

June 2007

Welcome to the first edition of Equality Focus - the e-newsletter of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. We hope you find this useful and that you will pass it on to anyone you think would find it interesting. We welcome any suggestions or comments you may have.

Chief Commissioner's View from the Chair

One of the very special aspects of Northern Ireland's fair employment legislation has been the duty placed on all registered employers, in both the public and private sectors, to identify any under-representation in their workforces, and to take steps to correct them. In this article the Chief Commissioner outlines our work in advising employers on measures they should be taking under fair employment legislation.



Bob Collins
Chief Commissioner

[Read this article.](#)

European Year of Equal Opportunity for All 2007



The Equality Commission is celebrating European Year of Equal Opportunity for All through a series of events, a major conference and a promotional campaign called 'Equality for All'. Our activities will focus on four key themes: - rights, representation, recognition and respect. Like many organisations across Europe, we will use this year to make people more aware of their rights to enjoy equal treatment and a life free from discrimination.

[Click here for more details of our activities.](#)

Promotion of Traveller Issues

The Equality Commission has launched a [Draft Strategy for the Promotion of Traveller Issues](#). It is aimed at raising public awareness of the key issues which adversely affect Travellers including the areas of accommodation, health, education, employment and good relations. The closing date for comments on this draft strategy is **Monday 23 July 2007**.

For more information [click here](#).



Have Your Say on the Review of Section 75



The Commission has now concluded its review of Section 75. We have published a report with conclusions about key aspects of Section 75 and recommendations for change and would like to hear your views

on this report. The deadline for submitting your views is **Monday 6 August 2007**.

[Read the report and give us your views.](#)

New disability duties on Public Authorities

As part of a series of changes to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA), new duties on public authorities came into force on 1 January 2007. These new duties mean that public authorities, when exercising their functions, must have due regard to the need:

- to promote positive attitudes towards disabled people, and
- to encourage participation by disabled people in public life.

We have produced a [Guide for Public Authorities](#) to help them meet their new obligations. It includes guidance on how to develop disability action plans, which must be submitted to the Equality Commission within six months of the duties coming into effect - **30 June 2007** (unless the authority has been granted an exemption by the Equality Commission).

For more information [click here](#)

Guidance for Public Authorities on Consulting with Children and Young People

We are currently consulting on [Draft Guidance for Public Authorities on Consulting with Children and Young People](#). This Guidance will help public authorities to fulfil their obligation to consult directly with children and young people and to develop best practice. The closing date for submitting your views is **Friday 27 July 2007**.

For more detail on the consultation or the Draft Guidance [please click here](#).

If you have any comments on this newsletter or would like it in other formats please email: Una O'Kane, Communications Officer at uokane@equalityni.org

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