



15 March 2018

PRESS RELEASE

Equality Matters – Perceptions of equality in Northern Ireland

An Equality Commission survey has confirmed that equality matters to people in Northern Ireland. The majority of respondents agree that there are benefits to a more equal society. Most people said that equality issues were as important, or more important, to them than previously, the survey has found.

Dr Michael Wardlow, Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission, commented: “68% of people we surveyed thought that equality was as important, or more important, to them than it was 12 months earlier. When we analysed the results, it was apparent that there was no significant difference in responses from those of different religious beliefs to the question of whether equality was more or less important to them. Over a quarter (28%) of people surveyed said religion was an important equality issue to them – more than any other issue.”

More than half (54%) agreed that there is a need for equality and anti-discrimination laws in Northern Ireland and almost half (47%) agreed that equality and anti-discrimination law should be strengthened.

Dr Wardlow added: “It is significant that, although over two thirds of people consider equality is important, only one third think that we have equality for all in Northern Ireland. The key areas on which we need to see action and progress cover different aspects of our lives. They include issues around employment, housing, and education, and the fact that many women are still adversely affected by gender bias and inequality in our society.”

“While the survey findings are broadly positive it is clear from the responses that challenges remain, for our society and for the Commission“, he concluded.

- Download [‘Equality Matters’](#) (pdf, 396kb)