

Insert Name of Public Authority Here and Logo in Picture Box Below



Public Authority Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report

Contact:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
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| • Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Disability Action Plan | As above x (double click to open) |
| | Name: |
| | Telephone: |
| | Email: |

Documents published relating to our Equality Scheme can be found at:

<https://nihrc.org/publication/detail/equality-scheme>

Signature:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "David Russell".

This report has been prepared using a template circulated by the Equality Commission.

It presents our progress in fulfilling our statutory equality and good relations duties, and implementing Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plans.

This report reflects progress made between April 2022 and March 2023

PART A – Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Equality Scheme

Section 1: Equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice

1. In 2022-23, please provide **examples** of key policy/service delivery developments made by the public authority in this reporting period to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations; and the outcomes and improvements achieved.

Please relate these to the implementation of your statutory equality and good relations duties and Equality Scheme where appropriate.

The Commission has operated and continues to do so in accordance with its Strategic Plan 22-25 and the objectives set in our Business Plan 2022-23. The areas of work are captured in five broad themes with actions, outcomes/impacts and key activities as follows:

Objective 1: To keep under review law and practice and advise government for the benefit of everyone across Northern Ireland -

Throughout the year the Commission continued its investigation into the provision of education on sexual and reproductive health in post primary schools in Northern Ireland in accordance with the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 and the recommendations in the 2018 CEDAW inquiry report Paragraph 86 (d). The Commission concluded its analysis of all evidence provided during the investigation and prepared an initial draft report.

The Commission provided statutory advice to the NI Office and Westminster Parliament on a range of bills, including the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill. The Commission provided clause by clause analysis of the Bill raising significant concerns as to the compliance of the Bill with the ECHR.

In addition, the Commission provided statutory advice to the Westminster Parliament on the Bill of Rights Bill, a Bill proposing to reform the UK human rights framework. In providing oral evidence to the NI Affairs Committee the Commission highlighted the important role played by the Human Rights Act 1998 in ensuring the rights contained within the ECHR are accessible in UK Courts.

The Commission also provided advice to NI Departments, including to the Department of Justice on measures to strengthen the response to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and on the use of audio and video links for NI Court and Tribunal Hearings.

The Commission continued to engage in the international human rights system, including through participation in the Universal Periodic Review. In a statement to the UN Human Rights Council the Commission raised concerns that the Bill of Rights Bill will weaken human rights protections and that the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill will unduly restrict victim's access to courts. In addition, the Commission submitted reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

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In partnership with the Equality Commission for NI the Commission continued to deliver the mandate of the designated Independent Mechanism under Article 33 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This included facilitating and providing secretarial support to the Disability Forum.

The Commission facilitated the monitoring visit by the Advisory Committee on the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and submitted evidence to the Committee.

Throughout the year the Commission managed a research project on the prevention of drug addiction and substance abuse with researchers from Queen's University Belfast regarding the prevention of drug addiction and substance abuse. The research report has been shared with the Department of Health.

The Commission continues to support individuals on a broad range of human rights matters, providing human rights information, advice and signposting to approximately 419 individuals this year. The Commission also exercised its legal powers, under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in a number of ongoing legal cases.

The Commission has continued to support an individual challenge against the Department of Justice in respect of the compliance of the Rehabilitation of Offenders (NI) Order 1978 with the right to private and family life. Following an appeal by the Department of Justice, a hearing before the Court of Appeal is listed for April 2023.

The Commission also continued to support an individual challenge to the Ministry of Defence regarding the provision of a pension to an unmarried partner. This was heard by the Court of Appeal in February 2023. A further application for judicial review is anticipated later in 2024.

The challenge to the vires of the Secretary of State for NI on the Abortion Regulations 2021 was subject to appeal by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child Pro Life Limited (SPUC). The Commission was granted leave to enter both written and oral submissions. These focused on both the Commission's previous litigation on reproductive healthcare and particularly on the application of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework. The Court of Appeal heard the appeal in January 2023 and judgment is awaited.

The Commission was also granted leave to intervene in a judicial review challenge supported by the Commissioner for Older People against the Department of Health on its policy on Continuing Healthcare. The Commission entered a written submission focusing on the application of the right to peaceful enjoyment of property, under Article 1 of Protocol 1 of the ECHR, and the interaction with the UNCRPD. This case was heard in October 2022 and the judgment is awaited.

