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Introduction

This Guidance has been prepared to provide practical assistance to public authorities in carrying out Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs), and information for those who will be engaged in consultations during those assessments. The existing Guide to the Statutory Duties outlines the mandatory arrangements under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; this document accompanies and is informed by the Guide but does not carry the same legal status.

In carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 ('the Act') has placed the following statutory requirement on each public authority:

- 75 (1) A public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity:
- a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;
 - b) between men and women generally;
 - c) between persons with a disability and persons without; and
 - d) between persons with dependants and persons without.
- (2) Without prejudice to its obligation under subsection (1), a public authority shall in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Schedule 9 of the Act then sets out detailed provisions for the enforcement of these duties, including the key elements of an Equality Scheme. Equality Schemes must show 'how the public authority proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to the relevant functions'.

In accordance with Schedule 9, paragraph 4(3) of the Act, Equality Schemes must conform with the Equality Commission's 'Guide to the Statutory Duties'. In particular, this practical guidance relates directly to Annex One of the Guide to the Statutory Duties (Section 4), mindful that each EQIA must contain the seven separate elements identified in this annex.

This practical guidance does not extend to screening. It is expected that a public authority will have screened policies, written or unwritten, prior to embarking on an Equality Impact Assessment (see Appendix III for a flow chart of this process).

EQIA incorporating nine overlapping equality categories present a considerable challenge to public authorities responsible for implementing timetables of work in accordance with approved Equality Schemes. Equally, continued involvement in these impact assessment procedures will place ongoing responsibilities on many groups and individuals in the voluntary, community and trade union sectors and to the Equality Commission. Providing comprehensive Practical Guidance on a unique equality project such as this is not an easy task. To ensure the best possible practical advice was obtained the Commission brought together an Advisory Group comprising key networks in the public, voluntary, community and trade union sectors. The Advisory Group was tasked with assisting the consultant team on the production of this Guidance. The Advisory Group held three meetings and reviewed each successive draft that was produced. This consultative process was supplemented by a series of consultative meetings with other key stakeholders to ensure that all concerns were taken on board. The Commission greatly appreciates the efforts made by all who provided valuable input into and comment on the various drafts.

In preparing this Practical Guidance, practice in other jurisdictions throughout the world was considered, for example, drawing upon material utilised in the conduct of environmental impact assessments, social impact assessment and gender impact assessment. However Northern Ireland is unique in pioneering Equality Impact Assessments across a much broader and more inclusive range of categories than any other jurisdiction.

Assessing the adverse impact of public policy across all nine categories cannot be effectively undertaken unless all qualitative and quantitative data relevant to the Section 75 categories are available and accessible. This is not yet the case and there are considerable gaps in information, which still need to be filled. Established monitoring systems have existed for sometime in the religious/political category in the context of Fair Employment monitoring regulations, and alongside this gender data has also been maintained. The absence of baseline data for Black and minority ethnic communities has caused some difficulty, but fortunately the growing body of qualitative research in this area has in many respects compensated for the gaps in quantitative data. Equally, there is a need for sensitivity and respect for human rights and data protection, particularly in the categories of sexual orientation and disability, but this must be weighed against the need to measure the extent of adverse impact and to support ongoing policy monitoring which are requirements of the Procedure for Conducting Equality Impact Assessments.

Public authorities must recognise their responsibilities in ensuring that effective systems of information gathering are put in place, to supplement available statistical and qualitative research and this is emphasised in Stage One of the Procedure for Conduct of Equality Impact Assessment (Annex 1), Guide to Statutory Duties (page 42). The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency has undertaken an initial review of relevant data across the eleven Assembly Departments. A description of these data sets, together with contact details are set out in the appendix. NISRA has committed itself to extending this data through seeking to include the remaining public authorities in further updates, and will add the information to its website as it becomes available. With this in mind the Commission would welcome additional sources of data to supplement this compendium, and the Commission's research strategy will seek to complement this with further data to support Section 75 work.

The Commission believes there is a need for balance between developing best practice in this area of equality work, and ensuring a consistent approach by all public authorities whose statutory duty includes the effective conduct of Equality Impact Assessments. The Commission has been conscious of the urgent need for Public Authorities to be given this further Guidance in this important area of their equality work. At the same time, as work on the production of this Guidance has shown, there is considerable value in ensuring meaningful consultation on the evolution of guidance on Equality Impact Assessments. With this in mind, the Commission will monitor and evaluate the implementation of this Practical Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment in the forthcoming year. As part of this process there will be a formal consultation period on the Guidance in advance of a review of the Guide to the Statutory Duties.

Equality Schemes, with their Equality Impact Assessments, are intended to increase participation and inclusion, to change the culture of public decision making, and to place a more proactive approach to the promotion of equality at the heart of public policy. Alongside the New Targeting Social Need and Promoting Social Inclusion strategies we are poised to take on, in a more focused and strategic way, the historic inequalities we have all grappled with, since anti discrimination and equality legislation was first introduced. Mainstreaming equality in public policy making involves taking ownership of the Equality Impact Assessment process and delivering on equality and good relations outcomes. The Commission looks forward to achieving the equality outcomes envisaged throughout the public sector that will result from authorities' planned Equality Impact Assessments and the implementation of the measures which will flow from them. A copy of this Guidance, including a bibliography, is accessible from the Commission's website www.equalityni.org

Conducting an Equality Impact Assessment

What is an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)?

- A1 In the context of the Section 75 duties, an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is written or unwritten, formal or informal, and irrespective of the scope of that policy or the size of the public authority. While the precise detail of each EQIA will be determined by these factors, the assessment itself must always be conducted in accordance with the procedure outlined in the Guide to the Statutory Duties (Procedure for Conduct of Equality Impact Assessments, Annex 1, page 41). That is, the assessment must make reference to the nine equality categories as defined in Section 75 of the Act. The nine categories are: religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability and dependancy, and an EQIA should encompass all groups contained within each category (for example, dependancy as a category is to include those with and those without dependants). While an EQIA must address all nine categories, it is not intended that each category will be afforded equal emphasis throughout the assessment process; instead the EQIA must be responsive to emerging issues and prioritise accordingly.
- A2 The primary function of the EQIA should be to determine the extent of differential impact upon the relevant groups and in turn whether that impact is adverse, that is whether it has a negative impact on groups or individuals in relation to one or more of the nine equality categories. In the light of this assessment, if it is decided that the policy has an adverse impact, the public authority must consider alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity or measures which might be employed to mitigate adverse impact.
- A3 The **processes** involved in conducting an EQIA should not be looked on as an end in themselves. Instead, it should be borne in mind that the aim of the assessment is the promotion of equality of opportunity and thus the **outcomes** of the EQIA are of primary concern.
- A4 In the Procedure for Conduct of Equality Impact Assessments outlined in the Guide to the Statutory Duties, the seven separate elements of an EQIA are as follows:
- Consideration of Available Data and Research
 - Assessment of Impacts
 - Consideration of:
 - *Measures which might mitigate any adverse impact*
 - *Alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity*
 - Formal Consultation
 - Decision by Public Authority
 - Publication of Results of EQIA
 - Monitor for Adverse Impact in the Future and Publication of the Results of Such Monitoring

A5 While these elements outline the necessary content of an EQIA they should not be looked on as defining the timing or sequence of events associated with an EQIA. This is because some of the elements are ongoing, some run consecutively while some are interlinked. By way of example, consultation should play a significant role at stages throughout the EQIA and not only at the time of 'Formal Consultation' prior to 'Decision by the Public Authority' (see Appendix III). Equally, any EQIA must retain an ongoing capacity to assess the potential impact of alternative policies, and procedures must be put in place for assessing the likely impact of these alternative policies either within or without that EQIA.

Defining the Aims of the Policy

A6 Before embarking on an EQIA, it is important to spend time determining the aims of the policy. This is a key stage in the development of an EQIA and should therefore be afforded due attention. The policy aim is the focal point defining the public authority's intended objective and will guide the subsequent development of an EQIA.

A7 With this in mind, the starting point for an EQIA must involve determining the EQIA's terms of reference, including the general aims of the policy along with more specific associated objectives and in particular where these may help to clarify the operation of the policy (for example, in relation to service provision or procurement).

A8 The following questions may help to provide an early steer for an EQIA:

- *What is the policy?*
- *What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy?*
- *Are there associated objectives of the policy? If so, what are they?*
- *Who defines or defined the policy?*
- *Who implements the policy?*
- *What outcomes do we want to achieve with this policy and for whom?*
- *Who are the main stakeholders in relation to this policy?*
- *What outcomes would other stakeholders want from this policy?*
- *How do these outcomes meet or hinder other policies, values or objectives of the public authority?*
- *What factors/forces could contribute/detract from the outcomes?*
- *How does the public authority interface with other bodies in relation to the implementation of this policy?*
- *Are there any groups which might be expected to benefit from the intended outcomes but which do not?*

A9 As should be clear from the answers to these questions, at this stage it is essential to identify (i) the responsibilities which the public authority holds in relation to this policy; and (ii) the responsibilities held by other bodies (and including other public authorities).

- A10 It is important to recognise that the 'Equality Duty' applies to all policies of the public authority, regardless of their nature, who defined the policies, where they came from or who implements them. Where a policy either originates, or is controlled in full or in part, by other persons, organisations or public authorities then arrangements must be put in place to co-ordinate the conduct of the EQIA between these persons and/or bodies. Where the public authority has an involvement in the service delivery of a policy which is set elsewhere it will not be appropriate to disregard this involvement but to identify the role relationships between each body as part of the EQIA and to act accordingly. For example, a procurement policy may be imposed on the public authority but when the policy is then implemented by that public authority it must be subjected to assessment under Section 75.
- A11 Wherever a policy originates, once adopted by the public authority then the public authority is deemed to have responsibility for the effects of that policy. On those occasions where one or more public authorities share responsibility for a policy then necessary arrangements should be put in place and public authorities should then co-operate fully in carrying out an EQIA.
- A12 As an EQIA proceeds it may become apparent that certain policies are associated. Where this is the case then it may be appropriate to link the EQIAs of these policies.
- A13 Where a screening exercise undertaken in preparation for an EQIA indicates the potential for adverse impact then new or proposed policies must be subject to the same process of Equality Impact Assessment as existing policies. It must be recognised that the data used to inform the decision-making process is likely to be more projective than retrospective. The policy will be screened first and on the basis of this screening the policy may or may not be subject to an EQIA.
- A14 In all the situations outlined above those carrying out an EQIA must remain responsive to any emerging issues. That is, they must be sufficiently flexible, within the confines of the approved equality scheme, to accommodate changed circumstances which may present themselves.
- NB In subsequent sections, the opening paragraphs have been reproduced verbatim from the relevant sections of the Guide to the Statutory Duties.

