



POLICY POSITION: Key Point Briefing

Human Rights Framework: Equality Considerations

- 1.1 The recommendations set out below outline our high level views on what decision-makers in Northern Ireland and the UK Government should consider to further promote equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination through the domestic human rights framework.
- 1.2 By way of **general principles** that all decision-makers should adhere to, we recommend that action is taken to:
 - The Human Rights Act 1998 should not be reformed without a convincing case that such reform is necessary to further improve access to rights
 - Ensure the progressive realisation of rights and that enjoyment of rights does not regress.
 - Promote awareness and understanding of equality and human rights and responsibilities
 - Ensure rolling impact assessment and stakeholder engagement to inform steps to improve realisation of human rights
 - Ensure the domestic human rights framework reflects international human rights standards

- 1.3 We also draw attention to **recommendations specifically relating to human rights in Northern Ireland**, including:
- Ensure human rights law reflects the particular circumstances in Northern Ireland
 - Introduce a Northern Ireland Bill of Rights reflecting Northern Ireland’s particular circumstances
 - Include a principle of equality in the NI Bill of Rights
 - Strengthen Northern Ireland equality laws through single equality legislation
 - Strengthen Northern Ireland equality and human rights post Brexit
- 1.4 We would welcome your support and engagement with colleagues, officials, and elected representatives to raise awareness of our positions, and to secure advocacy of our recommendations, towards ensuring the maintenance and strengthening of a human rights framework which promotes equality of opportunity and prevents discrimination.
- 1.5 The Commission will continue to engage on its recommendations regarding human rights with the government locally and at UK level, relevant departments, elected officials and wider stakeholders both locally and including international human rights bodies.
- 1.6 We also continue to engage with international human rights bodies, including the UNCRPD Committee, to advance key policy priorities and recommendations for equality in Northern Ireland.
- 1.7 For further information on the Commission’s recommendations relating to human rights, please see www.equalityni.org/HumanRights

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