Objective 2: To ensure that rights protection is not diminished as a result of the United Kingdom having left the European Union; and, where required, ensure that Northern Ireland keeps pace with changes in European Union equality laws –

In July 2022, NIHRC and ECNI jointly published their first annual report as the dedicated mechanism charged with oversight of Windsor Framework Article 2, setting out over 50 joint recommendations and a further 25 NIHRC recommendations¹ which were discussed at an event attended by around 50 stakeholder representatives.

Jointly with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI), the Commission published a Working Paper setting out the Commissions' view of the scope of the Article 2(1) commitment,

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including an appendix of the relevant EU legislation identified to date, alongside a table of related domestic law.² This drew on in-house, and externally commissioned, legal research and analysis and followed engagement with key stakeholders.

Stakeholder engagement events were held to launch two research reports: analysis by Alison Harvey BL of the implications of Protocol Article 2 for the law on human trafficking, published in May 2022; and a report on the interaction between Article 2 and rights of access to healthcare by Professor Tamara Hervey published in June 2022.

The Commission highlighted Article 2 issues in relation to a number of Westminster Bills during the year, including the Retained EU Law Bill³, the Protocol Bill⁴, the Bill of Rights Bill⁵ and the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill.⁶ The Commission's advice and recommendations were raised in letters from Westminster Committees, reflected in amendments and referenced in debates.⁷

In each of these submissions the Commission has highlighted the lack of consideration of Article 2 in legislative documents and Commission staff have engaged regularly with officials in the NIO, the Executive Office and other officials on related recommendations.

The Commission also responded to the European Commission Consultation on the Racial Equality Directive⁸ and highlighted Article 2 obligations within its treaty-monitoring work.⁹

The three Commissions contracted expert research on “European Union Developments in Equality and Human Rights: the impact of Brexit on the divergence of rights and best practice on the island of Ireland” and sought feedback on draft recommendations at a stakeholder event in January.

The Commission continued to raise awareness and promote understanding of the UK Government’s commitment under Article 2 of the Windsor Framework and of the remit and roles of the

¹ [Annual Report of the NIHRC and ECNI on the implementation of Protocol Article 2 2021-2022](#) (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022)

² NIHRC and ECNI ‘Working Paper: the scope of Article 2(1) of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol’ (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022) and NIHRC and ECNI ‘Table of EU Directives which underpin the Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity provisions included in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement chapter of the same name and implementing Domestic Legislation’ (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022)

³ NIHRC and ECNI [Briefing on the Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Bill](#) (NIHRC and ECNI, 2023)

⁴ [Joint NIHRC / ECNI Preliminary Briefing on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill](#) (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022)

⁵ NIHRC Advice on the Bill of Rights Bill (NIHRC, 2022)

⁶ [Advice on NI Troubles \(Legacy and Reconciliation\) Bill](#) (NIHRC, 2022)

⁷ For example: Letters from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs on the NI Protocol Bill, [22 November 2022](#) and [12 January 2023](#); Letter from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Secretary of State for Business and Trade on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, 9 February 2023; Letter from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, NI Office on the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, 1 December 2022; and Joint letter from the NI Affairs Committee, Women and Equalities Committee, Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI and Joint Committee on Human Rights to the Secretary of State for NI, relating to Parliamentary scrutiny of Article 2 of the Protocol on Ireland/NI, 23 June 2022.

⁸ NIHRC [Response to the European Commission Consultation on the Racial Equality Directive](#) (NIHRC, 2022)

⁹ See, for example, NIHRC Statement to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights the 72nd Pre-Sessional Working Group on the Examination of the United Kingdom’s Compliance with the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (NIHRC, 2023) and NIHRC Submission to the UN Committee on ICESCR – Parallel Report for the List of Issues in Relation to the Seventh Periodic Report of the United Kingdom (NIHRC, 2022)

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Commission. The Commission utilised digital platforms and proactive media statements to communicate this work.

The Commission produced and managed an advertising and digital marketing campaign on the dedicated mechanism function. The target audiences included:

Advice-giving and community support organisations;
Signposting organisations within government and voluntary sector;
NGOs, such as NI equality and human rights groups, and relevant NI legal advice centres.