Chapter 1

Consideration of Available Data and Research

1.1 Public authorities will need to consider how they will collect the information which will enable them to make a judgement of the extent of impact on the included groups. The Commission encourages public authorities to work collectively on this. For example authorities operating within the education or health and social services sectors may wish to work together both to ensure the most effective and efficient use of public resources and to access the optimum information. Likewise, information available within the public sector should be made available to those likely to be affected by policies to enable them to be fully informed of the basis on which decisions are made. The following guidance outlines the approach to be adopted at this stage:

- *Collect and analyse existing **quantitative** data by relevant characteristics as a minimum base from which to judge outcomes.*
- *Use **qualitative or evaluative research** or information gathered by government and bodies such as voluntary, community and trade union organisations.*
- *Identify where more detailed data are needed in order to have the optimum information on which to base decisions.*
- *If necessary, commission new data (qualitative or quantitative). As outlined above co-operation within and between sectors should be considered.*
- *Relevant, reliable and up-to-date information is essential. Statistics alone do not provide reasons or explanations for differences. Public authorities must therefore institute a system of information gathering to supplement available statistical and qualitative research. While the collection of relevant data is important, public authorities must be aware that particular issues of sensitivity and confidentiality may arise in relation to disability and sexual orientation. Public bodies must recognise the particular benefit of discussion and information gathering with groups representing people with disabilities and of different sexual orientations, in the absence of extensive data on these matters among their employees and recipients of services.*

1.1 As 1.1 above indicates, the Guide to the Statutory Duties encourages public authorities to work together when collecting new data. This co-operation will be vital in maximising resources and minimising duplication of effort. Beyond this, a general partnership approach to data collection is likely to be the most efficient and effective and should be actively promoted.

Equality Categories

- 1.2 To help categorise and analyse data, it may be considered useful, if not essential, to reference examples of groups contained within each of the nine equality categories. This point is noted indirectly in the Guide to the Statutory Duties, which calls for the collection and analysis of existing quantitative data by '*relevant characteristics as a minimum base from which to judge outcomes*'.
- 1.3 In their Equality Schemes, several public authorities already make reference to examples of groups contained within each of the nine equality categories (religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, disability, dependancy). Appendix I includes an example of such groups broken down by equality category, although it is to be stressed that this is presented by way of illustration and is not intended to be exhaustive or definitive. For example, a policy may be of special concern to a particular grouping which has not been identified (for example a particular age band) or a group made up of two or more categories (for example, young people with learning difficulties), and in such circumstances the EQIA must accommodate these special interests.
- 1.4 While reference to named examples within the nine equality categories may be helpful in providing a general framework for analysis, sole reference to a number of named groups may not always encourage inclusivity or afford flexibility of response. This is especially the case where policy issues may be salient to minority groups which are not named or where mixed identities are to be assessed (for example, subgroups such as 'married female Travellers').
- 1.5 Particular policies are likely to call for further work on the categorisation of groups within the equality categories, as the following examples illustrate:
 - (i) 'Person with a disability' as a group may need expansion to cover particular mental and physical impairments when considering particular policies.
 - (ii) The 'political opinion' group may need expansion if a public authority is assessing its conflict of interest policies.
 - (iii) There may be occasions where the groups identified in the 'religious belief' category may need to be expanded when dealing with policies relating to working or opening on particular religious festivals or holy days.
- 1.6 In this way, while identifying 'groups' may aid comparative analyses and encourage consistency between public bodies, the potential for exclusion must also be acknowledged and dealt with appropriately.

Sources of Data

- I.7 It is suggested that the following questions could be asked:
- *What do we need to know about this policy?*
 - *What information is needed to ensure that all perspectives are taken into account?*
 - *Who should be involved in determining what information is needed?*
 - *What existing quantitative data is available, in-house and externally?*
 - *What existing qualitative or evaluative research is available, in-house and externally?*
 - *What additional data are needed?*
 - *Is there a need to generate primary data?*
 - *Is there a need for secondary analyses of existing data?*
 - *Who will be partners in information gathering/provision?*
 - *What processes are required to consult effectively with these partners?*
- I.8 An EQIA depends on the effective use of data, whether quantitative or qualitative data, and whether internally or externally derived.
- I.9 **Quantitative data** refers to numbers (that is, quantities), typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information would often be analysed 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).
- I.10 **Qualitative data** refers to the experiences of individuals from their perspective, most often with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. It is likely that consultations, for example, are more likely to yield qualitative than quantitative data. Both types of data should be regarded as equally relevant, no one type of data is inherently more valuable than the other.
- I.11 Before beginning an EQIA a thorough audit of available data should be carried out, paying particular attention to in-house data sets which either can be used or adapted for the purposes of EQIAs. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency has recently completed an audit of the extent and quality of coverage of Section 75 groups by key data sources in Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office. The results of this audit are included as Appendix IV of this Guidance and should be consulted at an early stage in an EQIA. Appendix IV also includes contact details of those in Departments who can provide further information.
- I.12 The Guide to the Statutory Duties encourages public authorities to co-operate when considering existing data, and it would be important for the data audit to include all public authorities within a particular sector or between sectors when data can be usefully shared.

- I.13 There may be a temptation routinely to employ one-off data gathering exercises in order to address perceived shortfalls in available information. While this may be necessary in response to significant contemporary issues, it is not a substitute for putting in place procedures which allow data to be gathered at regular intervals to inform current and future EQIAs. With this in mind it may be important to identify in-house sources of data as a first stage in the data gathering process. For example, existing administrative databases may be potentially useful sources of information.
- I.14 At the same time, Appendix IV gives an indication that existing in-house data sources are not likely to cover all nine equality categories or all potential groups included within those categories. There may be a need to consider how these sources of data may be adapted to include new fields so as to capture relevant information, or to consider alternative sources of information if adding new fields is not a practical option within the required timescales.
- I.15 Secondary analyses of existing data sets may provide useful information, and Appendix IV lists a number of sources of quantitative social data.
- I.16 Where data from Northern Ireland are not available then it may be useful to consider comparative data and in particular that originating from other parts of Europe. Although it may be inappropriate to draw direct inferences from these international datasets, comparative analyses may highlight interesting or significant issues for particular categories, or matters which warrant further local research.
- I.17 Also, comments which have been gathered during all previous consultations, and including the preparation of the Equality Scheme, should continue to inform decision-making and should be regarded as a valuable source of information. Likewise, consultants' reports, academic publications and consultations with the trade union, voluntary and community sectors should continue to inform the process.

Methods of Data Collection

- I.18 It is important to reiterate the point that various data collection techniques are likely to be used during an EQIA and including both quantitative and qualitative methods.
- I.19 By way of example, the following could each play a role (although this list is not intended to be exhaustive and the techniques may also be known by alternative names. For example, focus group interviews may also be referred to as luncheon clubs or discussion groups):
- *Consultations*
 - *Surveys (e.g. face-to-face, telephone, postal)*
 - *Observations of behaviour**
 - *Administrative databases*
 - *Secondary analyses of existing databases*
 - *Focus group interviews***
 - *In-depth interviews*
 - *Pilot projects*
 - *Review of complaints made*
 - *User feedback*
 - *Academic publications*
 - *Consultants' reports*
 - *Citizens' juries*

* For further information on where and when observations may or may not be appropriate please refer to Appendix II.

** These may be known by a variety of titles, for further information on relevant procedures please refer to Appendix II.

- I.20 For those who may be unfamiliar with social research, Appendix II includes further notes on some of these methods, each of which has inherent advantages and disadvantages. For example, quantitative procedures may allow data to be gathered from a large number of people relatively efficiently but the information may be less rich in comparison with that derived from more intensive qualitative techniques. To overcome problems associated with any one method it is considered sensible to adopt a complementary approach, drawing on a range of techniques.
- I.21 Consideration should be given as to how appropriate particular methods may be for each of the nine equality categories or groups contained within each category. For example, accessing representatives of certain 'voiceless' minorities may be difficult, while certain categories may present particular problems in relation to sensitivity and confidentiality of information (for example, sexual orientation). It is expected that a public authority will be flexible in how it responds to such concerns, and the published report on the EQIA should acknowledge attempts which have been made to address these issues.

- 1.22 Data collection techniques should be mindful of human rights and data protection issues. If in doubt it would be important to consult with representatives of affected groups or relevant agencies before embarking on data collection. It should always be made clear that individuals have the right to decline to provide information and they should be made aware of how resulting data will be processed.
- 1.23 When gathering data, it will also be necessary to consider those occasions where there is an interaction between two or more categories (for example, a policy may adversely impact on disabled women but not on women or on people with disabilities generally). Methods of data collection must be capable of identifying such interactions along with the main effects associated with the category.
- 1.24 Before in-house databases and other systems of data collection have become well established, the gathering of data to inform an EQIA is likely to be time consuming and in areas such as sexual orientation only limited information is likely to be available. In all cases, lack of data should not be an excuse for doing nothing.
- 1.25 The public authority should be flexible and continue to monitor the impact of the policy after the completion of the EQIA.

Making Data Available

- 1.26 Any data must be presented in a manner which is easily accessible and understandable and which gives sufficient detail of procedures to allow for replication.
- 1.27 Where reasonable and practicable, raw data should be made available for inspection on request, with summary statistics included in the published report. It may be useful to present this information in a standardised form, using tables and figures for ease of access.

