



**Equality Commission**

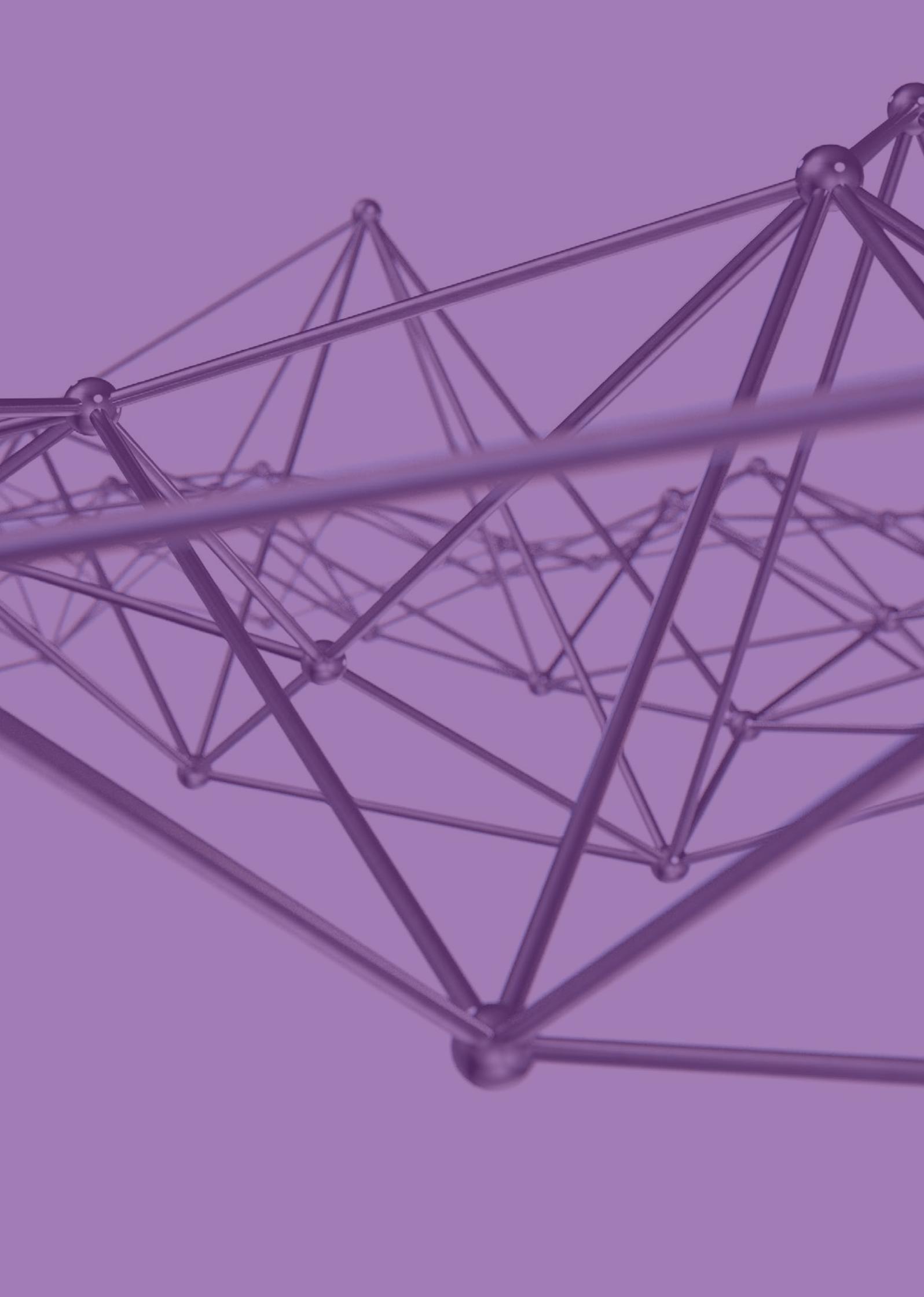
FOR NORTHERN IRELAND



# Section 75 Using Evidence in Policy Making A Signposting Guide

Developed in partnership with





# Contents

1. Section 75 Data/Evidence – Some Key Points
2. Sources of Section 75 Data/Evidence
  - a) Population level sources
  - b) Organisational level sources
3. Summary Guidance
  - a) Why draft a Section 75 signposting document?
  - b) Who is this guidance for?
  - c) Why do you need Section 75 data/evidence?
  - d) Types of Section 75 data/evidence
  - e) Consider data through a Section 75 lens
  - f) How do I analyse the Section 75 data/evidence?

# 1. Section 75 Data / Evidence – Some Key Points



**The Section 75 statutory duties require** public authorities to adhere to the arrangements in their Equality Schemes and pay the appropriate level of regard when revising and developing policies.



If you are a public authority you are required to:

- **Assess any equality and good relations impacts**, usually by conducting equality assessments (screenings and EQIAs), of policies being reviewed or developed. This includes assessing any adverse impacts and seeking opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations, before the policy is implemented.
- **Monitor any adverse impacts of policies adopted** and publish this information as per equality scheme commitments.



**In order to assess the equality impacts and monitor any adverse impacts of policies, you will need information** to ensure that your decisions and equality assessments are evidence based and appropriate. The type and volume of such information must be relevant, appropriate and proportionate to the policy you are considering.



**A failure to include appropriate and relevant information** may be a failure to comply with the arrangements in your equality scheme and to pay the appropriate level of regard. If you do not use Section 75 information to assess the equality implications of a proposed policy, there is a risk of a Section 75 complaint, an Equality Commission investigation or a Judicial Review.



**Types of data:** The information required to assess and monitor the impacts of policies will be dependent on, and relevant to, the policies being considered. The sources of information may be population and/or organisational and may be quantitative or qualitative. Qualitative information may be particularly useful where the policy is of a sensitive nature or where there is a lack of quantitative data.



**There is no single central source of information on which to base Section 75 assessments**, which means you may need to seek appropriate sources of evidence, liaising internally and externally to gather this. The information could relate to broader social, economic and population information and it may be necessary to analyse fully to assess any impacts of the policy on the Section 75 grounds. We describe this as considering information through a ‘Section 75 lens’.



**NISRA is the primary source of official statistics in Northern Ireland** and has developed a guide on [Accessing NISRA population level-section 75 data](#).