The Commission, jointly with the Equality Commission for NI, were granted leave to intervene in a judicial review against the UK Home Office by an individual challenging a dispersal application. The Commissions entered both written and oral submissions to assist the NI High Court on the application of the test to apply under Article 2 of the Windsor Framework. Judgment is awaited in this matter.

Objective 3: To build a society in which human rights are better understood, protected and valued, making a positive impact upon the delivery of services -

The Commission continued to promote understanding and awareness of the importance of human rights in Northern Ireland through its communication, engagement and education functions.

A communications strategy was developed in year to support the Commission's strategic priorities 2022-25. The Commission engaged with the media proactively in year and promoted its work across its wide range of digital platforms.

Over 65 public statements were made during this period.

The Commission directly engaged with the community through partnerships such as the Northern Ireland Business and Human Rights Forum and the Northern Ireland Sport and Human Rights Forum. We developed and delivered a programme of work for post primary schools based on the Commission's 2022-25 Strategic Priorities. In year partnership opportunities were developed with Eco Schools, NI Youth Assembly, Princes Trust and NI Universities and Education Providers.

In December 2022 we published and launched our Annual Statement on Human Rights in association with the Office of the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Commission was delighted to have Gary Lightbody from Snow Patrol and the Lightbody Foundation provide the keynote address. He usefully highlighted the interplay between poverty, mental health and human rights in Northern Ireland.

Objective 4: To work in partnership with other human rights and equality bodies to maximise human rights protection -

The Commission maintained membership of working groups within the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) including Artificial Intelligence, Business and Human Rights; Climate Change;

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Communications; the Legal working group; Rights of Older Persons; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Objective 5: To be a learning organisation, improving our skills to achieve the greatest impact –

The Commission maximises continuous professional development by encouraging and facilitating ongoing learning opportunities for each staff member and Commissioners. Due to the Commission's limited budget it was difficult to completely fulfil the training and development programme planned for 2022-23. However, the following relevant trainings did take place:

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Mental Health First Aid
- CIPD and CPD training
- Social Media including podcasts and video editing
- Media Training
- Interview Training
- European Court of Human Rights Case Law training
- EU Legislative Procedure in Practice training

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- 2 Please provide **examples** of outcomes and/or the impact of **equality action plans/** measures in 2022-23 (*or append the plan with progress/examples identified*).

Throughout the year the Commission continued its investigation into the provision of education on sexual and reproductive health in post primary schools in Northern Ireland in accordance with the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 and the recommendations in the 2018 CEDAW inquiry report Paragraph 86 (d). The Commission concluded its analysis of all evidence provided during the investigation and prepared an initial draft report.

The Commission continued to engage in the international human rights system, including through participation in the Universal Periodic Review. In a statement to the UN Human Rights Council the Commission raised concerns that the Bill of Rights Bill will weaken human rights protections and that the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill will unduly restrict victim's access to courts. In addition, the Commission submitted reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights.

In partnership with the Equality Commission for NI the Commission continued to deliver the mandate of the designated Independent Mechanism under Article 33 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. This included facilitating and providing secretarial support to the Disability Forum.

The Commission facilitated the monitoring visit by the Advisory Committee on the Council of Europe Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities and submitted evidence to the Committee.

Throughout the year the Commission managed a research project on the prevention of drug addiction and substance abuse with researchers from Queen's University Belfast regarding the prevention of drug addiction and substance abuse. The research report has been shared with the Department of Health.

The Commission continues to support individuals on a broad range of human rights matters, providing human rights information, advice and signposting to approximately 419 individuals this year. The Commission also exercised its legal powers, under the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in a number of ongoing legal cases.

The Commission continued to support an individual challenge to the Ministry of Defence regarding the provision of a pension to an unmarried partner. This was heard by the Court of Appeal in February 2023. A further application for judicial review is anticipated later in 2024.

The challenge to the vires of the Secretary of State for NI on the Abortion Regulations 2021 was subject to appeal by the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child Pro Life Limited (SPUC). The Commission was granted leave to enter both written and oral submissions. These focused on both the Commission's previous litigation on reproductive healthcare and particularly on the application of Article 2 of the Windsor Framework. The Court of Appeal heard the appeal in January 2023.