Chapter 2

Assessment of Impacts

- 2.1 *The authority must then use the information gathered to decide whether there is, or is likely to be, a differential impact, whether direct or indirect, upon the relevant group (or groups).*
- 2.2 *If an adverse effect on any of those groups can be identified, policy makers will need to assess whether the policy is unlawfully discriminatory taking into account that some policies are intended to increase equality of opportunity by requiring or permitting affirmative or positive action, or action to redress disadvantages. They will then have to decide how to ensure that the public authority acts lawfully.*
- 2.3 *Even if the policy is not unlawful, policy makers need to consider what to do in light of the adverse impact identified. The following is provided as guidance by the Commission:*
 - *If the policy is intended specifically to address the needs of a particular group, it may well be justifiable, indeed necessary in order to promote the equality of opportunity of that group.*
 - *If this is not the case, policy makers must consider whether there is any alternative measure which would achieve the aim desired without the differential impact identified. In this context, the Commission re-emphasises the importance of very careful consideration of policies which adversely impact on those categories defined by sexual orientation and age (both the young and the old) which are not currently covered by anti-discrimination legislation in Northern Ireland.*

- 2.1 It is suggested that the following questions may help guide assessment of impact:
 - *Is there differential impact on any of the groups in respect of the quantitative data?*
 - *Is there differential impact on any of the groups in respect of the qualitative or evaluative data?*
 - *Is there a difference in the conclusions reached using quantitative and qualitative methods? How can the difference be reconciled?*
 - *Is the differential impact an adverse one?*
 - *Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory?*
 - *If the policy is not directly or indirectly discriminatory, does it still have an adverse impact?*
 - *Is the policy intended to increase equality of opportunity by permitting or requiring affirmative or positive action or action to redress disadvantages? Is it lawful?*
 - *Is there any alternative measure which would achieve the desired aim without the adverse impact identified?*

- *Is there any mitigation which would alleviate the adverse impact identified?*
- *Are there additional measures which can be adopted which would further equality of opportunity in the context of this policy?*

- 2.2 When considering adverse impact it is important to highlight that an EQIA is not merely about the identification of either direct or indirect discrimination. Instead it is about promoting equality of opportunity in relation to the nine equality categories and to all groups within those categories.
- 2.3 Direct discrimination arises where, on prohibited grounds, a person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation. For example, direct discrimination may arise if a public authority has (i) a policy which precludes giving grants to certain political groups; or (ii) a policy which contains an age requirement (such a policy may be directly discriminatory, and may in the future be unlawful).
- 2.4 Indirect discrimination involves the application of a neutral provision, criterion or practice which particularly disadvantages one group and which cannot be objectively justified. For example, (i) a residency requirement in a policy may indirectly discriminate on racial or religious grounds; or (ii) a policy which requires employment participation on a full-time basis may indirectly discriminate against women or those with dependants.
- 2.5 Having gathered data which are relevant to the policy aim, that information should then inform an assessment of differential impact in relation to the nine equality categories and to all groups within those categories. This includes those occasions where there is an interaction between two or more categories (see para. 1.23).
- 2.6 Differential impact suggests that a particular group has been affected differently by the policy (in either a positive, neutral or negative way), while adverse impact is an indication that the effect is less favourable (i.e. negative) and is potentially unlawful.
- 2.7 As the Guide to the Statutory Duties makes clear, the purpose of an EQIA is to promote equality of opportunity. The public authority must make a judgement as to whether there is a differential impact and then determine whether the impact is adverse based on a systematic appraisal of the accumulated information. There is no statistical test available for making this judgement, nor would such a test be appropriate. Whether an impact is adverse is a question of common-sense; the public authority should look at all available information and make a reasonable judgement on whether the impact is adverse. If the impact is adverse then policy makers must consider whether it is or is not unlawfully discriminatory and in both cases then respond to this assessment appropriately, that is by considering mitigation and alternative policies.

- 2.8 While the data may highlight concerns in relation to only one or a small number of equality categories, appropriate attention must be afforded to all nine categories. That is, the process of conducting an EQIA should focus attention increasingly on those categories where adverse impact occurs. However, it is important to maintain an audit trail in relation to the nine equality categories, mindful that the final report should make reference to conclusions which have been drawn in relation to each equality category.
- 2.9 To assess differential impact, and in turn whether that impact is adverse, requires the bringing together of information from a number of sources, both qualitative and quantitative. Validity refers to the accuracy and precision of measurement, that is whether the measure yields 'correct' estimates of what is being assessed. Reliability is the consistency or stability of measurement, that is whether the measure yields consistent results when the object to be assessed has not changed. While these criteria can be used to assess how robust and 'generalisable' the available data may be, it would not be appropriate to use these criteria to exclude data which may well be germane to the EQIA. Instead it may be necessary to deal with such information with due caution (see para 5.5 below).
- 2.10 With regard to qualitative data, it is important to consider the extent to which the methods have yielded valid and reliable information that accommodates adequate representation from each equality category. With regard to quantitative data the same criteria of validity and reliability must apply but in terms of how the data are analysed then different issues arise. There is likely to be a temptation to apply statistical rules of significance to particular data sets in order to 'prove' adverse impact. While statistical 'rules of thumb' may be useful in determining whether there is indirect discrimination, their application is not likely to be helpful when drawing conclusions regarding adverse impact of policies in the context of promoting equality of opportunity.
- 2.11 The term 'adverse impact' must be interpreted in a way which accommodates the special characteristics, circumstances or needs of each equality category. Quantitative measures or numerical counts alone may inadequately capture the impact of these issues on such groups. For example, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and those with dependants may not attend public consultations and a mere recounting of views expressed will not reveal the reasons why those people are not visible or what may facilitate their future participation.
- 2.12 Assessment of impact concerns not only the policy under consideration but also any mitigation measures or alternative policies that could better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity. Therefore there must be an assessment of the impact of any alternatives considered. This assessment may proceed within the original EQIA, or if the alternative is significantly different from the original policy then either a new EQIA may be appropriate, or the alternative may be screened. Consultations are likely to play a key role in each of these processes.

- 2.13 Any policy which is targeted at particular groups by definition will have differential impact. The assessment of this impact must take into account whether it is unlawful and unjustifiable or whether it is intended and justified 'to address the needs of a particular group', either as a way of generally promoting equality of opportunity, or more specifically as part of a positive or affirmative action programme.
- 2.14 If it is discovered during an EQIA that a policy is more likely to be unlawfully discriminatory, that policy should be abandoned and there is no necessity to proceed with the EQIA. Any new policy which is proposed would then be subject to the screening process (see Appendix III).

Chapter 3

Consideration of Measures

- which might mitigate any adverse impact and
- alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity

- 3.1 *The consideration of mitigation and alternatives are crucial elements of the process. Options must be developed which reflect different ways of delivering the policy outcome.*
- 3.2 *The consideration of mitigation of adverse impacts is intertwined with the consideration of alternatives. Mitigation can take the form of lessening the severity of the impact or providing some other remedy, where the adverse impact cannot reasonably be reduced.*
- 3.3 *The mitigation of adverse impacts must be considered at the various stages of the policy-making process. Clear evidence of the mitigation of impacts must be apparent in the policy assessments, and details of mitigation and its implementation must be included in the final recommendations. Evidence of the consideration of mitigation must be presented during decision making.*
- 3.4 *Ways of delivering policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant group, or which better promote equality of opportunity for the relevant groups, must in particular be considered. Consideration must be given to whether separate implementation strategies are necessary for the policy to be effective for the relevant group. The following must be considered:*
- *How does each option further or hinder equality of opportunity?*
 - *How does each option reinforce or challenge stereotypes which constitute or influence equality of opportunity?*
 - *What are the consequences for the group concerned and for the public authority of not adopting an option more favourable to equality of opportunity?*
 - *How will the relevant group be advised of the new or changed policy or service?*
 - *What are the costs of implementing each option? Will the social and economic costs and benefits to the relevant group of implementing the option outweigh the costs to the public authority or other groups? An evaluation of net social benefits achieved by adopting each option must be considered.*
 - *Does the public authority have international obligations which would be breached by, or could be furthered by, each of the options?*
- 3.5 *Clear evidence of the consideration of the impacts of alternatives must be apparent in the relevant policy documentation. The realistic consideration of the impacts of reasonable alternatives must be evident in any final recommendation to policy makers. Justifications must be given if these alternatives have not been accepted.*

- 3.1 The Guide to the Statutory Duties provides clear direction to public authorities in relation to the consideration of measures and needs little by way of further clarification. Where adverse impact has been identified then a series of alternatives should be advanced for consideration. The Guide to the Statutory Duties requires public authorities to ask the six questions contained in 3.4 above, therefore it would be important to reference these six questions in any report on the results of the EQIA. For example, a policy to close a particular facility may have less of a differential impact if an alternative policy suggests that two facilities are downsized and neither is closed.
- 3.2 When considering options it would be appropriate to consider other policy initiatives such as New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) and Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI). For example, one policy option may be shown to adversely impact on various groups within the nine equality categories but a different option may also have an adverse impact on some of the groups but may disadvantage those in greatest 'need'. In these circumstances the option chosen should be that which accords with actions under New TSN and/or PSI where appropriate.
- 3.3 There may be occasions where differential impact can be justified as part of a wider strategy associated with positive or affirmative action in relation to particular groups, or where the policy deliberately attempts to encourage equality of opportunity for a particular group. For example, policies directly targeting or giving preferential treatment to persons with disabilities or those with dependants. Where this is the case any actions must be justified and it will be a question of providing a clear and legal rationale for these actions.
- 3.4 A public authority must ensure that an option for alleviating an adverse impact on a particular group does not in turn create an adverse impact for another group, either within that category or in another. If an adverse impact is unavoidable then it must be justified.