**The absence of information does not mean there are no equality impacts.** In order to make evidence based assessments you should gather appropriate information (data/evidence) that is relevant to the policy. This could include using qualitative information and/or research reports. If you identify gaps in data during the screening/EQIA process you should put measures in place to monitor the impacts of the policy in question on the Section 75 groups. Your monitoring arrangements will ensure there will be no gaps in data when you come to review or amend the policy in the future.



**Outcomes Based Approach (OBA)** and the need for relevant and appropriate information to monitor and evaluate outcomes is relevant to the Section 75 requirements to assess and monitor the impacts of policies. It will be important that you consider the requirement for information in an integrated manner to ensure a meaningful approach across your organisation.



## 2. Sources of Section 75 Data/Evidence

There is no single source of information to be used for your Section 75 equality assessments (screening /EQIA) and Section 75 monitoring requirements.

Sources of information in this publication are grouped under:

### a) Population level sources

- i. Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA)  
NISRA is the primary source of official statistics in Northern Ireland and has published a guide on how to access NISRA population level Section 75 data.
- ii. The NI Longitudinal Study
- iii. Northern Ireland Government Departments & Other Public Bodies, including Top 20 Datasets used by Local Councils in NI
- iv. Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI) & Other Commissions
- v. Community / Voluntary & Other Research Organisations
- vi. International Conventions



### b) Organisational level sources

Your public authority may have or could gather internally, sources of information which could provide relevant evidence for Section 75 assessments and monitoring outcomes.



## 2a) Population level sources



**NISRA**

Northern Ireland  
Statistics and Research Agency

Gníomhaireacht Thuaisceart Éireann  
um Staitisticí agus Taighde

### i) NISRA

NISRA is an agency of the Department of Finance and is the principal source of official statistics and social research on Northern Ireland. These statistics and research inform public policy and associated debate in the wider society.

NISRA aims to produce and disseminate high quality, trusted and meaningful statistics and research to inform decisions and improve understanding and to provide a high quality and cost effective civil registration service to meet user needs. NISRA has statisticians in all Civil Service Departments as well as some Councils and other public sector organisations.

## Population level sources

The table below allows you to access a range of data from the NISRA web site.

|                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Agriculture and Environment |  Births, Deaths and Marriages        |  Business and Energy              |
|  Census                      |  Children, Education and Skills      |  Crime and Justice                |
|  Deprivation                 |  Economy                             |  Government                       |
|  Health and Social Care      |  Housing, Community and Regeneration |  Labour Market and Social Welfare |
|  NI Summary Statistics       |  People, Places and Culture          |  Population                       |
|  Programme for Government    |  Tourism                             |  Travel and Transport             |



NISRA manages the **Northern Ireland Neighbourhood Information Service (NINIS)** which was developed to make small area information held within Central Government and Non-Departmental Public Bodies available to as wide an audience as possible.

The NINIS website contains datasets on a range of socio-economic themes at small-area statistical geographies; area profiles that provide statistical snapshots of an area and mapping facilities that enable statistics to be interpreted in a spatial context.

### Support

NISRA provide advice to assist you to access data and answer queries in relation to accessing data and will consider requests to commission specific tables from existing datasets.

NISRA have prepared [a document to assist you to navigate and access data from the NINIS website](#). The NINIS team also hold regular workshops and on-line training to help users navigate through the web site.

**If you have a query you can contact NISRA via the helpline +44 (0)300 200 7836 or email [info@nisra.gov.uk](mailto:info@nisra.gov.uk)**

## ii) The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study



[The Northern Ireland Longitudinal Study \(NILS\)](#) is a wide-ranging database of people and their major life events, stretching back decades. Health card registrations are used as a base to link Census information from 1981 to 2011 and other administrative datasets such as vital events, school data, property information, multiple deprivation measures, weather and pollution amongst others.

This will allow Section 75 data to be explored over a period of time. The NILS can provide evidence for research into social issues and the evaluation of government policies.

Access to the data is free of charge and can be applied for on a project basis. NILS can support the development of your project by providing technical guidance on the completion of a project application via our NILS Research Support Unit. The Research Support Unit has staff within NISRA and Queens University Belfast.

Working with longitudinal data sources does require specific statistical skills and analysts must have approved researcher status. However, NILS are keen to build partnerships for those lacking resources/capacity. If you have an idea for a relevant project and can work with NILS to build the rationale and impact pathways, they may be able to provide academic and statistical direction to complete the project. Funding may also be applied for to foster these partnerships via the [ESRC Impact Acceleration Account](#). For more information or to discuss potential projects and/or collaborations please [contact NILS](#).

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### Contact:

General Enquiries: [nils@qub.ac.uk](mailto:nils@qub.ac.uk)

Address: NILS C/O Queens University Belfast

Website: [www.nils-rsu.co.uk](http://www.nils-rsu.co.uk)

### iii) Northern Ireland Government Departments & Other Public Bodies

#### Departmental Research Pages

Each Government Department has a statistics branch and statisticians seconded from NISRA to provide data support. The following tables provide links to Department research pages and a summary of the information they hold.

Statistics and research information for each Department is available on the [NISRA website](#) and on the following pages of this publication.



### iii) Departmental Research Pages

The Departmental logos below are linked to each department's homepage.

## Department

## Statistics and Research Page

### [Department of Finance](#)



[Contact](#)

The Department of Finance publishes a wide range of statistics. **They include statistics compiled by:**

- The Land and Property Services (LPS) relating to new dwellings, housing stock statistics
- Lone pensioner allowance and disabled persons allowance statistics
- Public sector expenditure statistics are also available on this web site as well as statistics relating to human resources in the Northern Ireland Civil Service

### [NISRA](#)



[Contact](#)

NISRA publishes statistics on their website as well as links to statistics published by other Departments produced by NISRA statisticians.

**Statistics on the NISRA website include:**

- Tourism
- Economic and Labour Market Statistics (ELMS)
- Business statistics
- Labour market statistics
- NICS human resource statistics
- Vital statistics (births, deaths and marriages)
- Population (estimates, projection and migration)
- Census
- Deprivation
- Local area statistics (NINIS)

### [Department of Education](#)



[Contact](#)

Publications are produced by the Analytical Services Unit on behalf of the Department. **These include:**

- Statistical reports on school enrolments and performance, school leavers
- Attendance
- School meals
- Education workforce

Research reports on international studies and other research commissioned by the Department can also be found on this page.