Jointly with the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland (ECNI), the Commission published a Working Paper setting out the Commissions' view of the scope of the Article 2(1) commitment, including an appendix of the relevant EU legislation identified to date, alongside a table of

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- 2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/measures in 2022-23 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).**

related domestic law.¹⁰ This drew on in-house, and externally commissioned, legal research and analysis and followed engagement with key stakeholders.

The Commission highlighted Article 2 issues in relation to a number of Westminster Bills during the year, including the Retained EU Law Bill¹¹, the Protocol Bill¹², the Bill of Rights Bill¹³ and the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill.¹⁴ The Commission's advice and recommendations were raised in letters from Westminster Committees, reflected in amendments and referenced in debates.¹⁵

In each of these submissions the Commission has highlighted the lack of consideration of Article 2 in legislative documents and Commission staff have engaged regularly with officials in the NIO, the Executive Office and other officials on related recommendations.

The Commission also responded to the European Commission Consultation on the Racial Equality Directive¹⁶ and highlighted Article 2 obligations within its treaty-monitoring work.¹⁷

NIHRC continued to work with ECNI and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission on aspects of Article 2 with an island of Ireland dimension. The three Chief Commissioners gave evidence to the Oireachtas Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in September and the boards of the three Commissions met in person in Dublin in November, launching their first joint annual report.

The three Commissions contracted expert research on “European Union Developments in Equality and Human Rights: the impact of Brexit on the divergence of rights and best practice on the island of Ireland” and sought feedback on draft recommendations at a stakeholder event in January.

The Commission continued to raise awareness and promote understanding of the UK Government’s commitment under Article 2 of the Windsor Framework and of the remit and roles of the Commission. The Commission utilised digital platforms and proactive media statements to communicate this work.

¹⁰ NIHRC and ECNI ‘Working Paper: the scope of Article 2(1) of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol’ (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022) and NIHRC and ECNI ‘Table of EU Directives which underpin the Rights, Safeguards and Equality of Opportunity provisions included in the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement chapter of the same name and implementing Domestic Legislation’ (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022)

¹¹ NIHRC and ECNI Briefing on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill (NIHRC and ECNI, 2023)

¹² Joint NIHRC / ECNI Preliminary Briefing on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill (NIHRC and ECNI, 2022)

¹³ NIHRC Advice on the Bill of Rights Bill (NIHRC, 2022)

¹⁴ Advice on NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill (NIHRC, 2022)

¹⁵ For example: Letters from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs on the NI Protocol Bill, 22 November 2022 and 12 January 2023; Letter from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Secretary of State for Business and Trade on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, 9 February 2023; Letter from the Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI to Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, NI Office on the NI Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Bill, 1 December 2022; and Joint letter from the NI Affairs Committee, Women and Equalities Committee, Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/NI and Joint Committee on Human Rights to the Secretary of State for NI, relating to Parliamentary scrutiny of Article 2 of the Protocol on Ireland/NI, 23 June 2022.

¹⁶ NIHRC Response to the European Commission Consultation on the Racial Equality Directive (NIHRC, 2022)

¹⁷ See, for example, NIHRC Statement to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights the 72nd Pre-Sessional Working Group on the Examination of the United Kingdom’s Compliance with the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (NIHRC, 2023) and NIHRC Submission to the UN Committee on ICESCR – Parallel Report for the List of Issues in Relation to the Seventh Periodic Report of the United Kingdom (NIHRC, 2022)

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- 2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/measures in 2022-23 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).**

In year our public statements included:

Human Rights and Equality Commissions advise Oireachtas on post-Brexit protections – 22 September 2022

Clarifying the Scope of Protocol Protections is key to ensuring Equality and Human Rights are upheld post Brexit – 1 December 2022

Three Commissions Launch Research and Policy Recommendations: The Impact of Brexit on the Divergence of Rights and Best Practice on the Island of Ireland – 27 April 2023

The Commission has also designed and produced educational videos for government officials and policy makers explaining the Dedicated Mechanism mandate and Scope Paper. These will be launched later in 2023.

The Commission, jointly with the Equality Commission for NI, were granted leave to intervene in a judicial review against the UK Home Office by an individual challenging a dispersal application. The Commissions entered both written and oral submissions to assist the NI High Court on the application of the test to apply under Article 2 of the Windsor Framework. Judgment is awaited in this matter.

A communications strategy was developed in year to support the Commission's strategic priorities 2022-25. The Commission engaged with the media proactively in year and promoted its work across its wide range of digital platforms.