Chapter 4

Formal Consultation on the Actual Impact of Existing Policies and the Likely Impact of Proposed Policies

- 4.1 *An equality impact assessment requires consultation. Consultation must be carried out with relevant interest groups as well as the Equality Commission, other public bodies, voluntary, community, trade union and other groups with a legitimate interest in the matter. This should include those directly affected by the policy to be assessed, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest (detailed in the Equality Scheme, see Section 3 paragraph (3)(b)). It should be timely, open and inclusive, and conducted in accordance with the Guiding Principles detailed in Section 3 paragraph (2)(c) [sic Section 4 paragraph (2)(c)].*
- 4.2 *The method by which the public authority chooses to conduct consultations at this stage must ensure a fair opportunity to present pertinent information and to provide the public authority with a sound basis for decision, without rendering decision-making by the public authority unmanageable. It will be important to ensure that sufficient time and resources are dedicated to the consultation process to encourage full participation particularly by marginalised groups.*
- 4.3 *Wide publication of the consultation exercise is essential to inform the public and relevant groups about the policy being assessed, and to invite comments on it. This may include press releases, prominent advertisements in the press, the Internet and direct invitations to groups which are likely to be interested in and able to represent interests and views which would otherwise be inadequately represented.*
- 4.4 *The information used by the public authority in assessing the impact of the policy must be made available on request to those consulted. This will include any quantitative and qualitative data and other documentation such as consultants' reports.*

The Guide to the Statutory Duties at paragraph 4.1(2)(c) provides details of the guiding principles of consultation:

- *‘Consultation with groups and individuals should begin as early as possible.*
- *Consideration must be given to which method of consultation is most appropriate to the circumstances. Consideration should be given as to whether face-to-face meetings, small group meetings, focus groups, discussion papers with the opportunity to comment in writing, questionnaires, or Internet discussions are best.*
- *The accessibility of the language and the format of information must be considered to ensure that there are no barriers to the consultation process. Information should be available on request in accessible formats such as Braille, disc, and audiocassette and in minority languages to meet the needs of those who are not fluent in English. Public authorities must ensure that systems are in place to ensure that information is available in such accessible formats in a timely fashion. In addition, specific consideration should be given to how to best communicate information to young people and those with learning disabilities.*
- *Specific training for those engaged in consultation exercises should be considered to ensure those facilitating consultations have the necessary skills to communicate effectively with those being consulted.*
- *Adequate time should be allowed for groups to consult amongst themselves as part of the process of forming a view. The Commission recommends a period of at least two months for consultation exercises.*
- *Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure full participation in any meetings which are held. Different groups have different needs and may have different customs. Public authorities will need to consider the time of day, the appropriateness of the venue, in particular whether it can be accessed by those with disabilities, how the meeting is to be run, the use of appropriate language, whether a signer is necessary, and the provision of childcare.*
- *Information should be made available to ensure meaningful consultation. This should include relevant quantitative and qualitative data and other documentation such as consultants’ reports’.*

4.1 The following questions may be of assistance in guiding consultation:

- *Who is directly affected by the policy?*
- *What relevant groups have a legitimate interest in the policy?*
- *How do we ensure that those affected or with a legitimate interest in the policy are consulted?*
- *What methods of consultation will be used and at which stages of the EQIA?*
- *How will information be made available to those consulted?*
- *Will the information be accessible to minority groups such as those with disabilities and ethnic minorities?*
- *What barriers exist to effective consultation with each of the groups / bodies / persons identified above?*
- *What measures can be taken to facilitate effective consultation in light of any barriers?*
- *Have previous attempts at consultation with particular groups been unsuccessful? If so, why, and what can be done to overcome any obstacles?*
- *What resources are available to encourage full participation by marginalised groups?*
- *If meetings are to be held, where will they be held and at what time of the day?*

4.2 The Guide to the Statutory Duties, in paragraphs 4.1 – 4.4 (see above) makes clear that ‘formal consultation’ should be included as a critical stage in the EQIA, namely immediately prior to decision-making (see Appendix III). Less formal ‘consultation’ should inform the entire EQIA process.

4.3 An EQIA should include both types of consultation, that is (i) a ‘formal consultation’ which complies with the guiding principles outlined at 4.1 of the Guide to the Statutory Duties which is inclusive and affords a fair opportunity to present pertinent information so that the public authority may reach an informed decision; and (ii) ongoing less formal consultations with relevant consultees at key stages throughout the EQIA, as illustrated in Appendix III.

4.4 It is most important that consultations take place with those likely to be directly affected by the policy and this is essential during formal consultation. As already stated, consultations in general play an integral role in the EQIA and these consultations must be underpinned by a good working relationship with relevant consultees.

4.5 Through the establishment of these good working relationships, it is anticipated that over time the process of consultation will serve to facilitate the effective delivery of services by the public authority and it is important that public authorities recognise these consultations as a positive way of enhancing the effectiveness of policy formulation and review.

- 4.6 In the first instance, it is likely that the consultation process will be over-inclusive and this should not be seen as problematic. Over time it is likely that the process will become more refined but at this later stage the public authority must remain sensitive to the needs of particular groups and be able to access informed opinion whenever appropriate. Public authorities should ensure that for each EQIA they consider all appropriate consultees. The public authority should guard against a tendency to produce a list of consultees who are routinely consulted for each EQIA. Instead, the process of consultation should be characterised by flexibility and responsiveness.
- 4.7 During the course of an EQIA it is likely that consultations will take many forms. For example, consultations are likely to vary in terms of scope at particular stages of the process. On each occasion where consultations occur the public authority must ensure that the consultation is appropriate and is deemed to be reasonable. Useful guidance on the meaning of consultation was provided in the case of *R -v- Brent LBC (ex parte Gunning) (1995)*. *'Consultation must be at a time when proposals are at a formative stage.... The proposer must give sufficient reasons for any proposals to permit intelligent consideration and response. Adequate time must be given for consideration and response the product of the consultation must be conscientiously taken into account in finalising proposals.'*
- 4.8 For particular groups it is important to consult 'where people are' rather than expect consultees to travel to the public authority, for example, lesbian, gay and bisexual groups. Consultation will take many different forms, for example children, elderly people, Travellers, people with disabilities or persons with dependants cannot all be consulted in the same way, so different approaches are needed. It will be important to seek the advice of representative groups and relevant agencies to ensure the most affected individuals and groups are helped to engage in the process.
- 4.9 Amongst the various consultative mechanisms, face-to-face expert or general meetings are quite commonplace. In planning meetings, organisers must give consideration to an array of practical issues and including the following:
- *Is the venue wheelchair accessible?*
 - *Are there loop/signing/other facilities for people with varying disabilities?*
 - *Are the acoustics generally good?*
 - *Is it clear that people can bring and use advocates?*
 - *In complex buildings, is there a meeting and guiding service for those requiring it?*
 - *Have arrangements been made and individuals trained to deal with emergency evacuations?*
 - *Is the venue perceived to be 'welcoming and harmonious'?*
 - *Is the meeting in an area which will result in people of one community feeling uncomfortable about attending?*
 - *Has access to and from the meeting also been considered.*

- *Will any audience that needs to be particularly targeted feel comfortable? For example, does the venue have a reputation for being 'gay unfriendly'?*
- *Will the arrangements for chairing and organising reflect this hospitality? For example, young people may come to a school to discuss youth problems but they may not find it easy to talk freely if teachers are running the session.*
- *Are the venues flexible enough to allow larger/smaller group discussions?*
- *Are the venues accessible to public transport, and if not can alternative transport arrangements be made? For example, for people with mobility impairments or people with dependants and/or on low income.*
- *Depending on the issue under discussion, are the venues geographically spread, or are they overly concentrated in Belfast/urban centres?*
- *Are creche facilities available?*
- *Is interpretation needed?*

- 4.10 It will be necessary to put resources into consultation to ensure that it is effective. For example, resources may need to be expended on building the capacity of groups to engage in consultation. This may include providing training facilities, workshops, childcare, accessible formats such as Braille or minority languages and travelling expenses. Thought must be given as to where and how meetings are held and publicised, for example the venue, the time of day and advertisements in specialist publications such as the lesbian, gay and bisexual press.
- 4.11 At the stage of formal consultation it will not be sufficient merely to make available, for example, a copy of the published report of findings (see 'Publication of Results of an EQIA'). Instead the public authority must actively engage with consultees to ensure that they have a fair opportunity to present pertinent information so that the public authority may then reach an informed decision.
- 4.12 Most consultative processes involve preparing and circulating some form of initial written discussion paper for consideration. In this context it is important to carry out preliminary research, that is to liaise with those who work with the affected groups and identify what the needs are *before* consulting. It is likely that these preliminary consultations will save resources in the longer term.
- 4.13 Written papers which are made available to consultees should:
- *Use plain English and be jargon-free.*
 - *Convey specialist information in as simple a format as possible. For example, there will be occasions when documents need to include fairly detailed statistics or very specialised information. It is crucial that such material is translated into language enabling non-experts to engage with the process.*
 - *Include an executive summary.*
 - *Offer the text in languages other than English and in disability-friendly formats (for example, Braille, audio-tape, large type, etc.).*

- *Be relayed in newspapers, magazines and other material that is likely to be read by consultees. For example, this would include minority language publications and magazines published by the voluntary sector.*
- *Depending on the targeted audience, the documentation could be accompanied by non-written formats (for example, videos, role-play formats) and advice on possible discussion formats.*
- *Where appropriate, include specific questions or issues for discussion with particular target audiences. For example, people who have a learning disability or are deaf often do not find reliance on written communication effective. A radical look at more graphic forms of communication may be needed and should not be seen as something extraordinary.*

4.14 Public authorities should note that the Guide to the Statutory Duties specifies that, 'The Commission recommends a period of at least two months for consultation exercises' (Paragraph 4.1 (2)(c)). Public authorities should also be aware of the Code of Practice on Written Consultation laid down by the Prime Minister in November 2000. This recommends that written consultation should be conducted over a 12 week period. [website - <http://www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/servicefirst/2000/consult/code/ConsultationCode.htm>]. Public authorities should be mindful of these recommendations when scheduling an EQIA but should also take account of the distinction which is made between formal and informal consultations during an EQIA (see 4.2 and 4.3 above), and determine the programme of work accordingly.

