ANNEX A

FOI DOF/2023-0150

Request

Please provide a copy of the rationale, section 75 screening and EQIA behind the decision not to apply the NICS Guaranteed Interview Scheme for disabled applicants in recent trawl competitions for existing staff such as the vacancy IRC288416 - Deputy Principal – Policy & Legislation Northern Ireland Civil Service.

Please also confirm how many internal trawls have been run since the introduction of the NICS Guaranteed Interview Scheme. Of that number please confirm how many made reference to same to inform potential disabled applicants as to its application in relation to same.

DoF Response

I can confirm the department holds the information requested.

The Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS), applies only to NICS **external** recruitment activity where minimum essential criteria and some form of shortlisting apply. The scheme was introduced to provide recruitment opportunities for disabled people who are currently underrepresented within the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

The application of the GIS is further explained in the following documents:

Guaranteed Interview Scheme Policy and Guaranteed Interview Scheme FAQs

The NICS GIS Screening Policy is exempt under Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act as it is reasonably accessible by other means and is available on the DoF website or by selecting the following link:

Guaranteed Interview Scheme - Screening Policy | Department of Finance (finance-ni.gov.uk).

An Equality Impact Assessment was not required for GIS.

The NICS has run 12 internal trawls since the introduction of the NICS GIS on 1 January 2022. The GIS applies only to external recruitment activity; as trawls are internal competitions the GIS did not apply.