Over 65 public statements were made during this period. These included:

NI Human Rights Chief Commissioner responds to Abortion Services Statement – 2 December 2022

Commission welcomes Supreme Court judgment on Safe Access Zones Bill – 7 December 2022

Commission engages with Prince's Trust Young Ambassadors – 3 February 2023

Commission announces engagement with NI Youth Assembly on the International Day of Education – 24 January 2023

NIHRC teams up with Eco-Schools NI – 22 February 2023

Sporting organisations pledge support for human rights – 8 September 2022

Modern slavery, human trafficking and sustainable procurement discussed at Business and Human Rights Forum – 19 October 2022

New podcast series celebrates sport and human rights – 5 October 2022

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- 2 Please provide examples of outcomes and/or the impact of equality action plans/measures in 2022-23 (or append the plan with progress/examples identified).**

The Commission directly engaged with the community through partnerships such as the Northern Ireland Business and Human Rights Forum and the Northern Ireland Sport and Human Rights Forum. We developed and delivered a programme of work for post primary schools based on the Commission's 2022-25 Strategic Priorities. In year partnership opportunities were developed with Eco Schools, NI Youth Assembly, Princes Trust and NI Universities and Education Providers.

Targeting the public sector, we reviewed and updated the Northern Ireland Civil Service online human rights guide was completed in partnership with the Executive Office.

In December 2022 we published and launched our Annual Statement on Human Rights in association with the Office of the Speaker of the Northern Ireland Assembly. The Commission was delighted to have Gary Lightbody from Snow Patrol and the Lightbody Foundation provide the keynote address. He usefully highlighted the interplay between poverty, mental health and human rights in Northern Ireland.

The Commission maintained membership of working groups within the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions and the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (GANHRI) including Artificial Intelligence, Business and Human Rights; Climate Change; Communications; the Legal working group; Rights of Older Persons; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and the United Nations Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The Commission aims to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability and that access to employment and career advancement in the Commission is based solely on ability, qualifications and suitability for the post. All disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria for posts advertised at the Commission are guaranteed an interview. The Commission complies with all existing legislation in regard to its disabled employees.

The Commission has continued to particularly encourage applications from men who are currently under represented in the organisation.

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- 3 Has the **application of the Equality Scheme** commitments resulted in any **changes** to policy, practice, procedures and/or service delivery areas during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No (go to Q.4) Not applicable (go to Q.4)

Please provide any details and examples:

As outlined above – the impact of work on other public sector and private sector bodies

- 3a With regard to the change(s) made to policies, practices or procedures and/or service delivery areas, what **difference was made, or will be made, for individuals**, i.e. the impact on those according to Section 75 category?

Please provide any details and examples:

As outlined above – the impact of work on other public sector and private sector bodies

- 3b What aspect of the Equality Scheme prompted or led to the change(s)? (*tick all that apply*)

- As a result of the organisation's screening of a policy (*please give details*):
- As a result of what was identified through the EQIA and consultation exercise (*please give details*):
- As a result of analysis from monitoring the impact (*please give details*):
- As a result of changes to access to information and services (*please specify and give details*):
- Other (*please specify and give details*):

The work of the Commission is largely outward facing as explained above.

Section 2: Progress on Equality Scheme commitments and action plans/measures

Arrangements for assessing compliance (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 2)

4 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within job descriptions during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

All job descriptions have detailed as part of the duties and responsibilities that staff display a commitment to the protection of human rights, the values of the Commission and to the promotion of equality, show sensitivity to the diversity of views on human rights issues in Northern Ireland and observe the highest standards of confidentiality and professional ethics in relation to the Commission's work. Monitoring forms also include an explanatory note on equal opportunities and monitoring.