Chapter 5

Decision by Public Authority

5.1 *The legislation requires that in making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted by it, that the public authority shall take into account any Equality Impact Assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy (Schedule 9 paragraph 9 (2)). A commitment to this must be included within the Equality Scheme (see Section 3 paragraph 6). It is therefore essential that the public authority fully complies with this commitment.*

5.1 Section 75 requires public authorities to have ‘due regard’ to the need to promote equality of opportunity. They must also have ‘regard’ to the desirability of promoting good relations. The Guide to the Statutory Duties at paragraphs 2.10 to 2.13 clarifies the meaning and relationship between these two statutory duties:

2.10 *The term ‘due regard’ was intended to be, and is, stronger than ‘regard’, but in either case the authority is required by the statute to take the specified matters into account and give them the required weight when carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland. Authorities must appreciate Parliament’s stated assessment that there is a **need** to promote equality of opportunity between the categories of persons specified in Section 75(1) and a **desirability** of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group (Section 75(2)). In other words, every public authority must now, as a universal rule of practice, take both factors properly into account in the way they carry out their functions relating to Northern Ireland.*

2.11 *In the Parliamentary debates on the Northern Ireland Bill, the Secretary of State said: ‘[W]e regard equality of opportunity and good relations as complementary. There should be no conflict between the two objectives. Good relations cannot be based on inequality between different religions or ethnic groups. Social cohesion requires equality to be reinforced by good community relations.... **I repeat that we see no conflict between these two objectives** (Commission emphasis) (House of Commons, Official Report 27 July 1998, col. 109)’.*

2.12 *To the extent that public authorities perceive, in particular circumstances, a tension between the two duties, the primary duty of a public authority is its equality duty. The good relations duty cannot be invoked to justify a failure or refusal to comply with the equality duty.*

2.13 *The two duties are also treated somewhat differently in Schedule 9, which sets out a method of enforcement of the duties.*

- 5.2 As public authorities have a statutory duty to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity it is not sufficient merely to take equality into account, it must be accorded considerable weight. That is, the need to promote equality of opportunity must be given regard or weight in accordance with the public authority's statutory duty as outlined in Section 75 of the Act. However this does not necessarily mean that the equality duty overrides other clearly conflicting statutory duties with which the public authority must comply. Instead, the public authority must act in a proportionate manner and accord weight not only to administrative considerations but also to the statutory equality of opportunity duty. Such considerations must be reflected in decision-making in relation to an EQIA.
- 5.3 The decision-making process represents the natural endpoint of the 'Consideration of Measures' (see above). At this stage, all available information is combined in a decision or decisions with respect to adopted or proposed policies, together with the rationale for that decision. Decision-making documentation must indicate that the impact of alternative policies and mitigation was considered. At this time, it may be useful to move from a consideration of the specific policy under assessment towards a more detailed consideration of the implications for all policies associated with the EQIA.
- 5.4 Those involved in the decision-making process should have the necessary authority to ensure that any decisions that are made will be implemented.
- 5.5 Where an EQIA suggests differential impact for two or more different equality categories or groups within categories, this may present particular problems in terms of possible solutions. This may be especially true where the perceived needs of these groups are in conflict. Possible solutions include looking at the context of the problem (for example, is there particular under-representation of one of the two groups?), the role of mitigation and/or a consideration of alternative policies. It would also be appropriate when making decisions to bear in mind solutions which meet other policy initiatives such as New Targeting Social Need (New TSN) and Promoting Social Inclusion (PSI).
- 5.6 A highly structured approach to decision-making will not be possible, given the types of data, both quantitative and qualitative, which will be drawn upon. At the same time it would be useful to systemise the decision-making processes and thereby to be able to record a procedure which can be scrutinised and can be justified. For example, relative weights could be attached to the various data according to their perceived significance, and some description offered as to how these weightings are reflected in the decision-making process, bearing in mind the overall weight which must be accorded to the equality duty as outlined above.

- 5.7 It would be necessary to explain conclusions reached on the validity and reliability of quantitative and qualitative data. In particular, where different types of data differ in relation to the determination of whether or not there is adverse impact. For example, quantitative data may not indicate adverse impact on grounds of sexual orientation yet qualitative data may do so. In such circumstances the decision as to the weight attached to particular data must be explained.
- 5.8 On occasion it may not be possible to satisfy competing demands from various groups, or to ensure that there is no differential impact. However, it is important to ensure that any decisions which are reached can be justified and are reasonable.
- 5.9 In particular circumstances public authorities may deem it appropriate to hold hearings or tribunals as part of a decision-making process or to engage independent mediators or inspectors.
- 5.10 The following questions may help guide decision-making:
- *Who will play a role in the decision-making process?*
 - *What authority do the decision-makers hold in the public authority?*
 - *What information will inform the decision-making process?*
 - *What weights will be assigned to various pieces of information? How will these weights be determined?*
 - *How is the decision-making process to be structured?*
 - *Will the process involve face-to-face meetings? How many?*
 - *How will the decision-making process be recorded?*

Chapter 6

Publication of Results of Equality Impact Assessments

6.1 *The legislation (Schedule 9 paragraph 9) requires public authorities to publish the results of Equality Impact Assessments. The Equality Scheme must detail both how and where the results will be published (see Section 3 paragraph 5). It is therefore essential that this commitment is fully adhered to.*

- 6.1 The Guide to the Statutory Duties encourages the public sector to work collectively on the collection of information (Paragraph 1.1 of Annex 1). They must publish results and these should be in a systematic and consistent manner, at the same time acknowledging that each EQIA will be unique. It may not be appropriate to be overly prescriptive in terms of the reporting of an EQIA.
- 6.2 Each public authority must publish the results of the EQIA in a comprehensive and readily accessible form, paying particular attention to special needs of particular groups within each equality category. This is probably best achieved by presenting the EQIA as a report which accommodates the seven separate elements as outlined in the Guide to the Statutory Duties, along with measures to mitigate adverse impact. According to the Guide, *'The mitigation of adverse impacts must be considered at the various stages of the policy-making process. Clear evidence of the mitigation of impacts must be apparent in the policy assessments, and details of mitigation and its implementation must be included in the final recommendations. Evidence of the consideration of mitigation must be presented during decision making'*.
- 6.3 It is likely that a draft of this report will have been made publicly available during formal consultation but the final version of the report should give reasons for either rejecting or accepting the results of the consultations. The format of the published report is likely to vary depending on the nature of the policy under assessment.
- 6.4 The report should begin with an **Executive Summary** of the results of the EQIA, in particular focusing on any decisions which have been reached.
- 6.5 The report should contain a description of the policy aim, the context within which the policy operates, the scope of the policy and any existing data which are available and which may have informed policy development in the past (**Background**). A summary of the screening exercise should be included (with relevant documentation included as an appendix).

- 6.6 The first section, **Data Collection & Consultation**, should outline how data were collected for the EQIA, and will also include reference to consultees along with any other procedures which have been used to draw together pertinent information. Sufficient detail should be provided so that the research procedures could be replicated and the validity of the data confirmed. It should be made clear to all those providing information in relation to an EQIA how that information will be made available subsequently. For example, sensitive monitoring information, focus group interviews and individual interviews may be anonymous but responses to consultation with representatives will be attributable. More generally, in published reports public authorities should be wary of the possibility of allowing individuals to be identified where inappropriate.
- 6.7 The next section, **Key Findings**, should highlight results that have emerged and should ensure that due consideration is afforded to all nine equality categories. It would be useful to present summary statistics in tables. It would not be appropriate to discuss these findings at this point.
- 6.8 The final section, **Conclusions**, will then draw conclusions from the results in terms of the policy impact and will outline the decision-making process concerning policy review. This section should state the decisions made by the authority on the basis of the EQIA, for example, by way of an action plan with associated timescales. If a decision is made to introduce measures to mitigate adverse impact or alternative policies then it would be appropriate to address each of the six questions listed under 3.4 above, namely:
- *How does each option further or hinder equality of opportunity?*
 - *How does each option reinforce or challenge stereotypes which constitute or influence equality of opportunity?*
 - *What are the consequences for the group concerned and for the public authority of not adopting an option more favourable to equality of opportunity?*
 - *How will the relevant group be advised of the new or changed policy or service?*
 - *What are the costs of implementing each option? Will the social and economic costs and benefits to the relevant group of implementing the option outweigh the costs to the public authority or other groups? An evaluation of net social benefits achieved by adopting each option must be considered.*
 - *Does the public authority have international obligations which would be breached by, or could be furthered by, each of the options?*
- 6.9 This section should also outline systems which will be put in place to monitor for adverse impact in the future and should include all relevant timetables.

Chapter 7

Monitoring for Adverse Impact in the Future and Publication of the Results of such Monitoring

- 7.1 *A system must be established to monitor the impact of the policy in order to find out its effect on the relevant group. This must be reviewed on an annual basis. The public authority is required to publish the results of this monitoring (Schedule 9 paragraph 4 (2) (b)). The Equality Scheme must specify how and where such monitoring information will be published (see Section 3 paragraph 5). It is therefore essential that monitoring is carried out in a systematic manner and that the results are widely and openly published.*
- 7.2 *If the monitoring and evaluation show that the policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arise which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, the public authority must ensure that the policy is revised.*

7.1 The following questions may help guide monitoring:

- *Who will be responsible for monitoring?*
- *What has to be monitored?*
- *Are there monitoring procedures already in place which will generate this information?*
- *How could monitoring procedures already in place be adapted to better reflect Section 75 needs?*
- *Can existing monitoring procedures be adapted to collect the additional information required in relation to this policy?*
- *What monitoring techniques and tools will be the most effective?*
- *Will arrangements need to be put into place for others to collect monitoring and evaluation information (for example where the public authority is not responsible for the implementation of the policy)?*
- *What indicators or targets will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the policy?*
- *In what format will monitoring information be published?*
- *Does the monitoring information identify opportunities for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted?*

7.2 Monitoring consists of continuous scrutinising, follow-up and evaluation of policies. It is not solely about the collection of data, it can also take the form of regular meetings and reporting of research undertaken. Monitoring is not an end in itself but provides the data for the next cycle of policy review.