### iii) Departmental Research Pages

## Department

### [Department for Communities](#)



[Contact](#)

## Statistics and Research Page

Statistics and research that help guide the Department on policy, planning and decision making. It includes information about:

- Social security benefits
- Housing
- Sport, museums and libraries
- Culture and heritage
- Employment programmes and the labour market
- Family resources survey
- Public Record Office for Northern Ireland (PRONI)
- Welfare changes and evaluation
- Community regeneration
- Other DfC research

### [Department for the Economy](#)



[Contact](#)

This page contains statistics, research and analysis about the local economy and the development of skills, including:

- Higher and Further Education and training statistics
- Energy statistics
- Briefing and research
- Appraisal and evaluation

### [Department for Infrastructure](#)



[Contact](#)

Statistics and research that inform decision making within the Department's areas of responsibility including statistics and research on:

- Travel
- Transport
- Planning
- Road safety
- Driver and Vehicle Agency
- Active travel and use of public transport

## iii) Departmental Research Pages

## Department

### Department of Health



### Contact

### DAERA



### Contact

## Statistics and Research Page

The Information & Analysis Directorate (IAD) provides statistical information relating to many aspects of health and social care services in Northern Ireland. This includes statistics and information on:

- Commissioned surveys
- Family health services
- Health inequalities
- Hospitals
- Public health
- Mental health and learning disability
- Quality measurement
- Resource allocation
- Patient safety
- Social care
- The HSC workforce

The Department holds a range of statistics covering agriculture, environment, rural communities, food, animal health, fisheries and forestry in Northern Ireland. Statistics are available for the following areas:

- Agricultural statistics
- Environmental statistics
- Rural statistics
- Farmer equality indicators
- Animal health
- Fisheries
- Food
- Forestry

For up-to-date reports, bulletins and other information, you can follow the Department's statistical section on Twitter.

### iii) Departmental Research Pages

## Department

### Department of Justice



#### Contact

## Statistics and Research Page

The Department holds statistics on:

- Crime surveys
- Reoffending
- Victims and witnesses
- Prison population
- Compendia
- Omnibus survey
- Prosecutions and convictions
- Court statistics
- Youth justice statistics

### The Executive Office



#### Contact

The Executive Office statistics and research teams provide statistical support to policies and programmes, and also produce a number of official statistics publications.

Reports relating to personal wellbeing, life satisfaction, self-efficacy and locus of control are published on the website, as well as the Anholt-GfK Roper Nation Brands Index which is used to assess and monitor Northern Ireland's international reputation.

Publications relating to public appointments, good relations, and racial equality are also included alongside Outcomes Delivery Plan Indicators bulletins.

Links to legacy reports on topics such as gender equality, labour force religion breakdowns, and disability are provided.

## iii) Departmental Research Pages

## Department

### Northern Ireland Assembly



#### Contact

## Statistics and Research Page

The **Research and Information Service (RaISe)** provides neutral, non-partisan and evidence-based research and other information to support the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly. RaISe products relating to equality include the following:

- Research papers are produced in support of the work of Members and the business of the Assembly. Examples in the area of equality include papers on the development of fair employment law and statistics relating to women and men in Northern Ireland.
- The **Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series** is a partnership between RaISe, Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University and the Open University by which papers on key topics of interest to the Assembly are presented by relevant academics. Examples in the area of equality include social welfare and poverty and women in the workplace.
- Research Matters is a blog produced by RaISe which discusses issues of topical interest. Examples in the area of equality include gender and power and period poverty.



### iii) Local Councils – Top 20 Most Popular Datasets

The table below provides links to the top 20 most popular NISRA datasets used by local Councils in Northern Ireland. Users should note that the exact link you require will depend on the geographical area you are referring to.

|                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Population</b>                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">1. The Demographic Characteristics of the NI Population</a></li> <li><a href="#">2. Population Projections: 5 Year Age Bands – LGD</a></li> <li><a href="#">3. Resident Population – Household Size</a></li> <li><a href="#">4. 2001 Census Settlements Population and Household Numbers</a></li> <li><a href="#">5. 2011 Census Settlements population and household numbers (for comparison)</a></li> </ul> |
| <b>Jobs/Economy/<br/>Tourism</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">6. Universal Credit</a></li> <li><a href="#">7. Employee Jobs (admin geographies)</a></li> <li><a href="#">8. VAT/PAYE Registered Businesses (SOA/SA/Ward)</a></li> <li><a href="#">9. Labour Force Survey</a></li> <li><a href="#">10. Inter Departmental Business Register</a></li> <li><a href="#">11. LGD Tourism Statistics – Microdata AND Additional Tables</a></li> </ul>                             |
| <b>Deprivation/Health/<br/>Wellbeing</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">12. The Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measures</a></li> <li><a href="#">13. Disability Living Allowance Recipients (admin geographies)</a></li> <li><a href="#">14. Dental and GP Registrations</a></li> <li><a href="#">15. Health and Social Care Inequality Monitoring System</a></li> </ul>                                                                                                       |
| <b>Housing/<br/>Infrastructure</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">16. Housing Stock Tables</a></li> <li><a href="#">17. Planning Statistics</a></li> <li><a href="#">18. Home Internet and Broadband Access</a><br/>(this link will bring you to a search facility to access your required information)</li> <li><a href="#">19. NI Agricultural Census</a></li> </ul>                                                                                                          |
| <b>Crime and Justice</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">20. Recorded Crime for all Offences</a></li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

### iii) Open Data Portal

Governments create and look after data that helps deliver services to the public. You can access the [Open Data NI portal](#) to find data from Government Departments and other public sector organisations in Northern Ireland. Data is available in datasets across a range of themes:

The individual icons in the table below are linked to a range of data on the Open Data Portal.

|                                                                                                             |                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Health                    |  Education       |  Finance                          |
|  Environment & agriculture |  Property & land |  Tourism, leisure, culture & arts |
|  Population & society     |  Transport      |  Economy, industry & employment  |

You can also view the [Open Data Strategy for Northern Ireland 2020-2023](#)

### iii) Programme for Government Data

Information relating to the Northern Ireland draft Programme for Government (PfG) and Public Service Agreement (PSA – government targets), as well as relevant statistics can be accessed through the following links:

[Programme for Government/Outcomes Delivery Plan | The Executive Office](#)

[Programme for Government | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)



### iii) Other Public Bodies

There are also a wide range of research reports and statistics produced by other public sector organisations both in Northern Ireland and beyond. Some of these sources of information are listed below.