5 Were the Section 75 statutory duties integrated within performance plans during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

- Yes, organisation wide
- Yes, some departments/jobs
- No, this is not an Equality Scheme commitment
- No, this is scheduled for later in the Equality Scheme, or has already been done
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

6 In the 2022-23 reporting period were **objectives/ targets/ performance measures** relating to the Section 75 statutory duties **integrated** into corporate plans, strategic planning and/or operational business plans? (*tick all that apply*)

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- Yes, through the work to prepare or develop the new corporate plan
- Yes, through organisation wide annual business planning
- Yes, in some departments/jobs
- No, these are already mainstreamed through the organisation's ongoing corporate plan
- No, the organisation's planning cycle does not coincide with this 2021-22 report
- Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

See publications listed on our website at:

<https://nihrc.org/publication/category/corporate-reports-and-plans>

Equality action plans/measures

7 Within the 2022-23 reporting period, please indicate the **number** of:

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| Actions completed: | <input type="text" value="5"/> | Actions ongoing: | <input type="text" value="2"/> | Actions to commence: | <input type="text" value="0"/> |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|

Please provide any details and examples (*in addition to question 2*):

N/A

8 Please give details of changes or amendments made to the equality action plan/measures during the 2022-23 reporting period (*points not identified in an appended plan*):

N/A

9 In reviewing progress on the equality action plan/action measures during the 2022-23 reporting period, the following have been identified: (*tick all that apply*)

- Continuing action(s), to progress the next stage addressing the known inequality
- Action(s) to address the known inequality in a different way
- Action(s) to address newly identified inequalities/recently prioritised inequalities
- Measures to address a prioritised inequality have been completed

PART A

Arrangements for consulting (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 3)

- 10 Following the initial notification of consultations, a targeted approach was taken – and consultation with those for whom the issue was of particular relevance: (*tick one box only*)

All the time

Sometimes

Never

- 11 Please provide any **details and examples of good practice** in consultation during the 2022-23 reporting period, on matters relevant (e.g. the development of a policy that has been screened in) to the need to promote equality of opportunity and/or the desirability of promoting good relations:

- 12 In the 2022-23 reporting period, given the consultation methods offered, which consultation methods were **most frequently used by consultees**: (*tick all that apply*)

Face to face meetings

Focus groups

Written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing

Questionnaires

Information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/out of the consultation

Internet discussions

Telephone consultations

Other (*please specify*):

Please provide any details or examples of the uptake of these methods of consultation in relation to the consultees' membership of particular Section 75 categories:

We refer to the body of work outlined in the preceding section.

- 13 Were any awareness-raising activities for consultees undertaken, on the commitments in the Equality Scheme, during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes

No

Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

As above

PART A

- 14 Was the consultation list reviewed during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable – no commitment to review

Arrangements for assessing and consulting on the likely impact of policies (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

[Insert link to any web pages where screening templates and/or other reports associated with Equality Scheme commitments are published]

- 15 Please provide the **number** of policies screened during the year (*as recorded in screening reports*):

0

- 16 Please provide the **number of assessments** that were consulted upon during 2022-23:

| | |
|---|--|
| 0 | Policy consultations conducted with screening assessment presented. |
| 0 | Policy consultations conducted with an equality impact assessment (EQIA) presented. |
| 0 | Consultations for an EQIA alone. |

- 17 Please provide details of the **main consultations** conducted on an assessment (as described above) or other matters relevant to the Section 75 duties:

N/A

- 18 Were any screening decisions (or equivalent initial assessments of relevance) reviewed following concerns raised by consultees? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No concerns were raised No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

Arrangements for publishing the results of assessments (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

PART A

- 19** Following decisions on a policy, were the results of any EQIAs published during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

Arrangements for monitoring and publishing the results of monitoring (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 4)

- 20** From the Equality Scheme monitoring arrangements, was there an audit of existing information systems during the 2022-23 reporting period? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No, already taken place
 No, scheduled to take place at a later date Not applicable

Please provide any details:

N/A

- 21** In analysing monitoring information gathered, was any action taken to change/review any policies? (*tick one box only*)

Yes No Not applicable

Please provide any details and examples:

N/A

- 22** Please provide any details or examples of where the monitoring of policies, during the 2022-23 reporting period, has shown changes to differential/adverse impacts previously assessed:

Please see the body of work outlined above

- 23** Please provide any details or examples of monitoring that has contributed to the availability of equality and good relations information/data for service delivery planning or policy development:

Please see the body of work outlined above

PART A

Staff Training (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 5)

- 24** Please report on the activities from the training plan/programme (section 5.4 of the Model Equality Scheme) undertaken during 2022-23, and the extent to which they met the training objectives in the Equality Scheme.

