DEPARTMENT FOR THE ECONOMY

SECTION 75 EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY SCREENING TEMPLATE

This form should be completed when considering options for a new policy, service or programme, or changing an existing policy, service or programme.

Those policies identified as having significant implications for equality of opportunity must be subject to full EQIA.

The template will provide a record of the factors taken into account if a policy is screened out, or excluded for EQIA. It will be included in the quarterly Screening Report which is published on the Department’s website.

**Please complete the Cover Sheet Table below**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Policy Title (in full):** | **Invest NI Budget Allocation 2023/24** |
| **Policy Aim** | To assess the impact of projected budgetary allocation on Invest NI business and services during 2023/24 |
| **Decision (delete as appropriate)** | Due to the severity of the projected cuts to Invest NI’s existing budget (i.e. a budget reduction of circa £15.5m), and the likely curtailment of various activities, then it is likely that an EQIA will be required to consider all potential adverse impacts across the nine Section 75 grounds.  This EQIA should be undertaken by DfE, as the Department is responsible for budget allocation. This will ensure that all Departmental and Arms Length Body decisions relating to budget allocation are captured and considered in their entirety for impact on Section 75 categories. |
| **Business Area:** | Finance |
| **Contact:** | Pamela Marron, Equality Manager, 028 90 698273 |
| **Date of form completion:** | 15/5/23 |

**For Equality Unit Completion:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date received:** |  |
| **Amendments requested?** | Yes/ No |
| **Date returned to Business Area:** |  |
| **Date final version received:** |  |
| **Date placed on S75 Screening Webpage:** |  |

**Screening flowchart and template *(taken from Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for public authorities April 2010 (Appendix 1)).***

**Introduction**

**Part 1. Policy scoping** – asks public authorities to provide details about the policy, procedure, practice and/or decision being screened and what available evidence you have gathered to help make an assessment of the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations.

**Part 2. Screening questions** – asks about the extent of the likely impact of the policy on groups of people within each of the Section 75 categories. Details of the groups consulted and the level of assessment of the likely impact. This includes consideration of multiple identity and good relations issues.

**Part 3. Screening decision** –guides the public authority to reach a screening decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment (EQIA), or tointroducemeasures to mitigate the likely impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**Part 4. Monitoring** –provides guidance to public authorities on monitoring for adverse impact and broader monitoring.

**Part 5. Approval and authorisation** – verifies the public authority’s approval of a screening decision by a senior manager responsible for the policy.

A screening flowchart is provided overleaf.

Policy Scoping

* + Policy
  + Available data

Screening Questions

* Apply screening questions
* Consider multiple identities

Screening Decision None/Minor/Major

Mitigate

Publish Template

Re-consider screening

Publish Template

for information

Publish Template

EQIA

Monitor

**‘None’**

Screened out

**‘Major’**

Screened in for EQIA

**‘Minor’**

Screened out with mitigation

Concerns raised with evidence

Concerns raised with evidence re: screening decision

**Part 1. Policy scoping**

The first stage of the screening process involves scoping the policy under consideration. The purpose of policy scoping is to help prepare the background and context and set out the aims and objectives for the policy, being screened. At this stage, scoping the policy will help identify potential constraints as well as opportunities and will help the policy maker work through the screening process on a step by step basis.

Public authorities should remember that the Section 75 statutory duties apply to internal policies (relating to people who work for the authority), as well as external policies (relating to those who are, or could be, served by the authority).

**Information about the policy**

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| Name of the policy  **Invest NI Budget Allocation 2023/24** |
| Is this an existing, revised or a new policy?  New |
| What is it trying to achieve? (intended aims/outcomes)  An analysis of proposed cuts to Invest Northern Ireland’s budget (both Resource and Capital) in 2023/24 (c.£15.5m and £11.5m respectively), and consideration of how any cuts to budget may impact on service users and staff. |
| Are there any Section 75 categories which might be expected to benefit from the intended policy?  If so, explain how.  No, budget cuts of these proportions are likely to have a profound effect on Invest NI’s operations and in turn the NI economy and all its citizens. |
| Who initiated or wrote the policy?  Department for the Economy (DfE) has requested an analysis of the equality impact of a reduced budget allocation to Invest Northern Ireland for 2023/24. |
| Who owns and who implements the policy?  DfE has requested that all business areas (including Invest NI) should screen their budget allocation individually and consider any decisions they will make in 2023/24 as a result of their budget allocation which may have an impact on any of the Section 75 equality categories. Finance Division of DfE has advised that equality screening should be completed to identify the equality impacts and any potential mitigations of any budget allocations which result in material changes to policy or service delivery. |

**Background**

Invest NI has been tasked by Department for the Economy (DfE) to consider the impact on Invest NI of a projected cut to annual baseline budget of c. £15.5m in respect of resource and a cut to the bid of £11.5m in respect of capital for 2023/24.

