



Northern
Ireland
Office

Programme of NIO Consultations, Screenings, and Equality Impact Assessments

SIX MONTHLY UPDATE – JULY TO DECEMBER 2024

NIO Governance Team

January 2025

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*
Recently Completed Consultations			
N/A			
Current Consultations			
Consultation on the use of non-jury trials in Northern Ireland.	Launched 9 December 2024 and closes at 5pm on 3 March 2025	January 2025	
Forthcoming Consultations (within the next 3 months)			
NIO Equality Scheme and Diversity Action Plan	Due to begin in early 2025	January 2025	

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

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

Policy	Current Status
Screening Exercises	
S75 Screening for NIO Consultation: Non-Jury Trial Provisions under the Justice and Security (Northern Ireland) Act 2007	Published on 9 December 2024

iii) **EQIA Timetable**

Policy	Current Status
Equality Impact Assessments	
N/A	N/A