Staff are aware of the Equality Scheme and Section 75 duties form a key part of general policy and research work. Section 75 is specifically addressed in certain programmes of work. Additionally these equality issues are covered in our training programme for the Civil Service and in induction for all staff and Commissioners, and training for senior managers in employment matters, such as recruitment and selection procedures; and recruiting fairly. All staff who are on a recruitment panel attended recruitment and selection training during the 2022-23 year.

- 25** Please provide **any examples** of relevant training shown to have worked well, in that participants have achieved the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve the stated objectives:

As above

Public Access to Information and Services (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 6)

- 26** Please list **any examples** of where monitoring during 2022-23, across all functions, has resulted in action and improvement in relation **to access to information and services**:

See answer 1

Complaints (Model Equality Scheme Chapter 8)

- 27** How many complaints **in relation to the Equality Scheme** have been received during 2022-23?

Insert number here:

0

Please provide any details of each complaint raised and outcome:

N/A

Section 3: Looking Forward

- 28** Please indicate when the Equality Scheme is due for review:

2023/24

PART A

29 Are there areas of the Equality Scheme arrangements (screening/consultation/training) your organisation anticipates will be focused upon in the next reporting period? (*please provide details*)

N/A

30 In relation to the advice and services that the Commission offers, what **equality and good relations priorities** are anticipated over the next reporting period? (*please tick any that apply*)

- Employment
- Goods, facilities and services
- Legislative changes
- Organisational changes/ new functions
- Nothing specific, more of the same
- Other (please state):
As policy and legal work develop

PART B

PART B - Section 49A of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (as amended) and Disability Action Plans

1. Number of action measures for this reporting period that have been:

11

Fully achieved

0

Partially achieved

0

Not achieved

2. Please outline below details on all actions that have been fully achieved in the reporting period.

2 (a) Please highlight what **public life measures** have been achieved to encourage disabled people to participate in public life at National, Regional and Local levels:

| Level | Public Life Action Measures | Outputs ⁱ | Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ |
|-------------------------|---|--|--|
| National ⁱⁱⁱ | Member of the UK Independent Mechanism for the purposes of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. | Attendance at meetings, submissions and reports | The Commission, along with ECNI and other UK National Human Rights Institutions, continue to monitor compliance with the UNCRPD. |
| Regional ^{iv} | Development of report on human rights of persons with disabilities throughout NI, with specific engagement events. Submission and presentation of report to UNCRPD Committee. | The submissions and reports Participate in online policy discussions. | Attendance at CRPD evidence sessions Influence at the international level and information sharing locally. Continue to engage with ENNHRI and sit as a member of the CRPD Working Group. |

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| Level | Public Life Action Measures | Outputs ⁱ | Outcomes / Impact ⁱⁱ |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| | Ongoing work in the ENNHRI Disability working group. Attendance at the International Working Group for Rights of Older Persons | | |
| Local ^v | IMNI duties ongoing, including the recent establishment of a Disability Forum to complement work of the NIHRC and ECNI on UNCRPD Training sessions to assist in development of capacity for treaty monitoring engagement. Promotion of short films to promote and raise awareness of human rights through film and animation. Weekly Advice Clinic on a range of human rights issues, including disability. | Committee meetings Enhanced capacity for NGOs to advocate Training delivered by experts Films available online Support for equality and human rights practitioners forum. Delivery of advice. | Co-ordinating engagement on disability issues Appearance before Committees IMNI has established a Disability Forum to provide a dedicated space to ensure disabled people and their representative organisations are at the core of IMNI's work in promoting, protecting and monitoring the implementation of the UN CRPD in NI. Films have been utilised by the media, public sector organisations and schools and is available on the Commission's website as well as through social media. |

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2(b) What **training action measures** were achieved in this reporting period?

| | Training Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1 | Local training with NGOs, public sector bodies and commercial entities as well as knowledge exchange with NIHRC | Events across Northern Ireland and specific event on UNCRPD. Promotion of civil service training materials and courses. | Improved NGO engagement and advocacy measured by submissions. Increased knowledge within civil service of human rights standards including on disability rights. |
| 2 | Training with committee members JIMNI | Ongoing | Improved engagement with stakeholders and treaty monitoring bodies. |
| 3 | Ongoing engagement with UNCRPD Committee on issues of interest | Ongoing | Uptake of recommendations. |

2(c) What Positive attitudes **action measures** in the area of **Communications** were achieved in this reporting period?

