497.