The above budget reductions should also be considered alongside the loss of EU ERDF funding. Whilst a significant portion of ERDF funding for Invest NI has been allocated as a priority bid under ESA10, there still remains a funding gap for R&D and productivity improvement programmes. This gap is particularly acute on the capital budget for ‘SFA’ support and ‘Access to Finance’ programmes. The above bid, if it had been met,would have gone some way to bridging the gap that the loss of ERDF funding will leave in these intervention areas.

Through these challenging times, Invest NI’s work in terms of both direct financial assistance and advisory services such as nibusinessinfo.co.uk are focused at developing the wider business base to increase innovation and productivity, create employment, drive exports and efficiencies, and thereby to support long term, value-added, sustainable employment.

**Productivity**

As a small, advanced economy, the active identification and exploitation of export opportunities remains key to our future success. There is a strong, positive relationship between Exports, Innovation, and Productivity. Firms that export are more productive, innovative and faster growing and make the strongest economic contributions, through employment, salaries, investment, innovation and productivity growth. NI can only achieve the innovation-driven economic transformation envisaged in the DfE10X Strategy through supporting higher levels of innovation, stimulating productivity, and generating a growth in exports.

Furthermore, investment in the wider economy creates jobs which has a trickle-down effect, lifting people out of poverty and resulting in better health outcomes for the population, as well as reducing existing inequalities between communities.

As a small, geographically remote region of the United Kingdom, incentives from Invest NI are often critical in encouraging and supporting Foreign Direct Investment into NI. By not providing this support the responsiveness of the NI economy to future events will be seriously hampered, and in turn could lead to higher levels of unemployment.

This will place at risk the employment prospects of a generation of young people whose life chances and experiences have already been adversely impacted by the pandemic and whose levels of illness/mental health remain high, (employment contributes significantly to mental wellbeing and good health).

Positive action projects addressing the persistent under-representation of particular groups in the labour market (e.g. women’s leadership programmes) are also likely to be impacted.

Planning of a cut in baseline budget of this magnitude must also take into account potential cuts to regional services available through Invest NI. Section 75 considerations attaching to changes in regional funding are likely to be considerable and may require closer scrutiny in due course, particularly in relation to the drive to promote a more regionally balanced economy. This should be considered further as part of a Departmental Rural Needs Impact Assessment.

Consideration should also be given to responsiveness to uncertainty regarding the Windsor Framework and NI Protocol and the ongoing impact on trading with our closest neighbours in Europe.

In relation to the resource budget the cut has driven an average of 20% reduction to our main support areas. For the latest year for which figures are available, 2022/23, on average for every £1 of support offered by Invest NI, £7 of total investment was generated in the wider NI economy. On this basis, a c£15.5m reduction in Resource Budget, will lead to a wider overall reduction in the NI Economy of over £108m.

In relation to the unfunded capital of £11.5m this could lead to Invest NI being unable to bring forward new interventions to support productivity and green growth. These are critical interventions that are needed to help NI businesses remain competitive and, indeed, sustainable in the long term. Government sustainability policy objectives, through the Green Growth Strategy and Climate Change Act, will be unable to be met without assisting companies to massively reduce their carbon footprint and do more with less resources. Further, we would need to scale back Access to Finance aimed at providing loan and equity funding to early-stage business development.

Using the investment return ratio outlined above, we estimate that the impact of the reduction in the capital budget to the NI Economy will be over £80m.

**Implementation factors**

Are there any factors which could contribute to/detract from the intended aim/outcome of the policy/decision?

If yes, are they:







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**Main stakeholders affected**

Who are the internal and external stakeholders (actual or potential) that the policy will impact upon?

Staff – yes

Service users – yes

Other public sector bodies – yes

Voluntary community trade unions – yes

Business and commerce - yes

##### [Other policies with a bearing on this policy](#Onefour)

* All policies and procedures as enacted by Invest NI
* Any further budgetary decisions made within DfE and Invest Northern Ireland
* Investment Strategy for NI

**Available evidence**

Evidence to help inform the screening process may take many forms. Public authorities should ensure that their screening decision is informed by relevant data.