#### Organisation

#### Statistics and Research Page

##### [Community Relations Council](#)



- Northern Ireland Peace Monitoring Report
- Shared Space

[Contact](#)

##### [Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment \(CCEA\)](#)



- Qualifications
- Curriculum
- Corporate
- Questionnaires

[Contact](#)

##### [Government Equalities Office Gov.uk](#)



- Factsheet: Voluntary gender equality reporting
- Experiences of and barriers to participation in public and political life for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

[Contact](#)

##### [National Institute of Adult Continuing Education \(NIACE\)](#)



- About research in local government
- About the research team
- LGA Research bulletin
- Partner organisations
- Research publications
- Software and tools
- Statistical alert

[Contact](#)

## iii) Other Public Bodies

## Organisation

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### [Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People \(NICCY\)](#)



[Contact](#)

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### [Northern Ireland Housing Executive](#)



[Contact](#)

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### [Police Service of Northern Ireland](#)



[Contact](#)

## Statistics and Research Page

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The work of NICCY covers a wide range of issues affecting children's lives such as play and leisure, education, social care, health services and justice. Web site policy areas include:

- Discrimination
  - Education
  - Family life
  - Health and well-being
  - Youth justice
  - Poverty etc.
- 

- House Price Indices
  - Housing Research Bulletin
  - House Condition Survey
  - Housing Market Review
  - Housing Market Analysis
  - Housing Market Intelligence Exchange
  - National Statistics Protocols and Compliance
  - Welfare Reform
  - Publications and Links
- 

- Police Recorded Crime Statistics
- Anti-Social Behaviour Statistics
- Domestic Abuse Statistics
- Hate Motivation Statistics
- Drug Seizure Statistics
- Road Traffic Collision Statistics
- Strength of Police Service Statistics
- Workforce Composition Figures
- Security Situation Statistics
- In-Year Performance Against Policing Plan
- Stop and Search Statistics
- Statistics on Police Use of Force
- Motoring Offences Statistics
- Police and Criminal Evidence (PACE) Order Statistics

iii) Other Public Bodies

**Organisation**

**Statistics and Research Page**

[The Electoral Commission](#)



[Contact](#)

- Electoral registration research
- Electoral data
- Public opinion surveys
- Referendum question testing
- Other research
- Research report library

[The Policing Board](#)



[Contact](#)

- Annual crime statistics
- Custody visitor statistics
- Hate crime statistics
- Use of 'stop and search' statistics
- Public perceptions of policing reports

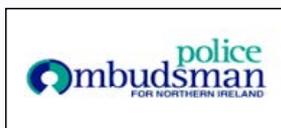
[Commissioner for Older People for NI](#)



[Contact](#)

- Care provision for older people in NI
- Financial abuse of older people in NI
- Commissioner Report: A summary of advice to government
- Valuing an ageing workforce
- Rates of crime against older people in NI

[The Police Ombudsman](#)



[Contact](#)

- Complaints in NI
- Complaints in your area
- Police officer satisfaction survey
- Complainant satisfaction survey

[The Public Prosecution Service](#)



[Contact](#)

- Quarterly statistical bulletins
- Thematic bulletins

iii) Other Public Bodies

### Organisation

#### The Commission for Victims and Survivors



[Contact](#)

### Statistics and Research Page

- Peace IV Research Programme
- CVS NI Outcome Delivery Plan

#### Business Services Organisation



[Contact](#)

- Family practitioner services official statistics
- General medical services historical data
- Dental historic data
- Prescription cost analysis open data and historic reports
- Ophthalmic historic data

#### Probation Board for Northern Ireland



[Contact](#)

- PBNI caseload statistics
- Stakeholder survey reports
- Key facts and figures
- Statistics and research archive



iii) Statistics Published on GB, Ireland and Europe

**Organisation**

**Statistics and Research Page**

Office for National Statistics



[Contact](#)

- Business, industry and trade
- Economy
- Employment and labour market
- People, population and community

Eurostat



[Contact](#)

- General and regional statistics
- Economy and finance
- Population and social conditions
- Industry, trade and services
- Agriculture and fisheries
- International trade
- Transport
- Environment and energy
- Science, technology and digital society

National Records of Scotland



[Contact](#)

- Scotland's census
- Infographics and visualisations
- Time series datasets
- Council area profiles
- Scotland's population
- Annual review of demographic trends

Welsh Government



[Contact](#)

- Statistics on –
- Maternity and birth rate
  - Migration
  - Arson
  - Homelessness
  - Abortion
  - Key economic statistics

## iii) Statistics Published on GB, Ireland and Europe

## Organisation

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### Central Statistics Office



[Contact](#)

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## Statistics and Research Page

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- People and society
  - Labour market and earnings
  - Business sectors
  - Economy
  - Environment
- 

### Scottish Government



[Contact](#)

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The Scottish Government have produced an [online tool](#) that provides an easy means to find the equality-related data and indicators that the Scottish Government and its agencies have produced.

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### OFCOM



[Contact](#)

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- Communications market report
  - Complaints against telecom and Pay TV
  - Audio description awareness data
  - Consumer issues survey
  - Disability consumer research
  - News consumption in the UK
  - Media Tracker
  - Children's media literacy
  - Adult's media literacy
  - Postal service volumes and revenue
  - Residential and business postal tracker
  - Wi-Fi airborne measurements
- 

### Utility Regulator



[Contact](#)

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- Electricity sector overview
- Gas sector overview
- Water sector overview

## iv) The Equality Commission

### Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Equality Commission provides a range of reports and information on its website in relation to [policy, research and investigations](#), as well as [consultation responses](#) which may assist you to obtain the relevant information for screening, EQIA and monitoring purposes. Issues covered on the website include:

The icons below are linked to ECNI data sources.

|                                     |                  |                                |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|
| ■ Education                         | ■ Employment     | ■ Health & social care         |
| ■ Housing & communities             | ■ Law reform     | ■ Participation in public life |
| ■ Social attitudes & good relations | ■ Welfare reform | ■ UNCRPD                       |

### ECNI Research

The Commission's [Statement on Key Inequalities in Northern Ireland \(2017\)](#) includes four individual Statements:

1. [Statement on Key Inequalities in Housing and Communities in Northern Ireland, 2017](#);
2. [Key Inequalities in Education, 2017](#);
3. [Key Inequalities in Participation in Public Life, 2018](#); and,
4. [Key Inequalities in Employment, 2018](#)

Each statement on key inequalities in Northern Ireland seeks to highlight the nature and extent of inequalities across the nine equality grounds covered by Section 75: gender; racial group; disability status; sexual orientation; religious belief; political opinion; age; marital status; and dependency status in respect to the topics listed above. Where possible, inequalities experienced by members of a particular equality group due to multiple identities are also highlighted.