- 7.3 When implementing step one of the Equality Impact Assessment process, ‘Consideration of Available Data and Research’, if systems of monitoring are established which allow for the routine collection of data in relation to the nine equality categories then this information can be used to monitor adverse impact in the future. Alongside these procedures there may be a need to establish particular methods for data collection in response to particular policy concerns. In turn, these methods may focus in particular on those groups which are adversely affected by the policy in question. The advice given at the ‘Consideration of Available Data and Research’ stage about data collection is equally applicable to monitoring. Monitoring should consist of both quantitative and qualitative methods as described in this section.
- 7.4 Monitoring must be sensitive to issues associated with human rights and privacy and the public authority should seek advice from consultees, the relevant agency or group representatives when establishing such procedures.

Appendix I

Examples of Groups by Equality Categories

Category	Examples of Groups
Age	For most purposes, the main categories are: those under 18; people aged between 18 and 65; and people over 65. However, the definition of age groups will need to be sensitive to the policy under consideration. For example, (i) in relation to employment policies the middle aged are often a vulnerable group, pensionable age is different for men and women and legal ages for working and voting vary; (ii) in relation to policies concerning young people then narrower age bands are likely to be more appropriate.
Marital status	Married people; unmarried people; divorced or separated people; widowed people.
'Men and women generally'	Men (including boys); women (including girls); transgendered people; transsexual people.
'Persons with a disability'	Persons with a disability as defined in Sections 1 and 2 and Schedules 1 and 2 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
'Persons with dependants'	Persons with primary responsibility for the care of a child; persons with personal responsibility for the care of a person with a disability; persons with primary responsibility for the care of a dependant elderly person.
Political opinion	Unionists generally; Nationalists generally; members/supporters of any political party; other.
Racial group	Chinese; Irish Traveller; Indian; Pakistani; Bangladeshi; Black African; Black Caribbean; White; mixed ethnic group; any other ethnic group; nationality.
Religious belief	Protestant; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Islam / Muslim; Sikh; Buddhist; other religion ; people of no religious belief.
Sexual orientation	Gay; lesbian; bisexual; heterosexual.

Appendix II

Methodologies

Consultation with representatives in practice may usually entail interviewing or conducting focus groups with representatives of particular groups in order to gauge their opinions or access their specialised knowledge. These groups may be drawn from within the organisation or from outside of it. The decision on which representatives may usefully be consulted will normally depend on factors such as the size and type of organisation and the particular policy to be assessed. It is likely that in many instances it will be impossible to consult with representatives of some protected categories from inside an organisation. This will occur where the category is not represented in the workforce or because of issues such as confidentiality relating to particularly sensitive categories. It may be essential for an organisation to develop links with appropriate groups in order to facilitate ongoing consultation. It is important to clarify from the outset the purpose of the consultation, which will determine not only the questions to be asked but also whether the consultation should incorporate examination of existing equality schemes and/or policies. It is also important to clarify which representatives will be consulted and how the results of the consultation process will be incorporated into the Equality Impact Assessment.

Surveys are often conducted by means of questionnaires. They can take a variety of formats from forced choice (where the respondent ticks or circles the relevant answer from a pre-determined set of answers) to open-ended (where each question is followed by space for a written response in the participant's own words), or a combination of the two. It should be remembered that such data may already be available in the form of results of previously conducted and published surveys, or in databases which have been archived. A survey may incorporate standard tests of attitudes, for example, or may simply consist of a series of questions devised for a specific purpose. Responses may be anonymous or identified by name or other means, in either case it is essential to assure confidentiality to encourage full and honest answers. Surveys can be a relatively speedy and inexpensive way of gathering a large quantity of data. They are particularly useful where the opinions of a numerically large group are of interest. Results may be amenable to statistical analysis and/or qualitative analysis, depending on the response format of the questions.

However, survey design is subject to many pitfalls. For example it is necessary to carefully consider what information should be sought, as unasked questions will remain unanswered. Response rates to surveys, especially where completed questionnaires are returned by post, are often low. It is difficult to access information on those without stable employment or a permanent address using surveys. Telephone surveys only access those who have residential telephones. As such, consideration needs to be given to the level of similarity between respondents and non-respondents - for example all of the respondents may be satisfied with a policy and all of the non-respondents unsatisfied, or vice versa.

It is also important to recognise that some numerically smaller groups may be under-represented or absent in survey samples, or indeed where they are represented in the sample, their number may be so small that meaningful conclusions about the impact of a policy on that group cannot be drawn. Finally, survey data may not be reliable in relation to categories where confidentiality is an important consideration to respondents, or where socially desirable responses are likely.

Observations of behaviour involve, as the name suggests, systematic attention, recording and analysis of conduct or function. The observations may vary in complexity from observation of patterns and content of social interactions, such as noting who contributes to decision-making during meetings, to simpler observations such as a 'head count' of numbers of individuals using a particular service. Such observations may facilitate quantitative analyses and may often provide a 'broad brush' picture of a situation but may be entirely inappropriate where an observation would be seen as an invasion of privacy. It is also possible to check for inter-rater reliability by having more than one observer check the way observations are categorised, and hence to guard against potential bias on the part of the observer. The observer may have to make assumptions about the category membership of the persons being observed. Conclusions from such studies may be severely limited, in that the observer has no access to the meanings behind actions and must rely on observations which are inherently superficial and may be biased by the observer's own prejudices. Hence, all that may be concluded from a simple 'head count' study is that more or less of one particular type of individual used a service. Results of such a study will give no indication of the reasons why individuals did or did not avail of the service.

Secondary analysis refers to analysis of existing databases of previously conducted surveys. These surveys can be re-analysed to provide information that may not have been drawn out from the original analysis because it was not directly relevant to the original purpose. Existing databases can only be used to provide demographic information on the population that an authority serves. In some cases, information relating to the nine equality categories will be available. In such cases, authorities will be able to ascertain the proportion of their service population in particular sectoral groups. Appendix IV details the Northern Ireland Departments' data sources that are currently available via the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). In many cases, existing databases will not have information relating to sectoral categories, such as disability or sexual orientation, not least because of the sensitivity associated with eliciting such information.

Focus groups are best described as guided conversations or discussions. The guidance is provided by a facilitator (sometimes called a moderator) whose remit is to ensure that the group discussion centres on the issue(s) of interest. Most recommendations stipulate that a focus group should consist of 8 to 12 participants in order to ensure a range of views and to avoid the development of subgroups or factions within the group. It is also often recommended that the participants should not know each other in advance of the session in order to encourage full and honest discussion. However, successful focus groups can be conducted with fewer participants and with pre-existing groups, such flexibility is a hallmark of focus group research.

General guidelines for organising focus groups usually recommend inviting more people than the target number to attend, on the assumption that some may not turn up on the day. A suitably sized room with seating which allows the participants to see each other (whether around a table or in a circle) is also necessary, and depending on the context, name badges can be worn or placed on the table so that participants (and the facilitator) do not have to try to remember everyone's names. It is also often a good idea to begin the session with refreshments (tea and biscuits) so that participants can relax and start to acclimatise to the situation.

Focus groups are often tape recorded, and it is useful to have a person other than the facilitator present to operate the recording equipment and also to take contemporaneous notes of the main features of the discussion. Sessions generally begin with the facilitator introducing themselves and explaining the purpose of the session and how it will proceed. Ground rules are explained at this point; participants are usually asked to preserve confidentiality by not discussing the session afterwards and to speak one at a time. They are also assured that the report of the session will preserve their anonymity and that remarks will not be attributed to individual participants. The facilitator should have prepared a 'game plan' for the session, noting issues to be explored and possible avenues for the discussion. Again, flexibility is the key. The aim is to allow the group to discuss the issues as naturally as possible rather than to present a series of set questions. Throughout the session the facilitator ensures that a full range of views is generated, that the discussion focuses on issues of interest and that no one individual dominates the discussion.

Most focus groups last around an hour but this may vary according to the agenda. To round off the discussion the facilitator may recap main points and ask if any of the participants would like to add anything. It is important to review the session, and preferably the tape recording, as soon as possible afterwards. This allows the facilitator and the note-taker to ensure that the recording is of adequate quality and to expand on the contemporaneous notes. Depending on the purposes of the session, the tape may be transcribed for further analysis or the notes expanded to produce a final report summarising the main points of the discussion in relation to the topic.

Interviews are face to face conversations between a researcher and a participant. Their form can range from the highly structured (where a list of questions are prepared in advance and presented to all participants in the same way) to the unstructured (where the conversation is allowed to develop more naturally). Structured interviews require considerable preparation in terms of developing an appropriate list of questions (interview schedule) and an appropriate strategy for deciding who to interview (sampling). However, they allow for generalisation from results and comparisons between groups, and data can be speedily collected and analysed by individuals who have had some basic training.

Development of a structured interview schedule should be guided not only by consideration of all the information you seek to collect (unasked questions will remain unanswered) but also of how to ensure that participants will answer the questions fully and honestly. Assurance of confidentiality help in this regard. It is also generally advisable to begin a structured interview with relatively non-contentious questions before moving on to more sensitive issues.

Sampling strategies will depend to a large extent on the purpose of the interviews. If the aim is to gauge general opinion on an issue throughout a population, the sample should be representative of the organisation in terms of a predetermined set of characteristics. These may include protected categories and/or other relevant characteristics such as grade or rank in an organisation. The aim in this context is to interview a sample which is a 'mini version' of the population of interest. On other occasions the aim may be to find out what particular groups think about an issue and the sampling strategy will revolve around identifying and locating members of these groups.