What evidence/information (both qualitative and quantitative) have you gathered to inform this policy? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 Category** | **Details of Evidence/Information** |
| **All** | The proposal to operate within a considerably reduced baseline budget is likely to necessitate the curtailment of a considerable number of both present and future initiatives and programmes of work (see above). This will limit opportunities for a number of Section 75 groups.  DfE’s Draft Audit of Inequalities and Action Plan 2022 – 2027 (April, 2023) makes clear the range of key inequalities that persist within the NI labour market, along with the positive action measures that it wishes to introduce to ameliorate these discrepancies. In summary, the key inequalities by Section 75 category are:  **Religious belief**  According to statistics from NISRA’s Labour Force Survey, the Catholic employment rate was estimated to be 71.2% in 2019, slightly lower than the employment rate estimated for Protestants (73.7%).  **Gender**  Employment rates for males and females in Northern Ireland are currently 62.4% and 54.4%. The sectors of employment are also very different with over half of females (52%) employed in Public Administration, Education and Health compared with 17.9% of males. A higher proportion of males are employed in Construction (13.3% of males employed in sector compared with 1.6% females); Manufacturing (11.7% of males employed in sector compared with 5.7% females); and Transport and Communication (11% of males employed in sector compared with 3.2% females).  There is also a larger percentage of males in full time employment with 89% of male workforce in full time employment compared to 64% of females. Females also have higher incidences of part-time working compared with males (35% vs 11%). Females also earn less than males.  The gap between male and female economic inactivity has been narrowing over time and the rates are now closer. A greater proportion of female economic inactivity is as a result of home and caring responsibilities compared with males.  **Disability**  Those with a disability are less than half as likely to be in employment as those without a disability, with the problem particularly evident for disabled persons with lower qualification levels. In general, those with a disability are much less likely to hold any qualifications compared with those without a disability (around 27.6% of those with a disability hold no qualifications compared with 10.8% of those without a disability). Conversely, only 15.5% of those with a disability hold a degree or higher level qualification, compared with 32.8% for those without a disability.  The lowest employment rate for those with a disability is found amongst 50 to 64 year olds; this cohort also has the highest incidence of disability of any age group amongst working aged adults. There are consistently lower levels of employment amongst those with a disability in Northern Ireland when compared to the whole of the UK, with a 35.5% employment rate recorded amongst those with a disability in Northern Ireland compared to 53.1% for the UK as a whole.  **Ethnic minorities/migrant workers**  The employment rate for persons classified as ‘white’ was estimated to be 72.2% in Northern Ireland in 2019, much higher than the 62.3% recorded for those identifying as ‘other’. Whilst, this is a significant difference, it should be noted that those classified as ‘other’ represented a relatively small population of an estimated 24,400 individuals of working age in Northern Ireland.  **Age**  There is evidence that there has been a greater labour market impact on younger age groups (aged 16-24) during the pandemic in NI compared with their counterparts in the UK as a whole. For example, 16-24 year olds in NI witnessed a drop in the employment rate of 8 percentage points more than the UK average in 2021. Young people in NI also had the highest economic inactivity rate amongst 16-24 year olds of any UK region in 2022. However, it should be noted that 86% of economic inactivity in this age group is caused by being a student, with Northern Ireland counting 7.5% of 16-64 year olds as economically inactive students, the highest rate of any UK region.  