## ECNI Policy Priorities

Aligned to the statements on key inequalities are policy priorities and wider recommendations which set out the actions the Commission believes are necessary to tackle identified, persistent and emergent inequalities:

1. [Equality in Housing and Communities, 2019](#)
2. [Equality in Education, 2018](#)
3. [Equality in Participation in Public Life, 2019](#)
4. [Employment Policy](#)

**ECNI Equality Awareness Survey:** The Commission regularly undertakes an Equality Awareness Survey of the general public in Northern Ireland to ask about their attitudes towards and perceptions of equality [2018 Equality Awareness Survey](#).

**ECNI - A Welcoming and Inclusive Workforce Survey:** [Summary of the survey responses](#).

**Brexit:** A number of policy positions concerning protecting and advancing equality and good relations as the [UK exits from the European Union](#).

**PfG:** Commission recommendations in relation to the [Programme for Government](#)

**Disability Policy:** [Disability Equality](#)

**Gender Policy:** [Gender Equality](#)

**Race Policy:** [Racial Equality](#)

**Sexual Orientation Policy:** [Promoting Sexual Orientation Equality - Priorities and Recommendations](#)

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## Section 75 and Formal Investigations

The Equality Commission publishes reports on a range of [Formal Investigations](#) that highlight inequalities across a number of Section 75 groups. For example:

- › **Expecting Equality: Pregnant workers and mothers in Northern Ireland workplaces.**
- › **Exception of teachers from FETO.**
- › **Has health information for people with a learning disability got better?**
- › **Health information for people with a learning disability.**
- › **The recruitment sector in the employment of migrant workers.**

## iv) Other Equality and Human Rights Commissions/Councils

### Equality and Human Rights Commission



[Contact](#)

EHRC research investigates equality and human rights across Great Britain.

EHRC are building a robust evidence base to influence policy, inform strategic priorities and improve people's lives.

EHRC conduct major research projects into pressing issues of social inequality and areas in which our human rights are under threat. Approaches vary from interviews with members of the public to complex statistical analysis of large datasets, such as household surveys.

### Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

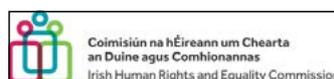


[Contact](#)

The NIHRC web site links you to organisations that can provide data on the following topics:

- Housing • Disability
- Discrimination • Employment
- Immigration and Asylum
- Mental Health • Detention
- Death Investigations and Inquests

### Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission



[Contact](#)

The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission is Ireland's national human rights and equality institution.

Data is available on the following topics:

- Evolving Justice Arrangements Post-Brexit
- Caring and Unpaid Work in Ireland
- Disability and Discrimination in Ireland
- Discrimination and Inequality in Housing in Ireland
- Discussion Paper on Brexit
- Who Experiences Discrimination in Ireland?
- Attitudes to Diversity in Ireland
- Establishing a Monitoring Framework in Ireland for the UNCRPD
- Ireland and the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture
- Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty

## v) Community / Voluntary & Other Research Organisations

### Community/Voluntary Organisations



[Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action \(NICVA\)](#) is a membership and representative umbrella body for the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland. [Membership](#) includes over 1,000 members of community organisations, voluntary groups, charities and associate members from statutory and business sectors.

NICVA's research team develops knowledge and provides a strong evidence base on issues that affect the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector. They produce reports for organisations, researchers, policy makers and organisations interested in the sector.

NICVA's [State of the Sector research](#) provides an overview of the scale and characteristics of Northern Ireland's voluntary, community and social enterprise sector and a snapshot of the varied and dynamic environment within which it operates.

[NICVA can also provide you with a list of community and voluntary organisations](#) that may be able to provide you with quantitative and qualitative data/evidence for equality assessments and monitoring impacts.

**Your approved equality scheme** also contains a list of consultees and this is a useful list to gather evidence/data for equality assessments and monitoring impacts.



## Other Research Organisations

There are many additional research, statistics and policy organisations that provide a range of information that will be useful for equality assessments and monitoring impacts.

### v) Other Research Organisations

#### Organisation

##### [Access Research Knowledge \(ARK\)](#)



[Contact](#)

#### Statistics and Research Page Headings

ARK is Northern Ireland's social policy hub. Established in 2000 by researchers at Queen's University Belfast and Ulster University, its primary goal is to increase the accessibility and use of academic data and research.

Work includes:

- A suite of three annual public attitudes surveys
  - > NI Life and Times Survey
  - > Young Life and Times Survey
  - > Kids' Life and Times Survey
- Conflict Archive on the Internet (CAIN)
- A critical policy unit
- A programme of work focused on ageing
- A wide range of public engagement activities
- Surveys On-Line

##### [Institute for Conflict Research](#)



[Contact](#)

The Institute for Conflict Research is an independent, not for profit organisation that has been based in Belfast since 1996. ICR specialises in research, training, mediation and capacity building for a shared and safe society through conflict transformation and social inclusion.

Information is available in the following areas:

- Conflict & Violence
- Equality & Diversity
- Hate Crime • Legacy of the Conflict
- Migration • Policing
- Sectarianism & Segregation
- Young People

## v) Other Research Organisations

## Organisation

### Joseph Rowntree Foundation



[Contact](#)

### New Policy Institute



[Contact](#)

### Office for National Statistics



[Contact](#)

### Resolution Foundation



[Contact](#)

## Statistics and Research Page Headings

An independent organisation working to inspire social change through research, policy and practice.

- Research Reports
- Poverty Statistics

A UK research institute which produces evidence-based research on a range of social and economic issues including:

- Poverty
- Social Security
- Housing
- Economics

The UK's largest independent producer of official statistics and the recognised national statistical institute of the UK.

- Business, industry and trade
- Economy
- Employment and labour market
- People, population and community

An independent think-tank focused on improving living standards for those on low to middle incomes.