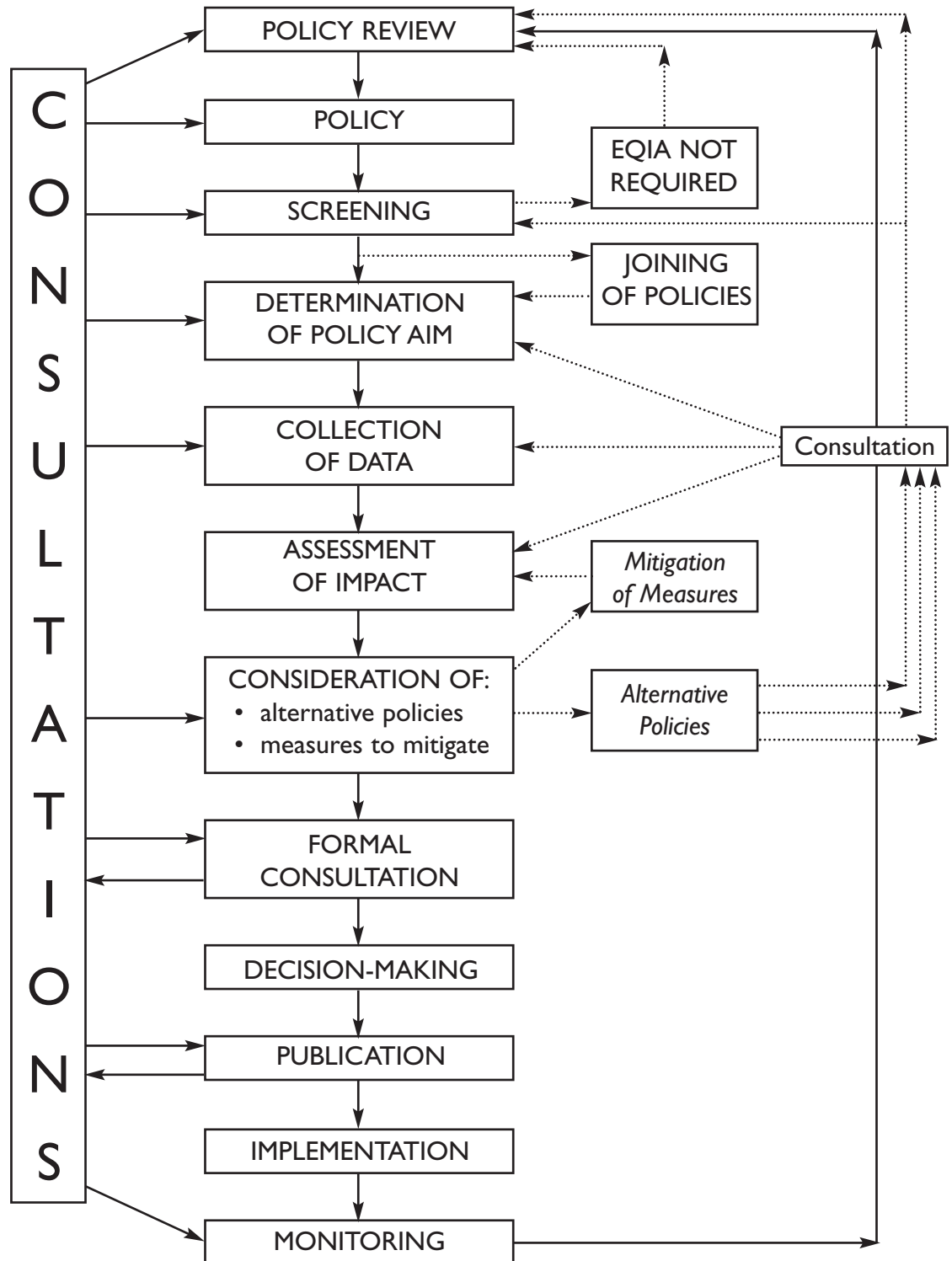
Responses to structured interviews may be recorded by the interviewer on the interview schedule itself (akin to filling out a questionnaire on behalf of the participant) or may be tape recorded for later transcription. Responses may be categorised and coded as numerical data or subjected to more qualitative forms of analysis. In either case the information gained will be constrained by the quality of the original schedule and by what participants were prepared to say - issues such as socially desirable responding are an important consideration when interpreting results.

Unstructured interviews are generally more demanding of the interviewer. While preparation generally involves only deciding on the topics to be explored, during the interview itself the interviewer will need to 'think on their feet', to follow up interesting remarks and perhaps above all to encourage participants to talk freely and comprehensively about the topic. It is usual to tape record unstructured interviews, and the resulting data consist of the interview transcripts themselves. Rigorous analysis of unstructured data is both time consuming and demanding, and actually begins during data collection as the interviewer converses with the participant and explores some avenues in greater depth than others. Ideally the interviewer also analyses the transcripts, moving from specific statements by participants to develop more general ideas and about their opinions, attitudes, values and beliefs. Again, socially desirable responding is an important issue and it should be clearly understood that the results represent an interpretation rather than objective findings.

Review of complaints made can provide valuable insights into particular policies. Such reviews can take various forms and may result in either qualitative or quantitative data. A simple count of the number and nature of complaints received will provide quantitative information on those policies that spontaneously elicit the highest number of complaints. The authority's response to complaints may also be examined more thoroughly using qualitative methods of data analysis. The types of complaints received can be categorised, the promptness and thoroughness of responses rated, the appropriateness of remedial action considered. It should be remembered however when using reviews as a source of data, that people who have failed to access a particular service are unlikely to be complainants and that certain groups may be less willing to voice their concerns than others.

Appendix III

Flow Chart



Appendix IV

Sources of Data

Foreword

Guidance on conducting an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) stresses the need to 'Consider Available Data and Research'. Part of this consideration will be the assessment of the extent to which the various Section 75 groups are able to be separately identified and analysed in various administrative and research data sets. Recognising the importance of data held by Departments in carrying out EQIAs and the likelihood of variability in the extent of coverage of Section 75 groups, the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency carried out an 'audit' of key sources of data within Northern Ireland Departments. The specific objectives of the audit were:

- *To assist those carrying out EQIAs in identifying relevant data.*
- *To identify the extent and quality of coverage of Section 75 groups within this data.*
- *To determine the potential for spatial desegregation of data (this is particularly relevant to Targeting Social Need).*

The results of the audit are provided in this appendix. A fuller description of each of the data sets is available on the NISRA web site (www.nisra.gov.uk).

This audit represents, as far as possible, the position at the date of publication. Significant changes in terms of extra data sources or changes in coverage of Section 75 groups will be updated on the NISRA Web site periodically.

The data sources are listed along with the names of those individuals who should be contacted initially for further advice on information available.

**The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency
March 2001**

Appendix IV

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety (DHSS&PS)										
Regional Information Branch (RIB)										
Hospital Inpatients System (HIS)	E	E	E	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Mental Health Inpatients System (MHIS)	E	E	G	G	N	G	N	N	N	PC
The Northern Ireland Regional Accident and Emergency System (NIREAS) ¹	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Community Returns ²	E ³	E	N	P	P	G	N	N	N	NI
Central Services Agency (CSA)										
Central Health Index (CHI)	E	E	P	N	N	P	N	N	N	PC
Dental Payment Information System (DPIS)	E	E	P	N	N	P	N	N	N	PC
Project Support Analysis Branch (PSAB)										
Child Health System (CHS) ²⁴	E	E	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Human Resources Management System (HRMS) ²⁵	E	E	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Equal Opportunities Monitoring System	E	E	G	E	G	G	N	N	N	PC
Information & Research Policy Branch (IRPB)										
National Food Survey	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y ⁴	N ⁵	N	DC
Infant Feeding Survey	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y ⁴	N ⁵	N	B,DC
NI Health & Social Wellbeing Survey (NIHSWS) 1	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y ⁴	N ⁵	N	PC
NI Health & Social Wellbeing Survey (NIHSWS) 2	Y	Y	Y	Y	TBD	TBD	Y ⁴	TBD	TBD	PC
Young People's Behaviour & Attitude Survey	Y	Y	N	SAP	N	N	N	N ⁵	N	S
Cancer Registry	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N ⁵	N	PC
Drug Misuse Database	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y ⁴	N ⁵	N	Part PC

Contact: Dr Liz McWhirter Telephone Number: 028 9052 2522

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Central Survey Unit (CSU)	Telephone Number: 028 9034 8201									
Continuous Household Survey (CHS)	E	E	E	E	P ⁶	E ⁷	E ⁸	N	N	NI ⁹
Family Expenditure Survey (FES)	E	E	E	E	N	N	E ⁸	N	N	NI ⁹
Census Office for Northern Ireland (CONI)	Telephone Number: 028 9034 8158									
Results of the Census of Population & Housing carried out in Northern Ireland in April 1991	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y ¹⁰	Y	N	N	PC, W, DC
Results of the Census of Population & Housing carried out in Northern Ireland in April 2001	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y ¹⁰	Y	N	N	PC, W, DC
General Register Office (GRO)	Telephone Number: 028 9034 8132									
All births registered in Northern Ireland by calendar year	Y	Y	Part Cov ¹¹	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
All stillbirths registered in Northern Ireland by calendar year	Y	Y	Part Cov ¹¹	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
All deaths registered in Northern Ireland by calendar year	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
All marriages registered in Northern Ireland by calendar year	Y	Y	Y	Part Cov ¹²	N	N	N	N	N	DC
All divorces occurring in Northern Ireland by calendar year	Y	Y	Y	Part Cov ¹²	N	N	Y	N	N	NI
Regional Reporting & Expenditure Branch (RREB)	Telephone Number: 028 9034 8203									
Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation Central Database	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	N	AD, PC

Appendix IV

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Department for Regional Development (DRD)										
Telephone Number: 028 9054 0878										
Northern Ireland Travel Survey	E	E	G	PROX	N	E	G	N	N	PC
Department for Regional Development Attitudes to transportation survey of residents	E	E	G	G	N	N	G	N	N	PC
Price Waterhouse Cooper (PWC) public transport customer survey	G	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PROX
Car park locations, number of disabled bays	N	N	N	N	N	PROX	N	N	N	PC
Dwellings not connected to mains water or sewerage in Omagh, all customer applications for connection	N	N	N	PROX	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Department of the Environment (DOE)										
Telephone Number: 028 9054 0878										
Planning Applications	N	N	N	N	N	G	N	N	N	PC
Car Parking Passes for Disabled People	N	N	N	N	N	E	N	N	N	NI
Built and Natural Heritage Visitors including Schools	PROX	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Road Safety Advertising Evaluation	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Road Safety Education in Schools	G	N	N	N	PROX	N	N	N	N	PC
Driver & Vehicle Licensing in Northern Ireland (DVLNI) Driver Licensing Database	E	N	N	N	N	G	N	N	N	PC
Driver & Vehicle Licensing in Northern Ireland (DVLNI) Vehicle Licensing Database	N	N	N	PROX	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Driving Theory & Practical Tests - Candidate Data	E	G	N	N	G	E	N	N	N	PC
Register of Driving Instructors	N	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Vehicle Test Applications	PROX	G	N	N	N	G	N	N	N	PC
1997 Local Council Election Results	G	G	N	PROX	PROX	N	PROX	N	N	PC