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| | Communications Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Broaden the range of organisational communication products to include visual aids | Creation of short films, development of social media and Instagram. | Films can be displayed on the Commission's website as well as social media sites, you-tube, Facebook and Twitter. Videos have also been incorporated into the human rights training programme of civil servants, health and social care trusts, community groups and school visits. |
| 2 | Maintain accessible software | Maintenance of Browsealoud Service for the Commission's website. | Support software which adds speech, reading, and translation to websites facilitating access and participation for people with Dyslexia, Low Literacy, English as a Second Language, and those with mild visual impairments. Online content can be read aloud in multiple languages using the most natural and engaging voice to transform the user's reading experience. |
| 3 | Subtitles | Use of subtitles and sign language in films | Greater accessibility. |
| 4 | Interpretation/Translation | Interpretation available for advice clinics and events, when required, as well as the use of translation services for correspondence received and issued by the Commission, when required | Greater accessibility. |

2 (d) What action measures were achieved to '**encourage others**' to promote the two duties:

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| | Encourage others Action Measures | Outputs | Outcome / Impact |
|---|--|---|---|
| 1 | Development of training for NGOs in treaty engagement with the sharing of international experience | Events and materials | Enhanced capacity and engagement reported back to NIHRC |
| 2 | Promotion as IMNI | Events and publications and submissions | Awareness levels of NGOs increased. Engagement with Committee. |
| 3 | Development of Procurement Guidance for the Central Procurement Directorate | Publication | Ongoing support. |
| 4 | Development of infographics | Social media postings | Increased social media responses |

2 (e) Please outline **any additional action measures** that were fully achieved other than those listed in the tables above:

| | Action Measures fully implemented (other than Training and specific public life measures) | Outputs | Outcomes / Impact |
|---|---|---------|-------------------|
| 1 | | | |
| | | | |

3. Please outline what action measures have been **partly achieved** as follows:

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| | Action Measures partly achieved | Milestones/ Outputs | Outcomes/Impacts | Reasons not fully achieved |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| | | | | |

4. Please outline what action measures **have not been achieved** and the reasons why.

| | Action Measures not met | Reasons |
|---|--|--|
| 1 | Traveller investigation | Action completed in 2020-21 so removed |
| 2 | Development of a series of school training materials to support the Commission's films | Materials not developed in 2021-22 due to lack of resources. |
| | | |

5. What **monitoring tools** have been put in place to evaluate the degree to which actions have been effective / develop new opportunities for action?

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(a) Qualitative

A range of feedback mechanisms have been used across our work.

The UNCRPD Committee examination process and subsequent recommendations has provided a key opportunity to assess the effectiveness of our engagement on the UNCPRD and with disabled peoples organisations and disabled peoples. Positive feedback has been received on our engagement activities and a number of our policy priorities were reflected in the Committee's concluding observations. Following on from this a Disability Forum was established along with ECNI.

(b) Quantitative

A particular example is the Annual human rights statement which includes a traffic light system which identifies urgent issues for remedial action. The Commission has developed impact measurement through the creation of a new database for treaty monitoring, this tracks the effectiveness of the Commission's engagement activities.

6. As a result of monitoring progress against actions has your organisation either:

- made any **revisions** to your plan during the reporting period or
- taken any **additional steps** to meet the disability duties which were **not outlined in your original** disability action plan / any other changes?

Please select

If yes please outline below:

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| | Revised/Additional Action Measures | Performance Indicator | Timescale |
|---|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | | | |
| 2 | | | |
| 3 | | | |
| 4 | | | |
| 5 | | | |

7. Do you intend to make any further **revisions to your plan** in light of your organisation's annual review of the plan? If so, please outline proposed changes?

No

ⁱ **Outputs** – defined as act of producing, amount of something produced over a period, processes undertaken to implement the action measure e.g. Undertook 10 training sessions with 100 people at customer service level.

ⁱⁱ **Outcome / Impact** – what specifically and tangibly has changed in making progress towards the duties? What impact can directly be attributed to taking this action? Indicate the results of undertaking this action e.g. Evaluation indicating a tangible shift in attitudes before and after training.

ⁱⁱⁱ **National** : Situations where people can influence policy at a high impact level e.g. Public Appointments

^{iv} **Regional**: Situations where people can influence policy decision making at a middle impact level

^v **Local** : Situations where people can influence policy decision making at lower impact level e.g. one off consultations, local fora.