- Incomes
- Inequality and poverty
- Jobs
- Skills and pay
- Housing
- Wealth and assets
- Tax and welfare
- Public spending
- Economic growth

## v) Other Research Organisations

## Organisation

## Statistics and Research Page Headings

### Age UK



[Contact](#)

Age UK seek to influence decision makers by conducting social and economic analysis, developing public policy proposals and shaping policy agendas in a wide range of areas:

- Demographics and ageing population
- Health in later life
- Ageing and the economy

### Policy Forum for NI



[Contact](#)

The Policy Forum for Northern Ireland organises senior-level conferences on public policy and aims to improve the quality of debate on public policy developments and so create opportunities for informed discussion.

- Report: Moving Forward - Putting NI on Track for the Future

### Queen's University Belfast



[Contact](#)

Numerous papers available in areas including:

- Economics
- Finance
- Centre for Economic History
- Centre for Irish Business and Economic Performance
- Centre for Not For Profit and Public Sector Research
- Centre for Health Research at the Management School (CHaRMS)

### University of Ulster



[Contact](#)

Numerous papers available in areas including:

- Architecture, Built Environment and Planning
- Art and Design
- Biomedical Sciences
- Business and Management
- Computer Science and Informatics
- Education • Law
- Nursing and Health
- Social Work and Sociology

## v) Other Research Organisations

## Organisation

### International Labour Organisation (ILO)



#### Contact

## Statistics and Research Page Headings

Brings together governments, employers and workers of 187 member states, to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes promoting decent work for all women and men.

- ILOSTAT - the world's leading source on labour statistics
- Capacity Building
- Legal Databases

### Sheffield Hallam University



#### Contact

Sheffield Hallam University is a Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research in the following areas:

- People, place and policy
- Housing
- Welfare reform and labour markets
- Regeneration and economic development
- Voluntary and community sector
- Community cohesion and migration
- Vulnerable groups
- Sustainability
- Measuring outcomes and impacts



## vi) International Conventions

Information and recommendations made by international treaty bodies (such as those listed below) to address key inequalities through the development and delivery of legislation, policy and practices may be of value to you when gathering information to assess and monitor equality impacts of a public authorities policies/decisions.

For further information see Equality Commission for Northern Ireland website section [International Mechanisms](#)

- › [United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women \(CEDAW\)](#)
- › [United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination \(CERD\)](#)
- › [United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(UNCRPD\)](#)
- › [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities \(FCNM\), United Nations Covenant on Economic, Social & Cultural Rights](#)
- › [European Commission against Racism and Intolerance \(ECRI\)](#)
- › [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages \(ECRML\)](#)
- › [Universal Periodic Review \(UPR\)](#)

In addition,

- [Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young people \(NICCY\)](#) has produced useful information on the [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#)
- The [Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission](#) has a range of publications that may provide a data and evidence base for policy development. This includes International conventions as well as a range of other human rights work, much of which identifies inequalities for the range of Section 75 categories.

## 2b) Organisation level sources



In order to assess the equality impacts and monitor any adverse impacts of policies, you will need information to ensure that your decisions and assessments are evidence based and appropriate. The type and volume of such information must be **relevant** and **proportionate** to the policy you are considering.

This may mean that available information from within your public authority is of more relevance than population level information. It is also likely, depending on the policy, that you **may need both** organisational and population information to assess and monitor the impact of a policy. You must follow your public authority's equality scheme monitoring commitments and this will assist you to ensure you have the relevant organisational level data for equality assessments.

### Potential Sources of Organisation Level Information

#### **Service delivery functions - sources of information includes for example:**

- Disability action plan
- Section 75 action plan and audit of inequalities
- Good relations audits and/or action plans
- Data/evidence from previous screening and equality impact assessments
- Equality data from user or exit surveys, such as customer satisfaction surveys, which include equality and good relations questions
- Consultations on issues relating to equality and good relations and research reports relevant to the public authority's functions
- Service complaints relating to equality and good relations

