

Programme for Government and Budget Recommendations



OVERARCHING RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that:

- there is a clear commitment in the PfG, underpinned by the inclusion of robust, outcome focused action measures, to identifying, addressing and monitoring the key inequalities experienced by the Section 75 equality groups, as well as to promoting good relations;
- a focus on addressing key inequalities includes identifying and mitigating any negative equality impacts, now and in the future, arising from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- the PfG makes it explicit that promoting equality of opportunity and good relations are cross-cutting themes across all Government strategies, legislative and policy development and actions;
- leadership is demonstrated in leadership in promoting positive and challenging negative social attitudes;
- all relevant PfG measures are not only tracked in aggregate but also for the impact on individuals from each of the Section 75 equality grounds;
- there is a clear commitment in the PfG, and in associated action plans, to stakeholder involvement from across the equality categories – not only in co-design but in the rolling monitoring and review of impacts.

Read more: www.equalityni.org/pfg



SOCIAL ATTITUDES

We recommend actions to challenge prejudicial attitudes, behaviour and hate crime, so as to ensure that workplaces, services, public spaces and communities are free from harassment and/or discrimination across the equality grounds.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Social Attitudes



EDUCATION

We recommend actions to:

- tackle prejudice-based bullying;
- address inequalities in attainment and access, with a particular focus on those experienced by Traveller, Roma and Newcomer children;
- ensure progress on a number of the recommendations ‘of benefit to all children’. In particular to advance childcare and early-years provision to meet the diverse needs of all children; drive attainment via collaborative approaches involving family and the wider community; and put in place a system for learning from successful interventions.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Education/Policy



EMPLOYMENT

We recommend actions to:

- support people with disabilities to access and remain in the workplace;
- support women's economic participation, including through access to appropriate, accessible and affordable childcare;
- address the exploitation and forced labour of migrant workers and the concentration of some minority ethnic workers in low paid employment;
- ensure the provision of training and programmes that are accessible and inclusive for all to get into, or stay in, work.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Employment/Policy



SOCIAL PROTECTION

We recommend actions to:

- protect the most vulnerable from the adverse impact of welfare reform, particularly mindful of the impact on people with disabilities and women, minority ethnic communities (including asylum seekers and refugees);
- give effect to the recommendations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) Inquiry Report into the impact of welfare reform (2016), and the 2017 UNCRPD Concluding Observations as they relate to welfare reform
- identify and commit to specific measures which will mitigate adverse impacts of welfare reform, or to any alternate policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/SocialProtection/Policy



HOUSING, ACCOMMODATION AND COMMUNITIES

We recommend actions to:

- identify and remove barriers to health, social care and well-being experienced by particular Section 75 equality groups, including older people; Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) people; trans people; Irish Travellers and other minority ethnic communities; and people with disabilities;
- ensure investment in health care to address the specific needs of equality groups, including the health care needs of people with disabilities, and young people's mental health needs.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Housing/Policy



PARTICIPATION IN PUBLIC & POLITICAL LIFE

We recommend actions to:

- address identified gaps in equality data across a number of areas of public policy; and ensure that data is sufficiently disaggregated to allow for meaningful equality analysis, to better inform public policy development;
- increase diversity in government public appointments by taking actions to increase the participation of those with disabilities; delivering on gender targets for boards and chairs; and implementing its 'Strategic Approach to Public Appointments Policy and Board Effectiveness in NI' policy and action plan to advance participation more generally;
- increase diversity in political representation by advancing the participation of women, and individuals from minority ethnic groups, in political life.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Participation/Policy



LAW REFORM

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

P f G P R I O R I T I E S :

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.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/LawReform/Policy



EU-UK WITHDRAWAL

We recommend actions to:

- commit to act in accordance with the UK Government's obligations under Article 2 of the EU-UK Withdrawal Agreement: Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland, including the commitment to keep pace with any future EU changes to 'Annex 1' Directives;
- commit to ensure that equality laws keep pace, not only with 'Annex 1' EU equality laws (as required under Article 2 of the Protocol), but with all future EU laws that strengthen equality rights;
- commit to address, and mitigate, the potential impact of any loss of EU funding on equality groups, as well as the impact on the voluntary and community sector.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/Brexit



EQUALITY STRATEGIES

We recommend action to:

- ensure that effective equality and good relations strategies and action plans are implemented and updated across the full range of anti-discrimination grounds.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/equalitydata/Policy



EQUALITY DATA

We recommend action to:

- collect comprehensive equality data to identify equality impacts and shape targeted actions to advance equality;
- address key gaps in equality data, including on the grounds of gender identity, sexual orientation, and race;
- rectify the lack of data disaggregation in relation to ethnicity, disability and gender.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/EqualityData/Policy



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS

We recommend action to:

- address key shortfalls in Northern Ireland so as to ensure compliance with obligations in international human rights conventions, including the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD).



Read more: www.equalityni.org/IntlMech/Policy



BUDGET

In the preparation of budget proposals, Departments and other public authorities should ensure that they are fulfilling their statutory equality and good relations duties.

The Commission has set out in guidance how Section 75 duties and equality scheme commitments apply to the budget processes. Equality scheme arrangements and tools - i.e. screening and equality impact assessment (EQIA) - provide a means for Departments and other public authorities to assess the likely impacts of the budget proposals.



Read more: www.equalityni.org/equalitydata/Policy

