

FOI DOF/2025-0321

Request

Under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, I am writing to request the following information in relation to the decision by the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) to participate in Belfast Pride 2025:

1. All internal correspondence, briefing papers, emails, minutes, or notes—whether in physical or digital form—relating to the planning, approval, or authorisation of NICS participation in Belfast Pride 2025.
2. Any assessments, impact statements, or reports that informed or justified the decision to take part in Belfast Pride 2025.
3. Any communication with external organisations (including but not limited to Stonewall) relating to Belfast Pride 2025, LGBT+ inclusion rankings, or the Stonewall Equality Index.
4. Any documentation or correspondence which discusses or references the Northern Ireland Executive's position on puberty blockers, and its relevance or impact on decisions related to Belfast Pride.
5. A breakdown of costs incurred or expected to be incurred by the Department of Finance or any part of the NICS in relation to participation in Belfast Pride 2025 (including branding, promotional materials, staff time, etc.).

Clarification received 12/06/25

Please be advised that the request you have asked for clarification on clearly relates to Belfast Pride.

DoF Response

Information held by the Department is attached at Annexes B - H. Please note some personal information has been withheld because it is exempt under Section 40(2) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 40(2) exempts personal information from disclosure if that information relates to someone other than the applicant, and if disclosure of that information would contravene one of the data protection principles in schedule 1 of the Data Protection Act.

Having considered all the information contained within the Legitimate Interest Test – also known as a Lawful, Fairness and Transparency Test - (attached as a separate document – **Annex I**), the department has established that, on balance, there is no lawful basis for the disclosure of third-party personal data falling within the scope of the request of which the requester is not the data subject. Making an unrestricted disclosure of personal data for private interests could constitute a disproportionate and unwarranted level of interference with the individuals' rights

and freedoms – particularly their right to privacy and family life under the Human Rights Act 1998

Information you have requested in respect of question 5 is held by the Department but is exempt under section 21(1) of the Freedom of Information Act. Section 21 exempts information if this information is reasonably accessible to the applicant by other means. Section 21 is an absolute exemption and the Department is not required to consider whether the public interest favours disclosure of this information.

The information is available at [Written Assembly Question AQW 28290/22-27](#)