Economic inactivity levels are also much higher amongst older working-age groups (50-64 year olds) in Northern Ireland compared with the UK as a whole, at 33.7% and 27.2% respectively. Just over half of economic inactivity in this age group in Northern Ireland is caused by long-term sickness.  **Dependents**  When considering the main reason for economic inactivity, caring for dependents is the second most common reason behind sick/disabled. This accounts for 20.8% of those that want to work and 17.4% of those that do not.  Caring for a dependant accounts for 25.5% of economically inactive females, whereas the percentage of males is much lower at 6.8%.  **Marital Status**  In 2019, those who were married had an employment rate of 80.2%, compared with 65.1% for those single; 59.4% for those divorced; 57.9% for those widowed; and 59.6% for those separated. Out of those who were employed, married people were estimated to hold a higher level of qualification than all other categories. For example, in 2019 just over 49% of those who were married and in employment were estimated to hold a degree, compared with 42% of those who were divorced; 37% of single people and 32% for those who were married but separated.  **Invest NI Data**  With regard to the profile of companies supported by Invest NI. Given resource constraints and the considerable time and effort involved on an ongoing basis, a strategic decision was made several years ago that the resources required to continue to monitor company profiles by all Section 75 grounds was disproportionate and unsustainable. Hence, at this time Invest NI is not in a position to provide monitoring information of the profile of all companies which are in receipt of financial support.  However, between 2016 and 2021, Invest NI approved nearly 16,000 offers, totalling assistance of £615m, which will leverage a total investment of £3.2bn, leading to the creation of almost 24,500 new jobs.  Whilst 28% (£175m) of this assistance offered was directed towards the creation of employment, the majority of assistance over this period, £192m (31%) was invested in research and development.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Invest NI Activity by Type of Support (2016-17 to 2020-21)** | | | | | | |  | |  |  | |  | | **Type of Support** | | **No of Offers** | | **Total Assistance £m** | | **Total Planned Investment £m** | **Total New Jobs** | | **% of Assistance** | **% of Investment** | | **% of Jobs** | | Creating Jobs | | 1,971 | | 175.08 | | 1,718.28 | 23,483 | | 28% | 54% | | 96% | | Investing in R&D | | 852 | | 192.24 | | 713.23 | 816 | | 31% | 23% | | 3% | | Developing Skills | | 1,171 | | 45.96 | | 172.38 | 150 | | 7% | 5% | | 1% | | Developing Overseas Trade Capability | | 4,876 | | 12.76 | | 24.15 | 0 | | 2% | 1% | | 0% | | Venture Capital Fund | | 1,065 | | 105.04 | | 333.27 | 0 | | 17% | 11% | | 0% | | Covid | | 453 | | 5.78 | | 10.98 | 0 | | 1% | 0% | | 0% | | Other | | 812 | | 38.58 | | 109.95 | 0 | | 6% | 3% | | 0% | | Developing Innovation & Technology | | 4,768 | | 39.22 | | 79.61 | 0 | | 6% | 3% | | 0% | | **Total** | | **15,968** | | **614.65** | | **3,161.84** | **24,449** | | **100%** | **100%** | | **100%** | | Invest NI is delivering for all of Northern Ireland with 73% of offers, 63% of assistance and 59% of investment made to companies outside Belfast.  **Outside Belfast Activity Invest NI 2016-17 to 2020-21** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | **Year** | **% Outside Belfast** | | | | | | | | | | | **No of Offers** | | **Total Assistance £m** | | **Total Planned Investment £m** | | | **Total New Jobs** | | | | 2016-17 | 76% | | 72% | | 67% | | | 60% | | | | 2017-18 | 74% | | 57% | | 55% | | | 55% | | | | 2018-19 | 73% | | 60% | | 55% | | | 62% | | | | 2019-20 | 70% | | 59% | | 60% | | | 50% | | | | 2020-21 | 73% | | 66% | | 62% | | | 63% | | | | **Total** | **73%** | | **63%** | | **59%** | | | **58%** | | | | ***Note: Figures Exclude EDO's and UNI's (includes Councils) and those projects where the location is yet to be determined.*** | | | | | | | | | | |   Over the last 5 years 37% of assistance offered, 41% of total planned investment and 42% of new jobs assisted were within the Eastern Regional Office Area. This area had the highest assistance per head of Adult Population £774, which is well above the NI total of £384 per head.  