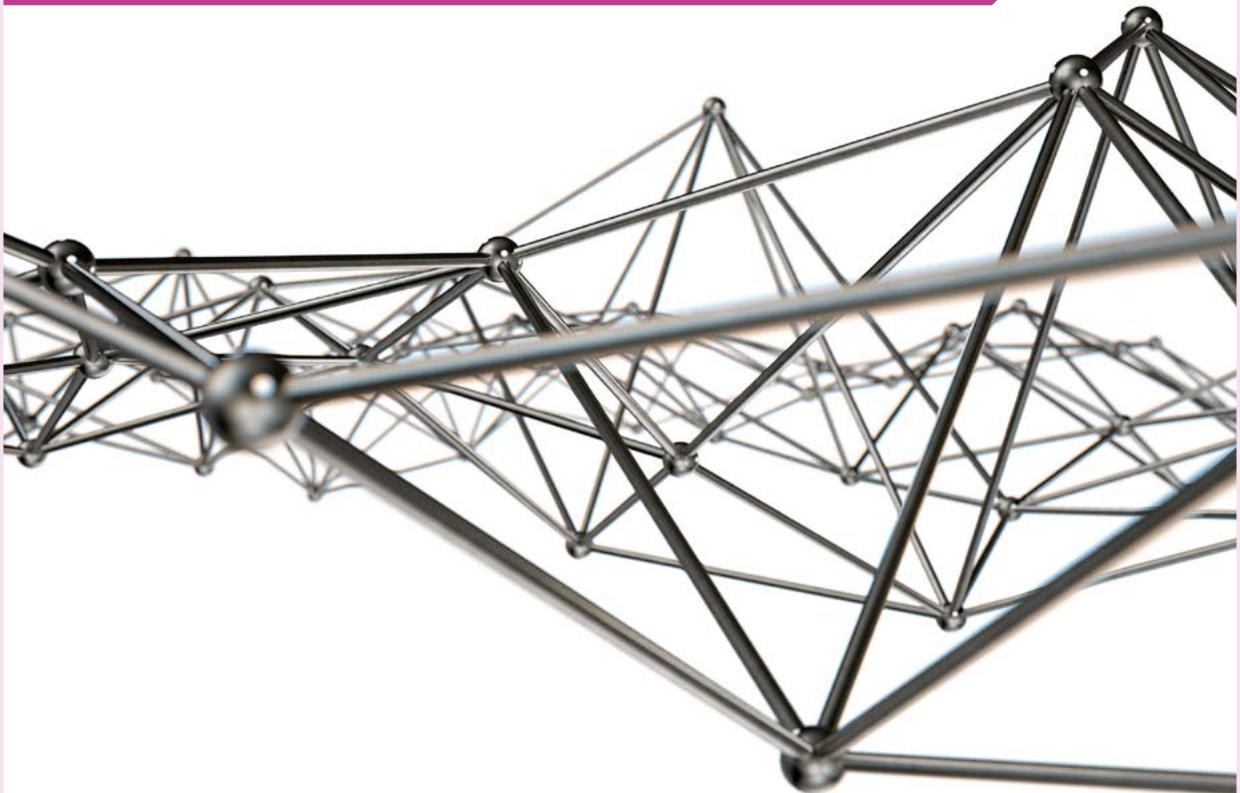


#### **Employment/participation in public life functions - sources of information includes for example:**

- Article 55 Reviews under the Fair Employment & Treatment legislation,
- Workforce equality monitoring information across the range of Section 75 equality groups, including the profile of staff by grade, pay and the uptake of employment policies for example flexible working policies
- Staff satisfaction surveys across the Section 75 groups
- Information from internal equality working groups or forums
- Trade unions may have relevant research information on Section 75 groups
- Staff complaints, including Industrial Tribunal applications, relating to equality and good relations
- Data on the composition, by Section 75 group, of Board Members or other public life positions for which your public authority has responsibility
- Section 75 and Disability Action Plans.

**Remember: the absence of information does not mean there are no equality impacts.**

Public authorities should try to gather information in order to assess equality impacts (screening and EQIA) and monitor actual impacts of policies on Section 75 groups. Where limited information is available you should ensure that monitoring arrangements are developed to monitor the impacts of the policy/decision on the Section 75 groups, once the policy is adopted. This will assist you to comply with your equality scheme commitments and to decide if the policy should be reviewed or revised, if it is not having the desired impact. Such monitoring arrangements may include establishing additional internal mechanisms to gather Section 75 information relevant to that policy or commissioning research, possibly in partnership with voluntary, community or trades unions and/or other public authorities.



## 3. Summary Guidance



### a) Why draft a Section 75 signposting document?

[Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998](#) (the Act) requires public authorities to comply with **two statutory duties**: the Equality of Opportunity duty and the Good Relations duty.

The first duty is the **Equality of Opportunity duty**, which requires public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland to have **due regard** to the need to promote equality of opportunity between the nine equality categories of persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation; men and women generally, persons with a disability and persons without; and persons with dependants and persons without.

The second duty, the **Good Relations duty**, requires that public authorities in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland have **regard** to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion and racial group.

As a statutory duty, Section 75 must be implemented as per your public authority's equality scheme commitments. The inclusion of appropriate evidence on which the equality impact of policies may be assessed and monitored are the cornerstone to the effective implementation of the duties.

The Section 75 duty requires continued monitoring of the equality impacts of policies after their implementation and that, again, is likely to require consideration of data.

### As a public authority you are required to:

- gather and consider Section 75 information to assess the potential equality impacts of a **policy prior to making a decision** about a policy (usually screening and/or EQIA) and
- to have Section 75 monitoring arrangements in place, **post implementation of a policy**.

You should read and understand these commitments in your public authority's approved equality scheme. Click here to access the [Equality Commission's Model Equality Scheme](#).



## b) Who is the guidance for?

This guidance is primarily intended to guide **policy makers** in the public sector to identify appropriate and relevant sources of Section 75 information to evidence the screening and EQIA processes and the policy development process.



**Who is a policy maker?** Policy makers are any public sector employees/managers who are involved in the policy making/decision making processes such as policy staff and equality officers. This includes many more people than those people who have a defined policy role within their job.

In the context of Section 75, 'policy' is very broadly defined and it covers all the ways in which we carry out or propose to carry out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland.

Therefore, this signposting advice is aimed at a **broad range** of people in public authorities, who are engaged in developing **new** policies/decisions or **revising existing** policies/decisions and who require Section 75 information to assess the potential and actual equality impacts of a proposed course of action.

## c) Why do you need Section 75 data?

### (i) Evidence based policymaking:

The Section 75 processes of screening and EQIA, which require Section 75 information, are policy development tools which should be mainstreamed in the policy development process and assist you to develop fairer and better policy decisions.

### (ii) Risk of complaints

If a public authority does not comply with its equality scheme commitments there is a risk of a Section 75 complaint or an Equality Commission investigation or even a judicial review.

### (iii) Equality scheme commitments:

Your equality scheme commitments regarding the use of data/evidence, relevant to the Section 75 groups include:

#### Screening and EQIA

- Screen new/revised policies: "In order to answer [screening questions](#) we gather all relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account we consider different needs, experiences and priorities for each of the Section 75 categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence".

- **Equality impact assessment (EQIA) of policies:** Equality schemes commit to undertaking an EQIA where during screening, a potential ‘major’ impact of that policy is identified on one or more Section 75 groups. Equality schemes also commit to undertaking these more detailed assessments as per [Commission Guidance](#). Stage 2 of this guidance on undertaking an EQIA is ‘Consideration of Available Data and Research’.

**Monitoring and publishing the equality impacts of a policy post-implementation** regardless of whether the policy was screened out before implementation.

- This monitoring information must be published in your public authority’s annual progress report. For more information on ‘How to Monitor’ [click here to access the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance](#).
- You should ensure that these monitoring arrangements are in place as it is a potential breach of your equality scheme and therefore an organisational risk if they are not.

### **Section 75 ‘audit of inequalities’ and action plan**

- Most approved equality schemes have committed to developing a Section 75 action plan, based on an ‘audit of inequalities’ to address persistent inequalities that your public authority has the opportunity to impact upon.
- The ‘audit of inequalities’ and action plan should therefore be based on evidence such as relevant data, research and consultations with stakeholders; both qualitative and/or quantitative. Further advice on this is available here: [Public Authorities Audit of Inequalities](#).



**There are 42,000 people with a learning disability in Northern Ireland**

Courtesy of Mencap

## d) Types of Section 75 data

The information required to assess and monitor the impacts of policies will be dependent on, and relevant to, the policies being considered and may be ‘**population level**’ and ‘**organisational level**’ data which may be **quantitative** (the ‘numbers’) and **qualitative** (the ‘stories’). Qualitative information may be particularly useful where the policy is of a ‘sensitive’ nature or where there is a lack of quantitative data.

