

DoF Screening template

Screening is the first of two methods by which the necessary level of “regard” is demonstrated as being paid to the statutory equality goal, as set out in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998. The DoF Equality Scheme commits us to screening our policies. This includes our strategies and plans, policies, legislative developments; and new ways of working such as – the introduction, change or end of an existing service, procedure, policy etc.

This screening template is designed to help business areas consider the likely equality and human rights impacts of their proposed decisions on different groups of customers, service users, staff and visitors.

Detailed information about the Section 75 equality duties and what they mean in practice is available on the Equality Commission’s website:
<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75GuideforPublicAuthoritiesApril2010.pdf>

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 accessible on the DoF website as soon as possible following completion and made available in alternative formats on request.

All Section 75 consultees should be advised of the screening exercise once the final policy decision has been taken.

The screening template has 4 sections to complete. These are:

Section A - details about the policy / decision that is being screened.

Section B - 4 key questions that require you to outline the likely impacts on equality groups, and all supporting evidence.

Section C - 4 key questions in relation to obligations under the Disability Discrimination Order and the Human Rights Act.

Section D - the formal record of the screening decision.

SECTION A

Information about the policy

This 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 on a step-by-step basis.

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

Is this a new or revised policy?

New

a) Name of the policy

Land Registration Legislation Project

b) Brief Description of the policy

Land Registry has undertaken a digital transformation project to put into place a new digital solution that will provide an effective, efficient and trusted service in line with Digital First, the Assembly's 2024-27 Programme for Government, the LPS Corporate Plan and the DoF Business Plan. The proposed transformation will replace the current LandWeb system and will change Land Registry services and practices affecting staff and users such as solicitors, other government departments and the general public. The Land Registry Implementation Project (the Implementation Project) is responsible for delivering the new digital solution

The Land Registration Legislation Project has been established to make the legislative amendments required by the Implementation Project to

lawfully introduce the new digital services which they are currently developing.

c) Aims of the policy/ Rationale behind the changes

The policy objective of the Land Registration Legislation Project is to amend existing legislation to allow the lawful introduction of electronic and digital services required by the Implementation Project as part of the introduction of the new digital services.

d) Who will the policy affect?

The Land Registration Legislation Project will affect the work of the Implementation Project by allowing them to lawfully introduce new digital services to Land Registry.

e) Is this a NICS wide policy?

No

f) Who will implement the policy?

The Land Registration Legislation Project Team

g) Will this policy or revision address an existing inequality?

No

h) Will this policy or revision benefit any Section 75 categories?

No

i) Will this policy or revision have an adverse differential impact upon any of the Section 75 groupings?

No

Section B

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? Set out all evidence below along with details of the different Section 75 groups you have met and / or consulted with to help inform your screening assessment. Please also provide details of priorities and needs identified for each Section 75 group.

- **Religious belief**

The 2021 Census saw over 42% of the NI population identify as Roman Catholic and 37% as Protestant. 19% reported as being of no religion; less than 2% identified as being of other religions.

[Northern Ireland: population distribution by religion 1861-2021 | Statista](#)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Political opinion**

The NI Life and Times Survey 2018 found that 26% describe themselves as Unionist, 21% as Nationalist and 50% as Neither.

[NI Life and Times Survey - 2018 : UNINATID \(ark.ac.uk\)](#)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Racial group**

The 2021 Census found that 96.55% of the NI population state their ethnic origin to be white and 3.45% stated they were of an ethnic minority. People who do not have English as their first language may find it difficult to access Government services although the availability of online translation services such as Browse Aloud can go some way to alleviate this difficulty.

[Census 2021 - Briefing \(equalityni.org\)](https://equalityni.org)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Age**

The 2021 Census found the ages of the NI population to be:

0-14 – 19%
15-39 – 31%
40-64 – 32%
65-84 – 15%
85+ - 2%

[Census 2021 Population and household estimates for Northern Ireland Statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://nisra.gov.uk)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Marital status**

The 2021 Census found that 38% of the NI population identified as single, 45.6% as married, 0.2% in a civil partnership, 3.8% as separated, 6% as divorced and 6.4% as widowed. The Department is not aware of any specific needs or experiences for this category.

[Census 2021 Main statistics for Northern Ireland - Statistical bulletin - Marital or civil partnership status & Household relationships \(couples\) \(qub.ac.uk\)](https://qub.ac.uk)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Sexual orientation**

The 2021 Census data reported that 90% identified as heterosexual, 7.9% gave no response, 1.2% reported as gay or lesbian, 0.7% as bisexual, 0.2% as other. The Department is not aware of any specific needs or experiences for this category.

[Census 2021 Main statistics for Northern Ireland - Statistical bulletin - Sexual orientation \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/census-2021-main-statistics-for-northern-ireland-statistical-bulletin-sexual-orientation)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Men & women generally**

The 2021 Census reports 49.2% of the population is male and 50.8% is female. The Department is not aware of any specific needs or experiences for this category.

