

PFG PRIORITIES:

LAW REFORM

➤ Recommendations

We recommend actions to:

- reform and strengthen equality law across a number of equality grounds; including age (as regards the provision of goods, facilities and services); race; disability; sex; fair employment; and sexual orientation;
- reform wider areas of the law that impact on Section 75 equality groups.

“People of all ages should have protection against discrimination on the grounds of age when accessing goods and services.”

ECNI: Strengthening Protection for Children and Young People, 2013.

➤ Equality law reform

The Commission is of the view that the introduction of single equality legislation would best harmonise and simplify the protections available in Northern Ireland. It is of note that equality legislation in other parts of the UK has already been streamlined and strengthened through the introduction of single equality legislation – namely the Equality Act 2010.

In the absence of single equality legislation, we recommend that the PFG contains a clear timetabled commitment to strengthen existing legislation in a number of key areas.

These include reform of:

- age discrimination legislation (in the provision of goods, facilities and services, relating to all ages);
- race equality legislation;
- disability discrimination legislation;
- sex equality legislation (as regards public functions);
- fair employment legislation (as regards the exception on recruitment of teachers and fair employment monitoring);
- sexual orientation equality law.

It also includes wider changes to the law that impact on Section 75 groups; for example, changes to law so as to permit same-sex marriage in Northern Ireland.

Reforming, strengthening and updating Northern Ireland equality law will help tackle inequalities, ensure greater harmonisation and consistency across the equality legislation, and address the significant gaps in protection between equality law in Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Read more: www.equalityni.org/LawReform