In order to screen/EQIA policies and also to monitor the actual impacts of policies on Section 75 groups post implementation of a policy, public authorities/policymakers may **require both**:

- **Population level data/evidence** – usually data external to your organisation and available from NISRA/other organisations and usually quantitative.

Population/national data contains various influential details such as birth, death and demographic details such as age, sex, annual income, occupation, language etc.

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- **Organisational level data/evidence** (including service/internal business level data). This can be accessed from a variety of means such as employment monitoring forms, customer or staff surveys, service user surveys, service user monitoring, the uptake of policies etc. that may reveal potential or actual equality impacts on certain Section 75 groups of the proposed or adopted policy.

**Most public authorities have committed in their equality schemes to establish the following Section 75 monitoring systems for accessing organisational level Section 75 data:**

**The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis.**

**The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis.**

**An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this equality scheme, to identify the extent of current Section 75 monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions.**

**Undertaking or commissioning new Section 75 data research if necessary.**

It is a potential breach of your organisation's equality scheme and therefore an organisational risk if these monitoring mechanisms are not in place. You should raise this with the named contact in your equality scheme if you find it difficult to access organisational level Section 75 data/evidence.

- **Quantitative Data – “The Numbers”**

Quantitative data refers to numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population.



This information is often analysed by either using descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine ‘significance’ either in relationships or differences in the data.

The primary source of quantitative data in the form of official statistics is [NISRA](#).

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- **Qualitative Methods – “The Stories”**

Qualitative data refers to the experiences of individuals related in their own terms, and based on their own experiences and attitudes. It is given from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Qualitative data is often used to complement quantitative data to determine why



policies may be/are successful or unsuccessful and the reasons for this. It can help interpret and contextualise statistical findings. It is also useful in its own right as evidence to assist screening and EQIA.

Whilst qualitative data assists policymakers where there are limitations in the availability and/or robustness of quantitative information, both sources of data are equally as important and qualitative data can sometimes provide the best information when carrying out screening exercises, even if quantitative data is also available.

Qualitative methods include case studies, semi-structured/unstructured/in-depth interviews, focus groups and targeted consultations. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data. They provide a means of exploring people's needs and experiences in relation to a policy or programme.

Qualitative methods can be contrasted with quantitative methods, such as an equality monitoring questionnaire, which aim to provide information in the form of numbers and frequencies that can be analysed statistically; for example, the proportions of those using a service by gender.



### **Absence of data**

It is important that if data is absent policymakers ensure monitoring mechanisms are put in place to capture data moving forward.



It is very important to remember when assessing the equality implications of a policy/decision ( through screening or EQIA) that the absence of data does not mean there are no equality impacts. Policy makers will need to look at all available data that they have - through a 'Section 75 lens'.

## e) What does 'look at all available data through a Section 75 lens' mean?

Policymakers may use a range of social, economic and population data that does not immediately illustrate impacts on the Section 75 groups. It may be necessary to delve a little deeper to clarify whether the information is of relevance to a particular Section 75 group or people with multiple identities.

Staff conducting screening/EQIA exercises should consider liaising with their statisticians to ask how quantitative data may be 'mined' or 'drilled down' to ensure there is clarity with regard any impacts on people in the Section 75 groups.



**Example 1:** If a policy maker received data from NISRA relating to employment statistics of people aged 40 + there may also be information contained in the data relating to gender, disability etc. which may be useful in the screening process.

**Example 2:** Information gathered from a consultation exercise, whilst not directly focused on the Section 75 groups, could be applied to a particular policy screening exercise, even if the initial intention was not for this purpose. This is because during consultation exercises people may identify themselves as belonging to a particular Section 75 group. Therefore, feedback from consultation responses should be considered to see if any comments relate to any Section 75 groups.

**Example 3:** Published statistics on homelessness may include infographics and data on reasons for homelessness. This could be used to show, for example, that physical health/disability is a factor of homelessness on the grounds that it is not reasonable for a person to continue to occupy their current accommodation.

## f) How do I analyse the Section 75 data?

### **Consider the different potential/actual impacts of the policy**

It is important not only to assess if there is adverse impact but also to try to 'seek out' opportunities to promote equality of opportunity and good relations, i.e. by mitigating or changing the policy or considering alternative policies.

In analysing data, it is important to identify differences within and between equality categories. For example,

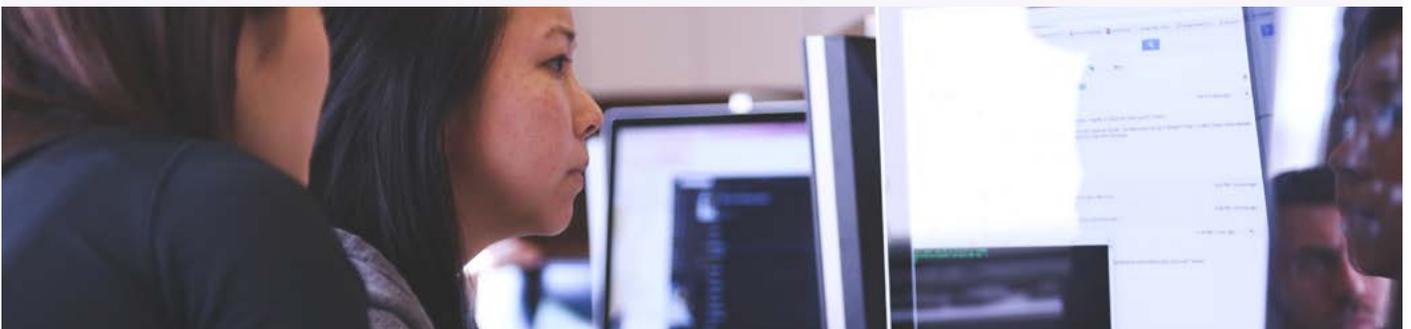
- whether there is evidence of higher or lower participation or uptake of services by different Section 75 groups.
- whether the outcomes from a policy, programme or process differ within or across the Section 75 categories.

### **Consider multiple identities**

It is important to consider inequalities that could be addressed by the public authority's policies and functions, arising from individuals' multiple identities. For example, there may be specific barriers to employment experienced by minority ethnic women or young Protestant men.

### **Involve other relevant people**

In order to ensure the best analysis and assessment of information it is often useful to involve a range of internal functions, e.g. policy, research, statisticians and equality staff and/or external expertise such as researchers or voluntary and community organisations.











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