Companies in the Western region received 22% of total assistance offered and 21% of both total planned Investment and new jobs assisted. The assistance per head was £332, which is below the NI total of £384 per head.  The North West region received 12% of assistance offered over the period, 13% of total planned investment and 14% of new jobs assisted. The assistance per head was £305, which is below the NI of £384 per head.  The Southern region received 16% of assistance offered, total planned investment and new jobs assisted. The assistance per head was £242, which is below the NI figure of £384.  Companies in the North East region received 13% of assistance offered, 10% of total planned investment and 6% of new jobs assisted. The assistance per head was £321.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Invest NI Activity by Region Per Head of Adult Population 2016-17 to 2020-21** | | | | | |  |  | | **Region** | **Adult Population 2020** | **Assistance Per Head** | **Investment Per Head** | **New Jobs Per 10,000** | **Assistance Rank** | **Investment Rank** | **Jobs Rank** | | East | 274,369 | 774 | 4,481 | 361 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | North East | 226,534 | 321 | 1,269 | 64 | 3 | 4 | 5 | | North West | 234,708 | 305 | 1,617 | 142 | 4 | 3 | 2 | | South | 389,641 | 242 | 1,229 | 95 | 5 | 5 | 4 | | West | 374,442 | 332 | 1,722 | 131 | 2 | 2 | 3 | | **Total** | **1,499,694** | **384** | **2,014** | **156** |  |  |  | | ***Per Head figures exclude Not Yet Determined*** | | | |  |  |  |  |   It should be noted that areas such as regional office areas are not self-contained labour markets. A project assisted in a particular location has the potential to create benefits across a much wider area. Northern Ireland is a relatively small place and evidence indicates that many investments draw their workforce from areas beyond regional area boundaries. Recent information on labour mobility patterns produced by NISRA demonstrates that approximately 47% of those who work in the Belfast District Council area reside in other areas.  The growing number of migrant workers moving to Northern Ireland demonstrates the availability of jobs for those prepared to travel. Since District Council Areas and Parliamentary Council Areas are not self-contained labour markets, they may not be meaningful areas to analyse patterns of assistance and investment activity. Furthermore a large project assisted in a particular location has the potential to create benefits in a much wider area. For example, assistance provided to the Queen’s University of Belfast to establish a Centre of Excellence, will accrue benefits to a much wider geographic area than just the South Belfast area in which it is located.’ (BDS EQIA, 2007)   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | **All usual residents aged 16 to 74 (excluding students) in employment and currently working in the area** | | | |  | | | | **DCA of Usual Residence** | **% Work in Resident DCA** | **% Reside Outside Work DCA** | | Antrim and Newtownabbey | 59% | 41% | | Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon | 85% | 15% | | Belfast | 53% | 47% | | Causeway Coast and Glens | 90% | 10% | | Derry City and Strabane | 87% | 13% | | Fermanagh and Omagh | 89% | 11% | | Lisburn and Castlereagh | 57% | 43% | | Mid and East Antrim | 76% | 24% | | Mid Ulster | 84% | 16% | | Newry, Mourne and Down | 87% | 13% | | Ards and North Down | 85% | 15% | | **Notes:** |  |  | | **1. The workplace population in an area does not include those persons working in the area who live outside Northern Ireland.** | | | | **2. No fixed place is counted as if working in the area.** | |  | | *Source: NISRA: Census 2011: Travel to work or place of study* | | |   In conclusion, Invest NI continues to make consistent efforts to address disproportionate levels of economic inactivity among groups that remain under-represented in the labour market (e.g. those with a disability, women, members of the BAME community, members of disadvantaged communities), as well as creating opportunities for younger people to enter work, and for older people and women to return to work. |