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Local Government Pensions - Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) Data	G	G	PROX	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Department for Social Development (DSD)	Contact: Dr Chris Morris Telephone Number: 028 9052 2280									
Income Support	Y	Y	IN	N	N	IN	Y	N	N	PC
Jobseekers Allowance	Y	Y	IN	N	N	IN	Y	N	N	PC
Disability Living Allowance	Y	Y	N	N	N	IN	N	N	N	PC
Attendance Allowance	Y	Y	N	N	N	IN	N	N	N	PC
Retirement Pension	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	N	IN, Part Cov	N	N	PC
Child Benefit	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
Incapacity Benefit	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	IN	Part Cov	N	N	PC
Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) ¹³	Y	Y	IN	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
Disabled Persons Tax Credit (DPTC) ¹⁴	Y	Y	IN	N	N	IN	Y	N	N	PC
Child Support Agency-Non Resident Parent	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
Child Support Agency-Parent With Custody	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	N	Y	N	N	PC
Industrial Injuries Disability Benefit	Y	Y	N	N	N	IN	N	N	N	PC
Maternity Allowance	Y	Y	IN	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Widows Benefit	Y	Y	IN	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Invalid Care Allowance	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Housing Benefit	Y	Y	IN, Part Cov	N	N	N	Part Cov	N	N	PC

Appendix IV

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Department of Enterprise, Trade & Investment (DETI)	Contact: Dr Clare Alexander Telephone Number: 028 9052 9525									
Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL,TTWA
Labour Force Survey	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	PC,DC, PARL
Claimant Count	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL,TTWA
New Earnings Survey (NES)	Y	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,DC, PARL,TTWA
Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)- Production and Construction	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL,TTWA
Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)- Service Sector	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Census of Employment	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL,TTWA
Quarterly Employment Survey (QES)	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Triennial Survey into Northern Ireland	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Business Expenditure on Research and Development	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL
Industrial Development Board (IDB) Corporate Database	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Equality Commission Monitoring Returns	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,DC
Quality Assurance Database Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)	N	Y	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,DC
United Kingdom Occupancy Survey (UKOS)	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,DC
Visitor Attraction Survey	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC,DC
Targeting Social Need (TSN) Monitoring Returns Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB)	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	N	PC,W,DC, PARL,TTWA

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Northern Ireland Office (NIO)										
Northern Ireland Crime Survey (NICS)	E	E	E	E	E	N	E	N	N	AD,W,DC,EWB ¹⁵
Community Attitudes Survey (CAS)	E	E	E	E	N	N	E	N	N	EWB ¹⁵
Recorded Crime Dataset	N	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC, PD
Courts Dataset	G	E	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT, PD
Crime Information Retrieval System (CIRS)	E	E	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	AD
Administrative Time Limits (ATL)	E	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Prisons Dataset	E	E	G	G	N	N	N	N	N	MT
Prevention of Terrorism Act (PTA)	E	G	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	AD, PD
Juvenile Justice	E	E	N	G	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Police Authority for Northern Ireland (PANI)										
Community Consultation Survey	E	E	E	E	N	N	E	N	N	NI
Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS)										
Court of Appeal	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
High Court Bails	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
High Court - Chancery	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
High Court - Queen's Bench	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
High Court - Family (Matrimonial)	N	N	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	CT
Crown Court	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
County Court	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
Magistrate's Court	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
Children Order	Y ¹⁶	Y ¹⁶	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
Coroners Court	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
Enforcement of Judgements Office	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT
Court Funds Office	Y	N	N	N	N	Y	N	N	N	CT
Social Security and Pensions Appeals Tribunals	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	CT

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
Department of Education (DE)	Contact: Dr Ivor Johnston Telephone Number: 028 9127 9677									
Secondary School Census	E	E	N	E	E	P	N	N	N	PC
Nursery and Primary Schools	E	E	N	E	E	G	N	N	N	NI
Pre-School Education Centre Census	N	E	N	E	E	N	N	N	N	NI
School Leavers' Survey	E	E	N	E	E	P	N	N	N	PC
School Performance Survey - Year 12 & Year 14 Pupils	N	E	N	N ¹⁷	N	N	N	N	N	NI
Department of Higher & Further Education, Training & Employment Tertiary Education Statistics & Research Branch (DHFETE-TESRB)	Contact: Dr Linda Bradley Telephone Number: 028 9025 7607									
Further Education Leavers Survey (FELS)	E	E	CAY	G ¹⁸	G ¹⁹	G	CAY	N	N	PC
Further Education Statistical Record (FESR)	E	E	CAY	G ¹⁸	G ¹⁹	G	CAY	N	N	PC
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Database	E	E	N	P ¹⁸	G ¹⁹	G	N	N	N	PC
Department of Higher & Further Education, Training & Employment Agency (DHFETE-T&EA)	Contact: Mr Dave Rogers Telephone Number: 028 9025 7665									
Jobskills	G	G	G	G ²⁰	G ²¹	G	G ²²	N	N	NI
International Fund for Ireland/Wider Horizons	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	N	Y	Y ²²	N	N	PC
New Deal 18-24 ²³	G	G	G	G ²⁰	G ²¹	G	Y	N	N	Part PC
New Deal 25+ ²³	G	G	G	G ²⁰	G ²¹	G	Y	N	N	Part PC
New Deal for Disabled People ²³	G	G	G	G ²⁰	Y ²¹	G	Y	N	N	Part PC

Datasets	Age	Gender	Marital Status	Religion	Racial Group	Disability	Dependants	Political Opinion	Sexual Orientation	Geographical Identifier
New Deal for Partners ²³	G	G	G	G ²⁰	G ²¹	G	Y	N	N	Part PC
New Deal for Lone Parents ²³	G	G	G	G ²⁰	G ²¹	G	Y	N	N	Part PC
Worktrack	Y	G	Y	G ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Enterprise Ulster	Y	G	Y	G ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Open Learning	Y	G	Y	G ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	N	N	N	PC
Flexible Learning	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	N	N	N	PC
Individual Learning Accounts	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Job Bridge	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Premiere	Y	G	N	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	N	N	N	PC
Business Education Initiative	Y	G	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	N	N	N	PC
Job Brokerage	Y	G	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Careers Guidance	Y	G	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Walsh Visas	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Employment Support	Y	G	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Bridge To Employment	Y	G	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y	N	N	PC
Disablement Advisory Service	Y	Y	Y	Y ²⁰	Y ²¹	Y	Y ²²	N	N	PC
							Y	N	N	NI
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD)										
Social Survey of Farmers and their Families	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N ⁵	N	NUTS III
DARD Colleges Student Enrolments	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N	N ⁵	N	PC
Fisheries Employment Status at Ports	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	N	N	N	DC
People in Agrifood Industry Enrolled on Lifelong Learning Programmes	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	PC
Contact: Dr Chris Hughes Telephone Number: 028 9052 4142										

Data Assessment Codes

AD	Address
B	Board
C	The system contains individual records and is maintained by the Central Services Agency
CAY	Cannot assess yet
CT	Court
DC	District Council
E	Quality of data is excellent
EWB	East, West & Belfast
G	Quality of data is generally good although there may be some gaps
IN	Indicative data
MT	Main Town
N	No
NI	Not Available below NI level
NUTSIII	Nomenclature of Units for Territorial Statistics III
Oth	Other
P	Quality of data is poor
PARL	Parliamentary Constituency
Part COV	Partial coverage
Part PC	Partial Postcode
PC	Postcode
PD	Police Division
PROX	Proxy
Q	The Department queries the database via the Board Database Managers
S	School
SAP	School as proxy
TBD	To be decided
TTWA	Travel to work area
W	Ward
Y	Yes

Notes

- 1 The NIRAES system is used in A&E Departments in some trusts; RIB do not have direct access to this database.
- 2 Community Returns include Korner Community, Korner PSS and Children Order/Children in Need Returns.
- 3 This information is completed in age groups rather than for each individual.
- 4 Information on number of persons in the household and/or relationship to head of household.
- 5 Political opinion may be proxied by religion.
- 6 Race - CHS has included a question for 3 years, < 25 individuals from non-white backgrounds picked up each year and suggestion of confusion of 'national identity' with race.
- 7 Disability - Current definition is long standing illness based. Will be looking for 2001 -2 survey at expanding definition to come closer to Section 75.
- 8 Dependents - CHS and FES include definitions of child dependants and there may be scope for expanding this, but intended scope of Section 75 not clear.
- 9 Postcode - Postcodes not available with current address samples, but already starting postcode survey samples - effective on CHS and FES from April 2001.
- 10 The Census does not identify disabled people under the definition of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
- 11 Married or Unmarried Only.
- 12 Some information on religious denomination of place of marriage.
- 13 Previously Family Credit.
- 14 Previously Disability Working Allowance.
- 15 East, West and Belfast.
- 16 For Children Only.
- 17 School Management Type is Available.
- 18 Religion is held by HESA; Community background is held in FELS and FESR.
- 19 Ethnicity is held rather than race.
- 20 DHFETE currently monitors by community background rather than religious belief.
- 21 DHFETE currently monitors by ethnicity rather than racial group.
- 22 Dependant children only.
- 23 New Deal - Although data held on New Deal participants is generally good, data are only available in respect of those New Deal participants who attend a job centre. New Deal data are currently unavailable pending resolution of a number of data issues following the introduction of a new computer system, but data should be available in February 2001 when data quality can be reviewed.
- 24 Postcode is collected on the Child Health System but it is not complete in all cases.
- 25 The codes for the Human Resources Management System relate only to the information that is available centrally in DHSSPS.

