



**Northern  
Ireland  
Office**

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

**SIX MONTHLY UPDATE – JANUARY TO JUNE 2021**

**Corporate Governance Team  
Stormont House  
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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; and
- 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 **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 Para 4(2)(d) of the Act 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 within the NIO completes a return detailing:

- Any Consultation Exercises
- Screening Exercises
- Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs)

Details of Consultations, Screening Exercises and Equality Impact Assessments undertaken in the last six months are shown in the tables below.

## NIO Programme of Consultations, Equality Screening & Equality Impact Assessments

### i) Consultation Exercises within the last six months

Policy	Current Status	Last Updated	Limited Consultation*
<b>Recently completed consultations</b>			
Non-Jury Trial Provisions in the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007	Closed on 15 February 2021	Published on 26 April 2021	No
<b>Current consultations</b>			
None			
<b>Forthcoming consultations (within the next 3 months)</b>			
None			

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

### ii) Screening Exercises within the last six months

Policy	Current Status
<b>Screening Exercises</b>	
Accommodation Move - Relocation plans for a move of the NIO HQ from Stormont House to Belfast City Centre	Screening exercise completed in February 2021
Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Bill 2021 - provisions to support the sustainability of the Institutions and continuity of decision making for the Northern Ireland Executive	Screening exercise completed in April 2021
Rebalancing our workforce - An exercise to enable eligible staff on Fixed Term contracts to convert to permanent status	Screening exercise completed in June 2021
Northern Ireland Office approach to supporting the new US Envoy on Northern Ireland.	Screening exercise completed in June 2021

iii) **EQIA Timetable**

Policy	Current Status
<b>Equality Impact Assessments</b>	
None	