**Needs, experiences and priorities**

Taking into account the information referred to above, what are the different needs, experiences and priorities of each of the following categories, in relation to the particular policy/decision? Specify details for each of the Section 75 categories

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Section 75 Category** | **Details of Needs/Experiences/Priorities** |
| **All**  **Gender**  **Age**  **Religious belief**  **Political opinion**  **Race / ethnic origin**  **Disability**  **Marital Status**  **Sexual Orientation**  **Dependancy** | A significant cut to the budget allocation for the period 2023/24 is likely to have a significant adverse impact on a number of Section 75 categories through the reduced funding of activities generally, including entrepreneurial support programmes (e.g. Energy Loan Scheme, Productivity Investment Scheme, Grant for R&D, Innovation Vouchers, Proof of Concept), regional hubs and related positive action measures designed to ameliorate under-representation in the labour market (e.g. young male Protestants, women, those with a disability, those from new communities, those with caring responsibilities).  As one example, DfE’s Women in Stem Action Plan, designed to address the shortfall of women in STEM subjects and subsequent employment, is likely to be supported by a range of Invest NI activities that may be impacted by the proposed ‘under allocation’.  The EQIA attached to Investment Strategy for NI identified the following inequalities in the NI economy:  • Women are underrepresented in industries associated with STEM and young women are less likely to study STEM subjects in further and higher education.  • 53% of females were employed in the Public Administration, Education and Health sectors and a further 18% in Distribution, Hotels and Restaurants, women were significantly under represented in Energy and Water,(0.4%), Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (0.7%), Construction (1.2%) and Transport and Communications (3.9%)  • Women are under-represented in the highest paid and highest status occupations and over-represented in lower status and lower paid occupations  • Women are more likely than men to report under-employment  • Because of their caring roles, women have to balance enhanced pay and career progression with flexibility in employment arrangements  • In 2019, the female share of employees in the public sector remained unchanged from the previous year  • In 2019, the female share of private sector employment was 45.7%  • A lower proportion of women than men (8.9% compared to 9.4%) quoted employment as one of the 3 most important issues they face in day to day life  • In its Statement of Key Inequalities, ECNI identifies that  o Those aged 18 – 24 years have higher unemployment rates than those aged 25 or older  o Those aged 50 – 64 are less likely to be in employment and more likely to be economically inactive than those aged 25 – 49  • Youth unemployment is associated with lifelong problems such as worklessness, poverty, lower life satisfaction and ill-health  • For young people, NEET status intersects with other factors such as disability, low educational attainment and poor physical and mental health  • For older workers increases in economic inactivity may be linked to long term sickness, rising retirement age and increased levels of informal caring  • A much lower proportion of those over 65 quoted employment as one of the 3 most important issues they face in day to day life (2.9% compared to 9.1% of all respondents)  • In the 2011 Census 15% of the population was 65 or older and 21% were children under the age of 16  • The Fair Employment Monitoring Report 30 shows that in 2019 50.5% of the monitored workforce consisted of Protestant Employees and 49.5% of Catholic Employees. In contrast the equivalent figures in 1990 were 65.1% and 34.9%  • In 2019 Roman Catholics accounted for 53.3% of all appointments and Protestants 46.7%, The Roman Catholic percentage of appointments has exceeded that of Protestants since 2006  • In 2019, members of the Protestant community [50.6%] represented a greater share of the private sector workforce. The Roman Catholic community share of the private sector workforce was 49.4%  • In 2019, the Protestant community share of the public sector workforce was 50.2%. During the period 2001-2019, the Protestant community held a larger share of the public sector workforce, although this has been gradually decreasing since 2001 when it stood at 59.8%.  • No separate information is available in relation to Political Opinion. However, in the traditional Northern Ireland communities there is a degree of correlation between Religious Belief and Political Opinion.  • In its Statement of Key Inequalities, ECNI identifies that  o Irish Travellers are less likely to be in employment than all other ethnic groups  o Migrant workers, particularly those from Eastern Europe, are subject to industrial and occupational segregation  o Migrant workers and refugees face multiple barriers to employment  o Migrant workers are vulnerable to exploitation  o Migrant workers are among the groups facing prejudicial attitudes within the workplace  o Irish Travellers are less likely to be in employment than all other ethnic groups and are more likely to be economically inactive  • In its Statement of Key Inequalities, ECNI identifies that:  o There is a persistent employment gap between people with and without disabilities  o People with disabilities are among the groups facing prejudicial attitudes within the workplace  • People with disabilities are much less likely to be in employment than people without disabilities. This employment gap is persistent having shown little change between 2006 and 2016  • For people with disabilities gaps in educational attainment partially explain the employment gap, but participation in employment is still lower for people with disabilities than non-disable people with equivalent qualifications  • People with disabilities face wider barriers to employment, such as access to transport, the physical environment and limited employment support which can impact on their ability to participate in employment  • Among people with a disability, people with mental health issues and/or a learning disability are less likely to be employed than other people with a disability  • Those who are single are more likely to be economically inactive than those who are married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership  • Those who are separated, divorced or widowed are more likely to be economically inactive than those who are married, co-habiting or in a civil partnership and those who are single  • Those who were single were more likely than those who were married, divorced or widowed to quote employment as one of the 3 most important issues than face in day to day life (12.4%, compared to 8.8%, 7.5% and 4.6%)  • Although only indirectly related to marital status, lone parents with dependants experience particular barriers to employment, including the cost and availability of childcare  • Little background or contextual data is available on lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Northern Ireland  • Lesbian, gay and bisexual people are subject to prejudicial attitudes in the workplace which may impact on their ability to participate in or sustain employment  • There are data gaps in relation to lesbian, gay and bisexual peoples’ experience of the Northern Ireland labour market, these data gaps mean that it is difficult to monitor inequalities in relation to their participation in and experience of employment  • Lone parents with dependants experience particular barriers to employment, including the cost and availability of childcare  • Those with dependants were more likely than those with no dependants to quote employment as one of the 3 main issues they face in their day to day life (10.8% compared to 8.2%) |

**Part 2. Screening questions**

**Introduction**

In making a decision as to whether or not there is a need to carry out an equality impact assessment, the public authority should consider its answers to the questions 1-4 which are given on pages 10-12 of this Guide.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **none** in respect of all of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then the public authority may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is ‘screened out’ as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, a public authority should give details of the reasons for the decision taken.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **major** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, then consideration should be given to subjecting the policy to the equality impact assessment procedure.