[Census 2021 Population and household estimates for Northern Ireland Statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](https://www.nisra.gov.uk/census-2021-population-and-household-estimates-for-northern-ireland-statistical-bulletin)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Disability**

The 2021 Census shows that 24.33% of people report their activities are hindered by a disability to some extent or other. Some Land Registration customers within this category may have difficulty traveling to locations where they can currently access Land Registry services, such as public offices and solicitors offices; the increase in online availability of Land Registry services which will be facilitated by the introduction of the new Land Registry IT Solution is likely to have a positive impact on this issue.

The impact of the introduction of services via the new Land Registry IT Solution is being considered as part of user engagement for that project and is outside the remit of the Land Registration Legislation Project.

[census-2021-ms-d02.xlsx \(live.com\)](#).

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

- **Dependents**

The 2021 Census found that 30% of households in NI have dependent children. The Department is not aware of any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

[Census 2021 population and household estimates for Northern Ireland: Statistical bulletin \(nisra.gov.uk\)](#)

The Department has not identified any specific needs or experiences for this category in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

Screening questions

There are 4 essential screening questions:

1. What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the nine Section 75 categories?

None

2. Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 categories?

No

3. To what extent is the policy likely to impact upon good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group?

None

4. Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between these three groups?

No

Are there likely impacts on Section 75 Categories?

- **Religious belief:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Political opinion:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Racial group:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Age:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Marital status:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Sexual orientation:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Men and women generally:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Disability:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

- **Dependants:** No adverse impacts on equality of opportunity have been identified.

What is the level of impact? None

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).

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

No impacts have been identified for people with multiple identities as a result of the Land Registration Legislation Project.

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.

Alternatively there may already be policies in place which would mitigate any adverse impact identified.

Mitigation measures proposed:

Not applicable

Section C

DoF also has legislative obligations to meet under the [Disability Discrimination Order](#) and the [Human Rights Act](#) . The following questions relate to these two areas.

Consideration of Disability Duties

Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity for DoF to better **promote positive attitudes** towards disabled people?

Explain your assessment in full

No opportunities to better promote positive attitudes towards disabled people have been identified in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

Does the proposed policy / decision provide an opportunity to actively **increase the participation** by disabled people in public life?

Explain your assessment in full

No opportunities to actively increase the participation by disabled people in public life have been identified in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

Consideration of Human Rights

The Human Rights Act (HRA) 1998 brings the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) into UK law and it applies in N Ireland. Articles 3 and 4 are classified as “absolute” rights ie the State can never withhold or take away these rights. All others are either “qualified” or “limited”. Further information is available via the following link

<http://www.nicshumanrightsguide.com/>

Indicate any potential adverse impacts that the policy / decision may have in relation to human rights issues.

	<u>Adverse Impact</u>	
	(delete as appropriate)	
Right to Life	Article 2	No
Prohibition of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment	Article 3	No
Prohibition of slavery and forced labour	Article 4	No
Right to liberty and security	Article 5	No
Right to a fair and public trial	Article 6	No
Right to no punishment without law	Article 7	No
Right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence	Article 8	No
Right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Article 9	No
Right to freedom of expression	Article 10	No
Right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association	Article 11	No

Right to marry and to found a family	Article 12	No
The prohibition of discrimination	Article 14	No
Protection of property and enjoyment of possessions	Protocol 1 Article 1	No
Right to education	Protocol 1 Article 2	No
Right to free and secret elections	Protocol 1 Article 3	No

Please indicate any ways which you consider the policy positively promotes human rights.

No positive impacts on human rights have been identified in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

Please explain any adverse impacts on human rights that you have identified.

No adverse impacts on human rights have been identified in relation to the Land Registration Legislation Project.

If you have identified any adverse impacts on human rights through this screening you must complete a Human Rights Impact Assessment: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/publications/human-rights-impact-assessment-proforma>.

Monitoring Arrangements

Public authorities should consider the guidance contained in the Commission's [Monitoring Guidance for Use by Public Authorities \(July 2007\)](#):

<http://www.equalityni.org/ECNI/media/ECNI/Publications/Employers%20and%20Service%20Providers/S75MonitoringGuidance2007.pdf>

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.

Please detail proposed monitoring arrangements below:

Not applicable

Section D - Formal Record of Screening Decision

Title of Proposed Policy / Decision being screened:

Land Registration Legislation Project

I can confirm that the proposed policy / decision has been screened for (i) equality of opportunity, (ii) good relations disabilities duties and (iii) human rights issues

On the basis of the answers to the screening questions, I recommend that this policy / decision is –

Screened Out – No EQIA necessary (no impacts)

Provide a brief note to explain how this decision was reached:

No negative impacts have been identified as part of this screening

Screening assessment completed by -

Name Ciara Coughlin
Grade Deputy Principle
Date 08 December 2025

And approved by –

Name Christine Farrell
Grade Grade 5
Date 09 December 2025

Central Support Team Notified 09 December 2025

Equality Contacts advised 09 December 2025

Screening uploaded to DoF website (insert date)