If the public authority’s conclusion is **minor** in respect of one or more of the Section 75 equality categories and/or good relations categories, then consideration should still be given to proceeding with an equality impact assessment, or to:

* measures to mitigate the adverse impact; or
* the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of a ‘major’ impact**

1. The policy is significant in terms of its strategic importance;
2. Potential equality impacts are unknown, because, for example, there is insufficient data upon which to make an assessment or because they are complex, and it would be appropriate to conduct an equality impact assessment in order to better assess them;
3. Potential equality and/or good relations impacts are likely to be adverse or are likely to be experienced disproportionately by groups of people including those who are marginalised or disadvantaged;
4. Further assessment offers a valuable way to examine the evidence and develop recommendations in respect of a policy about which there are concerns amongst affected individuals and representative groups, for example in respect of multiple identities;
5. The policy is likely to be challenged by way of judicial review;
6. The policy is significant in terms of expenditure.

**In favour of ‘minor’ impact**

1. The policy is not unlawfully discriminatory and any residual potential impacts on people are judged to be negligible;
2. The policy, or certain proposals within it, are potentially unlawfully discriminatory, but this possibility can readily and easily be eliminated by making appropriate changes to the policy or by adopting appropriate mitigating measures;
3. Any asymmetrical equality impacts caused by the policy are intentional because they are specifically designed to promote equality of opportunity for particular groups of disadvantaged people;
4. By amending the policy there are better opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

**In favour of none**

1. The policy has no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations.
2. The policy is purely technical in nature and will have no bearing in terms of its likely impact on equality of opportunity or good relations for people within the equality and good relations categories.

Taking into account the evidence presented above, consider and comment on the likely impact on equality of opportunity and good relations for those affected by this policy, in any way, for each of the equality and good relations categories, by applying the screening questions given overleaf and indicate the level of impact on the group i.e. minor, major or none.**Screening questions**

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| **1** What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? minor/major/none | | |
| Section 75 category | Details of policy impact | Level of impact? minor/major/none |
| Religious belief | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 will have a significant impact on a wide range of Invest NI activities, and including regional programmes of work. | Major (-ve) |
| Political opinion | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 will have a significant impact on a wide range of Invest NI activities, and including regional programmes of work. | Minor (-ve) |
| Racial group | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 may have the effect of curtailing proposed positive action measures, including those aimed at supporting members of new communities. | Major (-ve) |
| Age | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 may have the effect of curtailing proposed positive action measures aimed at young people and women returnees to the labour market. | Major (-ve) |
| Marital status | N/A | None |
| Sexual orientation | N/A | None |
| Men and women generally | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 may have the effect of curtailing proposed positive action measures, and including programmes designed to address under-representation of women in STEM and leadership roles. | Major (-ve) |
| Disability | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 may have the effect of curtailing proposed positive action measures, including those designed to have a positive impact on the employment prospects for those with a disability. | Major (-ve) |
| Dependants | The proposed budgetary ‘under allocation’ for 2023/4 may have the effect of curtailing proposed positive action measures, including those designed to have a positive impact on employment opportunities for those with dependants. | Minor (-ve) |

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| **2** Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equalities categories? | | |
| Section 75 category | If **Yes**, provide details | If **No**, provide reasons |
| Religious belief |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Political opinion |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Racial group |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Age |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Marital status |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Sexual orientation |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Men and women generally |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Disability |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |
| Dependants |  | No, the proposed baseline budget will present no opportunities for promoting equality of opportunity, and is more likely to threaten positive action measures. |

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| **3** To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? minor/major/none | | |
| Good relations category | Details of policy impact | Level of impact minor/major/none |
| Religious belief | Economic uncertainty could act as a catalyst for sectarian strife. | Minor (-ve) |
| Political opinion | Economic uncertainty could act as a catalyst for sectarian strife. | Minor (-ve) |
| Racial group | Adverse economic impact could harm relations with minority ethnic and new communities. | Minor (-ve) |

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| **4** Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group? | | |
| Good relations category | If **Yes**, provide details | If **No**, provide reasons |
| Religious belief |  | No, the proposed budget will present few opportunities for promoting good relations, and is more likely to have an adverse effect. |
| Political opinion |  | No, the proposed budget will present few opportunities for promoting good relations, and is more likely to have an adverse effect. |
| Racial group |  | No, the proposed budget will present few opportunities for promoting good relations, and is more likely to have an adverse effect. |

**Additional considerations**

**Multiple identity**

Generally speaking, people can fall into more than one Section 75 category. Taking this into consideration, are there any potential impacts of the policy/decision on people with multiple identities?

(*For example; disabled minority ethnic people; disabled women; young Protestant men; and young lesbians, gay and bisexual people).*

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| The impact of any budget cuts may be felt across all Section 75 categories, either singly or in combination, although at this time sufficient data are not available to make an accurate forecast. |

Provide details of data on the impact of the policy on people with multiple identities. Specify relevant Section 75 categories concerned.

See above.

**Part 3. Screening decision**

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

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| The impact of budget cuts of this magnitude are likely to be significant on various Section 75 categories and including those who have been traditionally under-represented in the labour market. Post pandemic recovery plans and contingency planning with regard to Brexit, must be taken into account in any future decision to carry out an EQIA |

If the decision is not to conduct an equality impact assessment the public authority should consider if the policy should be mitigated or an alternative policy be introduced.

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| Responsibility for budget allocation rests with DfE, and it is assumed therefore that responsibility for carrying out an EQIA will also rest with the Department and will extend across all its business areas. |

If the decision is to subject the policy to an equality impact assessment, please provide details of the reasons.

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| As detailed above, Section 75 groups across Northern Ireland may have the potential to suffer adverse impacts as a direct result of proposed budget cuts. The extent of these impacts can only be accurately assessed through a full EQIA but this will be contingent on the gathering of further data. It is therefore proposed that an EQIA should be carried out by DfE across all its business areas and including Invest NI. |

All public authorities’ equality schemes must state the authority’s arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by the authority on the promotion of equality of opportunity. The Commission recommends screening and equality impact assessment as the tools to be utilised for such assessments. Further advice on equality impact assessment may be found in a separate Commission publication: Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment.

**Mitigation**

When the public authority concludes that the likely impact is ‘minor’ and an equality impact assessment is not to be conducted, the public authority may consider mitigation to lessen the severity of any equality impact, or the introduction of an alternative policy to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations.

Can the policy/decision be amended or changed or an alternative policy introduced to better promote equality of opportunity and/or good relations?

If so, give the **reasons** to support your decision, together with the proposed changes/amendments or alternative policy.

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| Given the scale of the proposed cuts it is unlikely that their effect can be mitigated unless additional or alternate funding is sought. |

**Timetabling and prioritising**

Factors to be considered in timetabling and prioritising policies for equality impact assessment.

If the policy has been **‘screened in’** for equality impact assessment, then please answer the following questions to determine its priority for timetabling the equality impact assessment.

On a scale of 1-3, with 1 being the lowest priority and 3 being the highest, assess the policy in terms of its priority for equality impact assessment.

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| **Priority criterion** | **Rating (1-3)** |
| Effect on equality of opportunity and good relations | 3 |
| Social need | 3 |
| Effect on people’s daily lives | 3 |
| Relevance to a public authority’s functions | 3 |

Note: The Total Rating Score should be used to prioritise the policy in rank order with other policies screened in for equality impact assessment. This list of priorities will assist the public authority in timetabling. Details of the Public Authority’s Equality Impact Assessment Timetable should be included in the quarterly Screening Report.

Is the policy affected by timetables established by other relevant public authorities?

If yes, please provide details

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**Part 4. Monitoring**

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission’s Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities (July 2007).

The Commission recommends that where the policy has been amended or an alternative policy introduced, the public authority should monitor more broadly than for adverse impact (See Benefits, P.9-10, paras 2.13 – 2.20 of the Monitoring Guidance).

Effective monitoring will help the public authority identify any future adverse impact arising from the policy which may lead the public authority to conduct an equality impact assessment, as well as help with future planning and policy development.

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**Part 5 - Approval and authorisation**

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| **Screened by:** | **Position/Job Title** | **Date** |
| Pamela Marron | Equality Manager |  |
| **Approved by:** |  |  |
| Ian Maxwell | Director | 18/05/2023 |

Note: A copy of the Screening Template, for each policy screened should be ‘signed off’ and approved by a senior manager responsible for the policy, made easily accessible on the public authority’s website as soon as possible following completion and made available on request.